

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

B. A. (ENGLISH) – I YEAR

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COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Course Objective

To develop confident and proficient English communicators with strong LSRW skills for effective communication and employability in a globalized world.

Unit I - Basics of Communication

Introduction to Communication skills – Importance of Communication – Communication Process – Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication – Barriers to Effective Communication.

Unit II - Listening Skills

Importance of Listening – Types of Listening – Barriers – Listening and Note Taking.

Unit III - Speaking Skills

Public Speaking – Setting Clear Objectives – Generating Ideas – Preparing the Speech – Group Discussions – Types of Group Discussions – Interviews – Types of Interviews – Basic Interview Structure.

Unit IV - Reading Skills

General and Technical Comprehension – Intensive Reading – Extensive Reading – Skimming and Scanning.

Unit V - Writing Skills

Functional Grammar – Common Errors – Paragraphs and Essays – Report Writing – Formal and Informal Letters – Resumes – Emails – Notices – Agenda – Minutes.

References

1. Konar, N. (2021). *Communication Skills for Professionals*. PHI Learning Pvt. Ltd..
2. Thomson, A. J., & Martinet, A. V. (2015). *A practical English grammar*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Course Outcomes: After completion of the course, learners will be able to:

- CO1:** Comprehend diverse communication facets through the LSRW macro skills – Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing.
- CO2:** Employ both verbal and non-verbal communication strategies effectively in a professional setting.
- CO3:** Identify language errors to generate grammatically and idiomatically sound spoken and written expressions.
- CO4:** Assess oral proficiency by delivering concise formal speeches, engaging in group discussions, and participating in debates.
- CO5:** Develop proficiency in crafting clear, accurate, and context-appropriate texts for academic and professional purposes.

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UNIT – I

Lesson 1.1 - Basics of Communication

1.1 Introduction

Communication is the foundation of human interaction and one of the most essential life skills. It is the process through which people exchange ideas, information, emotions, and experiences to create shared understanding. In today's interconnected world, effective communication extends beyond the ability to speak or write fluently; it also involves listening attentively, interpreting non-verbal cues, adapting messages to different audiences, and responding appropriately in diverse contexts. Whether in academic settings, professional environments, or everyday social interactions, strong communication skills foster collaboration, strengthen relationships, resolve conflicts, and facilitate informed decision-making. As workplaces become increasingly multicultural and technology-driven, the ability to communicate clearly, confidently, and ethically has become a critical competency for personal growth, academic success, and career advancement. This module introduces the fundamental principles of communication, explores its processes and forms, and equips learners with the skills necessary to communicate effectively in both personal and professional spheres.

1.2 Learning Objectives

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Define communication and explain the importance of effective communication.
- Describe the communication process and differentiate between formal and informal communication and verbal and non-verbal communication.
- Identify and analyse barriers to effective communication and recommend strategies to overcome communication barriers.

1.3 Introduction to Communication Skills

Communication skills are the abilities that help a person to send and receive messages clearly, so that ideas, information, and feelings

are properly understood. Whenever we talk to someone, listen to them, write a message, read a notice, or even smile, nod, or use gestures, we are using communication skills. Communication is not only about speaking well; it also includes listening carefully, choosing the right words, using polite tone and body language, and checking whether the other person has understood the message. It is a two-way process between a sender and a receiver: one person sends a message; the other receives it; tries to understand it; and gives feedback. If any part of this process fails, there can be confusion or misunderstanding.

In our daily life, we use communication skills all the time at home, in school, and in society. Students use communication skills to ask doubts in class, participate in discussions, work on group projects, make friends, and express their opinions. Teachers use them to explain lessons, give instructions, and guide students. Later in life, almost every job requires good communication skills to talk to clients, colleagues, and superiors. A person may be very knowledgeable, but if they cannot express their ideas clearly and politely, others may not understand or appreciate their abilities.

Communication skills are also important for building good relationships and character. When we listen with attention and respect, other people feel valued. When we speak honestly but politely, we can solve problems without fighting. Good communication helps to prevent and reduce conflicts, clear misunderstandings, and create a positive, friendly environment in the classroom and at home. On the other hand, poor communication can hurt feelings and damage relationships.

In the modern world, communication does not happen only face-to-face. We also use phones, emails, social media, online meetings, and other digital tools to share messages. This makes communication faster and easier, but it also requires extra care. Written messages can be forwarded or misread, so we must be clear, correct, and respectful in what we write. Learning communication skills therefore includes learning how to speak, listen, read, and write effectively, both in traditional settings and using modern technology.

Because of all these reasons, communication skills are taught as an important part of the curriculum. By studying this chapter, students will learn different types and forms of communication (formal, informal, verbal, non-verbal), common barriers to communication, and simple principles like the 7 C's of effective communication. These ideas will

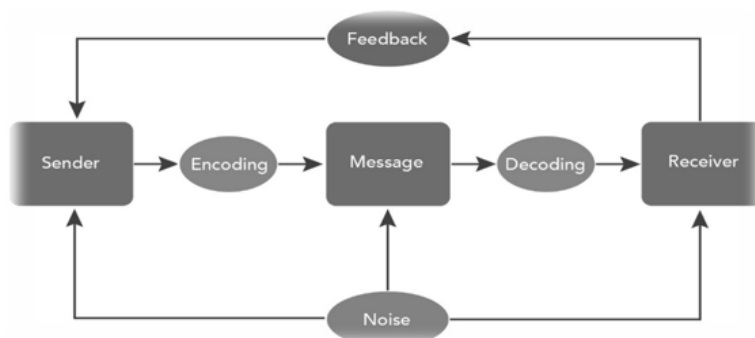
help them to become more confident speakers and careful listeners, and to communicate in a way that is clear, polite, and effective in real-life situations.

1.4 Importance of Communication

Communication is important because it is the basis of understanding between people. Through communication, we share information, ideas, and feelings, so that others know what we think and what we need. When communication is clear, work becomes easier, relationships become stronger, and problems are solved faster. In daily life, good communication helps us talk to family and friends, clear doubts in class, and cooperate with others in groups and teams. In the workplace, it is essential for giving instructions, taking decisions, and avoiding costly mistakes. People who communicate well are often seen as more confident and professional, and they get better opportunities for study and career growth.

Communication is also important for creating trust and good relationships. When we listen carefully and speak politely, others feel respected and valued. This reduces conflicts and misunderstandings. In schools and organizations, good communication helps everyone stay “on the same page” about rules, plans, and goals, so that tasks are completed correctly and on time. In short, communication is not just about talking; it is a life skill that helps us learn, work, and live together more peacefully and successfully.

1.5 Communication Process



The communication process is the step-by-step way in which a message moves from the sender to the receiver. It has several basic elements:

1. **Sender:** The sender is the person who starts the communication. The sender has an idea, information, or feeling that they want to share.
2. **Encoding:** Encoding means putting the idea into a form that can be

sent. The sender chooses words, symbols, gestures, or pictures to express the message.

3. **Message:** The message is the content of communication. It is what the sender wants to say. It can be facts, instructions, questions, requests, or emotions.
4. **Channel (or Medium):** The channel is the means or path through which the message travels. It may be spoken words, a phone call, a letter, an email, a notice, a WhatsApp message, a video, etc.
5. **Receiver:** The receiver is the person who gets the message. The message reaches the receiver through the chosen channel.
6. **Decoding:** Decoding means understanding the message. The receiver reads or hears the message and tries to get the meaning that the sender intended.
7. **Feedback:** Feedback is the response given by the receiver to the sender. It shows whether the message was received and understood. Feedback can be words (answering a question), an action (following an order), or even facial expressions and body language.
8. **Noise:** At every stage, noise or barriers (like loud sounds, poor language, wrong attitude, or technical problems) can disturb the message and cause misunderstanding.

Effective communication happens when the message is encoded, sent, decoded, and confirmed through feedback with minimum barriers and when both sender and receiver understand it in the same way.

1.6 Types of Communication

Communication is the process of sharing information, ideas and feelings between two or more people to create understanding. It can be done in different ways, using words, actions, symbols, or technology. In ordinary life and in professional spaces, people use several basic types of communication: formal, informal, verbal, and non-verbal communication. Formal and informal communication refer to the structure and style of interaction (official vs. casual), whereas verbal and non-verbal communication refer to the medium used to send the message (using words vs. using body cues).

1.6.1 Formal communication

Formal communication is the official exchange of information and messages within an organization that follows pre-defined rules, channels,

and a recognized chain of command. It uses professional language and is typically documented for future reference. It is used in organizations for things like notices, reports, meetings, and office correspondence. Common formal channels include downward, upward, horizontal, and diagonal communication.

Key Characteristics

Official channels: Follows organizational hierarchy and exact structural routes rather than casual networks.

Professional tone: Language is polite, clear, and often written in standard/formal style. Uses correct grammar, avoids slang, and stays objective.

Recorded and tracked: Leaves a reliable paper trail like emails, reports, or memos.

Purpose-driven: Focuses strictly on work tasks, policies, and goals

Examples: circulars, office orders, written notices, official emails, meeting minutes, reports, staff meetings

Directions/flows of Formal Communication

1. Downward: The flow of information from superiors to subordinates. In organizations, it is when communication originates from higher-level management down to lower-level employees through the official chain of command. It is used to assign tasks, share company policies, give performance feedback, and explain strategic goals.

Examples:

- Principal's instructions to teachers, teacher's instructions to students
- Bosses send orders or rules down to workers.

2. Upward: The movement of information from lower levels of a hierarchy to the upper levels. In organizations, it is the structure flow of information from lower-level employees to upper management or supervisors. It uses official company channels to share feedback, reports, and concerns, helping leaders understand daily operations and employee needs.

Example:

- Student's application to class teacher/principal, teacher's report to HOD
- Workers share project updates and task completion stats with managers.

- Staffs submit formal complaints about workplace issues through HR channels.

3. Horizontal (Lateral): The sharing of information between people at the same level. It is the structured exchange of information, ideas, or requests between employees, peers, or departments at the same hierarchical level within an organization. It helps teams coordinate tasks, solve shared problems, and align workflows without going through upper management

Example:

- Communication between two teachers, or between two classmates working on a project
- A marketing manager and a sales manager meeting to plan a product launch.
- An IT specialist emailing the human resources department about system updates.

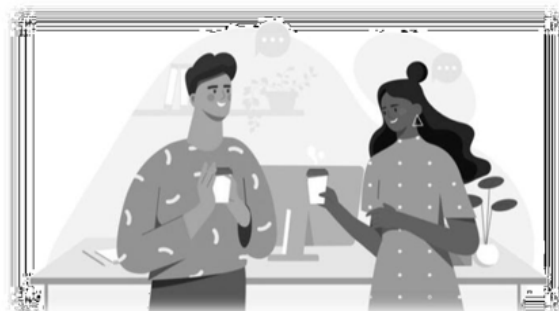
4. Diagonal: It is the official exchange of information between people who work in different departments and hold different levels of rank in an organization. It skips the standard up-and-down chain of command to speed up work.

Example:

- Lab assistant communicating directly with a senior administrator in another department
- A support staff worker sending a data report straight to a vice president of another department

1.6.2. Informal Communication

Informal communication happens outside official channels. It is casual, spontaneous, and often happens between friends, classmates, or colleagues during everyday conversation. In organizations, it is sometimes called the grapevine.



Key Characteristics

- Arises from personal relationships and social needs
- Flexible, fast, and usually oral (face-to-face or via calls/messages)
- Language can be casual, with slang or regional words

Examples:

- Chatting in the staff room, corridor conversations
- Students talking during breaks or in WhatsApp groups
- Colleagues sharing news over lunch

Patterns of Grapevine Communication

- Single strand: A tells B, B tells C, C tells D
- Gossip: One person tells many others
- Cluster: A tells a small group; each tells a few more

Basis	Formal Communication	Informal Communication
Another name	Official communication	Grapevine communication
Channel	Defined by organization	Social networks, friendships
Reliability	More reliable, recorded	May be inaccurate, often not recorded
Speed	Slower	Faster
Advantage	Effective due to timely and systematic flow of information.	Efficient because employees can discuss work related problems, this saves time and cost of the organization.
Disadvantage	Distortion due to long chain of communication.	Spread of rumours
Flow of Information	Only through predefined channels.	Can move freely
Examples	Notices, circulars, official emails	Friendly chats, corridor talk, WhatsApp gossip

1.6.3 Verbal Communication

Verbal communication uses words (spoken or written) to share information, ideas, thoughts, and feelings between people, either by speaking or writing. It is usually direct, clear, and can be recorded or repeated. It includes everyday conversations, classroom teaching, discussions, meetings, interviews, speeches, phone calls, video calls, as well as written forms like letters, emails, notices, reports, and text messages. In verbal communication, the choice of words, clarity of expression, and the structure of sentences are very important because they decide how clearly the message is understood. It is usually a two-way process, where one person sends the message and the other receives it, responds, and gives feedback, which helps both sides to check understanding and correct mistakes if needed. Effective verbal communication depends not only on what is said but also on how it is said. Because it is direct and flexible, verbal communication is the most commonly used form of communication in personal, educational, and professional settings.

Types of Verbal Communication

Verbal Communication can be classified into four primary types based on the number of people involved and the setting. They are intrapersonal, interpersonal, small group, and public communication.

1. **Intrapersonal Communication:** It is talking to yourself in your own mind. It is your inner voice, self-talk, or silent thoughts. It is the inner dialogue or self-reflection you use to process thoughts, manage emotions, and make choices.
2. **Interpersonal Communication:** A direct, one-on-one conversation between two people such as a phone-call or chat with a friend.
3. **Small Group Communication:** Communication that happens when three or more people talk together in a group. Examples include team meetings or group projects.
4. **Public Communication:** When one person speaks to a large group or crowd. Examples include giving a speech or a lecture for a large live audience.

Verbal communication has three main forms:

1. **Oral Communication (spoken words)**
2. **Written Communication (printed or typed text).**

3. Visual and Audio Visual Communication (pictures or videos)

1. Oral Communication

Oral communication is the sharing of ideas, thoughts, and information through spoken words. This type of communication lets people get fast feedback, show emotion through tone of voice, and build quick trust.

Key Types

1. **Face-to-face:** Direct chats between two or more people.
2. **Group discussions:** Team meetings or small project talks.
3. **Public speaking:** Speeches and large presentations.
4. **Telecommunication:** Phone calls and video chats.

Examples:

- Classroom teaching, seminars, interviews, meetings, discussions
- Phone calls, video calls, teleconferences

Advantages of Oral Communication

- **Easy to understand:** Speaker and listener can ask and answer questions, so the message becomes clear and transparent.
- **Quick feedback:** The listener can respond immediately, so doubts are cleared on the spot.
- **Flexible:** The speaker can change words, tone, or examples according to the listener's reactions.
- **Saves time and effort:** Speaking is usually faster than writing long letters or reports, so it saves time and other resources.
- **Good for teamwork:** Group discussions and meetings help people share ideas, plan together, and solve problems.
- **Useful for confidential talk:** Sensitive or secret information can be shared directly, without leaving a written record.
- **Helps to solve conflicts quickly:** Face-to-face talk can remove misunderstandings and settle disputes faster.
- **More natural and encouraging:** The speaker's facial expressions, voice, and body language make the message more friendly and motivating.

Disadvantages of Oral Communication

- **No permanent record:** Normally, spoken words are not written down, so there is no proof and nothing to check later. This gives oral messages little or no legal value.
- **Easy to forget:** People may not remember everything they heard, especially if the message is long or detailed. Important points can be missed or confused.
- **Chances of misunderstanding:** If the speaker is not clear, or the listener is distracted, the message can be misunderstood. Noise and different accents can also create confusion.
- **Not suitable for long or complex information:** Very detailed or technical information is hard to explain only by speaking. Without written notes or visuals, listeners may not follow everything.
- **No fixed responsibility:** Because nothing is written, it is hard to fix responsibility if someone denies what was said or if there is a mistake in the message.
- **Can be affected by emotions:** If the speaker is angry, excited, or nervous, the message may not be organized or polite. Emotions can make the message confusing or harsh.
- **Limited reach:** Usually, oral communication needs people to be present at the same time (face-to-face or on call). It is not always good for reaching many people in different places or time zones.

2. Written communication

Written communication is the process of sharing messages, ideas, or facts using written words. It includes physical formats like letters and memos, as well as digital tools like emails, text messages, and reports, serving as a lasting record for clear business and personal interactions.

Key Elements of Good Writing

- **Clarity:** Use simple words so readers understand your main point fast.
- **Conciseness:** Cut out extra words and focus only on the facts.
- **Correctness:** Check your spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- **Tone:** Match your style to your audience, keeping it polite and professional at work.

Common Types

1. Emails and Memos: Quick, everyday updates for teams or clients.
2. Reports and Proposals: Deep looks into data or new business plans.
3. Contracts and Policies: Formal legal texts that set rules and duties

Examples:

- Letters, emails, circulars, notices, reports, minutes of meeting
- Text messages, WhatsApp/email, official documents

Advantages of Written Communication

- Permanent record: Written messages can be kept and stored, so they can be used as proof or reference in the future.
- Can be edited and corrected: The sender can write, check, and rewrite the message to remove errors before sending it.
- Sender and receiver need not meet: The message can be sent even if the sender and receiver are in different places or free at different times (for example, emails, letters, SMS).
- Good for complex matters: Difficult or detailed information (rules, procedures, data, reports) can be explained clearly in writing.
- Less chance of misunderstanding: As the message is written clearly and can be read again, there are fewer chances of confusion or forgetting.
- Can reach many people: One written message (like a circular, notice, or email) can be sent to many people at the same time.

Disadvantages of Written Communication

- Takes more time: Writing, checking, and sending a message usually takes more time than simply speaking.
- Needs good language skills: If the sender is weak in the language, it becomes difficult to write the message clearly.
- Poor writing gives poor impression: If the message has grammar mistakes, wrong spelling, or bad layout, it creates a poor image of the writer.
- Slow feedback: The receiver may read the message later, so feedback is not instant like in face-to-face talk or phone calls.

- Less personal touch: Written messages usually feel formal and impersonal. They do not show feelings and tone as naturally as face-to-face conversation.

Aspect	Oral Communication	Written Communication
Speed	Very fast	Slower
Record	Usually no permanent record	Permanent record available
Feedback	Immediate	Delayed
Use	Meetings, calls, interviews	Notices, reports, official correspondence

3. Visual and Audio Visual Communication

It is said that a picture is worth a thousand words. The human brain decodes visual data in a fraction of a second. In visual communication, information is shared mainly through pictures and other visual aids, not through spoken or written sentences alone. It uses visual aids like charts, graphs, diagrams, maps, posters, symbols, logos, photos, and slides to make the message easier to see and understand. For example, a bar graph showing exam results, a road sign showing “No U-turn”, a poster on “Save Water”, or a school timetable chart on the wall are all visual communication. Visuals help to simplify complex data, attract attention, and make messages more memorable, especially for large groups or when language skills are weak.

Audio-visual communication combines sound and visuals together. Here, people receive the message through both their ears and eyes at the same time. Common examples are educational videos, television programmes, films, PowerPoint presentations with narration, and online video lessons. Because audio-visual communication uses both picture and sound, it is usually more interesting, clearer, and easier to remember than only audio or only text, so it is widely used in teaching, training, and mass communication.

1.6.4. Non-Verbal Communication

Non-verbal communication does not use words but still carries powerful messages. It includes facial expressions, gestures, body posture, eye contact, touch, use of physical space, appearance, and even the tone, pitch, and speed of the voice. A smile, a frown, crossed arms, a firm handshake, or avoiding eye contact can communicate attitudes and emotions without a single word being spoken. Non-verbal signals can

support verbal communication, making the message stronger and more expressive, or they can contradict it, such as when someone says “I’m fine” but looks upset. Effective communicators pay attention both to what is said and to how it is said through these non-verbal cues.

Types of Non-Verbal Communication



1. **Kinesics** – Kinesics is the study of the movement of body parts. It is popularly referred to as body language. It includes:
 - Facial expressions: smiling, frowning, raised eyebrows
 - Gestures: hand movements, nodding, pointing
 - Posture: standing straight, slouching, leaning forward
2. **Oculesics** – A subcategory of kinesics, is the study of eye movement, eye behaviour, gaze, and eye-related non-verbal communication. The eye contact draws the attention of listeners. It connects the speaker and the listener.
 - Looking directly at someone shows interest, attention, or confidence
 - Avoiding eye contact may show shyness, discomfort, or dishonesty (but also cultural differences)
3. **Haptics** – It is the study of human touch and its implication in communication. Touch is the most refined and intimate of the five senses.
 - Handshakes, pats on the back, a gentle tap on the shoulder
 - Can express warmth, support, or authority depending on context
4. **Proxemics** – It is defined as the study of space and spatial distance.
 - Personal space; how close we stand to others
 - Too close can feel threatening; too far can feel distant
5. **Paralanguage** – It refers to the voice effects that accompany speech and

can convey emotions, feelings and attitude.

- Tone, pitch, volume, speed, pauses
- The same sentence can sound polite, angry, or sarcastic depending on tone

6. Appearance and artifacts

- Clothing, hairstyle, accessories, cleanliness
- The physical setting: furniture, colours, layout of the room

7. Silence

Silence may look like “nothing”, but it can also communicate meaning. Silence is a way of communicating without words, sound, or visible signals, and it often shows a person’s feelings or attitude. For example, a student who has not done homework may stay silent when the teacher asks about it. A whole class becoming silent when the principal enters can show respect. Sometimes silence can mean agreement (quietly accepting a decision), disagreement (refusing to respond), anger, fear, or shock, depending on the situation. Silence can give time to think, avoid conflict, or prevent a person from saying something rude. So, even when no one is speaking, silence itself can send a strong message about relationships and emotions.

Self-Assessment Questions

Question 1: Identify the type (formal/informal, verbal/non-verbal, or both)

Write the type of communication for each:

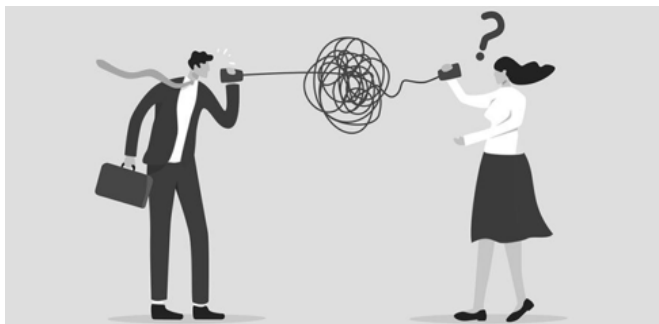
1. The principal issues a circular about exam dates.
2. Two friends chat casually on WhatsApp after school.
3. A teacher gives instructions to the class during assembly.
4. A formal email sent to apply for a job.
5. A student nods head to show “yes” without speaking.
6. Colleagues gossip about a new rule during lunch break.

Question 2: Match the following

Column A	Column B
A) Verbal communication	1. Body language and facial expressions

B) Non-verbal communication	2. Official notice from the office
C) Formal communication	3. Friendly talk with a neighbour
D) Informal communication	4. Use of spoken or written words

1.7 Barriers to Effective Communication



Barriers to communication are obstacles that stop a message from being sent, received, or understood in the right way between sender and receiver. When these barriers are present, the meaning gets distorted, delayed, or completely blocked, leading to confusion and misunderstanding in personal, educational, and workplace situations. These obstacles can be generally categorized as follows: physical, psychological/emotional, language or semantic, cultural, organizational, and technological barriers.

Types of Communication Barriers

1. Physical (or Environmental) barriers: Physical barriers are obstacles in the surroundings that interfere with communication. As a result, the message cannot be heard or seen clearly, so parts of it are missed or misheard.

Examples:

- Loud noise from traffic, construction, or crowds during a conversation
- Long distance between speaker and listener
- Poor seating arrangement in a classroom where some students cannot see or hear
- Poor lighting, closed doors, faulty microphones, low network in online class

2. Psychological/Emotional barriers: Psychological/Emotional barriers arise from the mental and emotional state of the sender or receiver. As a consequence, the person may not listen to the message properly, may become defensive, or misinterpret a simple message as an attack.

Examples:

- Stress, anger, fear, anxiety, low self-confidence
- Prejudices or negative attitude towards a person or group
- Feeling that “teacher will not listen” or “boss is always unfair”

3. Language and Semantic barriers: Language barriers occur when people do not share the same language or vocabulary. Semantic barriers occur when the same words mean different things to different people. The words are heard or read, but the meaning understood is different from what the sender intended.

Examples:

- Use of difficult vocabulary, jargon, technical terms, abbreviations
- Different meanings of the same word (e.g., “bimonthly”, “issue”, “charge”)
- Grammatical mistakes or poorly structured sentences that confuse the listener

4. Cultural barriers: Cultural barriers arise due to differences in values, beliefs, customs, and social norms. Behaviours which are considered standard or ordinary in one culture may appear rude, strange or offensive in another culture. This can lead to misunderstanding.

Examples:

- Different ideas about eye contact, gestures, touching, or personal space
- Different ways of showing respect (using titles, standing up, dress codes)
- Different attitudes towards time, punctuality, or directness in speech

5. Organizational barriers: Organizational barriers appear due to the structure, rules, or communication system of an institution. Important information flows slowly in the organisational structure or is changed; people at different levels of the hierarchy do not have the same understanding of the message.

Examples:

- Too many levels in the hierarchy; messages distorted as they pass through many people

- Lack of clear channels: employees not sure whom to report to or ask
- Rigid rules, complicated procedures, or poor feedback system

6. Technological barriers: Technological barriers are problems related to tools and technology used for communication. It occurs when messages are not delivered on time because of faulty network, audio/video fails, or people cannot join or participate properly.

Examples:

- Poor internet connection during online classes or meetings
- Outdated or incompatible software, faulty devices, no access to required tools
- Lack of digital literacy (people do not know how to use email, LMS, video-conferencing)

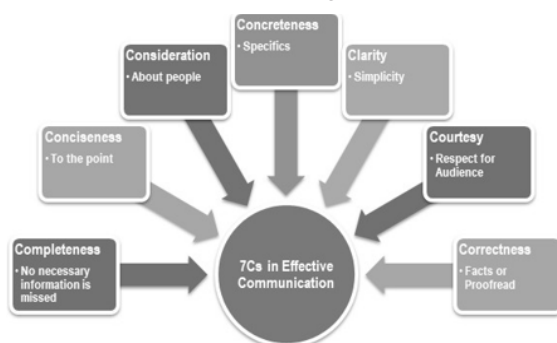
Self-Assessment Questions

Question 3: Fill in the blanks

1. Loud noise and long distance are examples of barriers.
2. Fear, anger, and prejudice are examples of.....barriers.
3. When people use difficult words and jargon, it creates.....barriers.
4. Differences in customs and values between people from different countries can cause.....barriers.
5. Complicated rules and too many levels in an office lead to..... barriers.

1.8 7 C's for Effective Communication

The 7 C's of effective communication are Clarity, Conciseness, Concrete, Correctness, Consideration, Completeness, and Courtesy. It ensures that your messages are understood clearly, professional, and impactful. By following these principles, one can save time, build trust, avoid miscommunications and misunderstanding, strengthen relationships in both personal and professional settings.



1. Clarity

Clarity means making your message easy to understand by using simple words, focusing on one main idea, and removing confusing details. For the message to be clear, one must avoid vague ideas, pompous words and confusing sentences. The receiver should know exactly what you want to say. For example, instead of saying, “We need to optimize our output parameters down the line”, make it clear and say, “We need to finish this report by Friday.” Here the purpose, task, and time are all easy to understand.

2. Conciseness

It means conveying a message using the fewest possible words without sacrificing clarity or completeness. To be concise, avoid unnecessary repetition and “filler” words. This saves time and keeps attention on the main point. Remove unneeded phrases like “actually,” “you know,” or “due to the fact that.” For example, instead of saying, “I am writing this email to let you know that, in my opinion, we should probably cancel the meeting”, make it concise and say, “We should cancel the meeting.” Focus only on what the reader or listener needs to know right now.

3. Concreteness

Concrete communication gives clear examples, numbers, or details so the listener can imagine or verify what you mean. To achieve concreteness, use specific, definite, and vivid facts instead of vague or general statements. For example, instead of saying, “Our sales numbers went up a lot recently”, make it concrete and say, “Our sales increased by 45% in July.”

4. Correctness

It means the facts, figures, and language should be accurate. Correctness starts with checking grammar, spelling, names, dates, and data. Mistakes can cause confusion and reduce your credibility. For example, instead of saying, “Their going to loose the project”, make it correct and say, “They are going to lose the project.”

5. Consideration

Being considerate in communication is thinking and considering the needs and perspectives of the recipient or audience. This aspect of communication expect the reaction of the recipient, change tone, and frame messages that match with the audience’s knowledge, needs and

interests. For example, instead of saying, “I need you to fix this mess so I can go home”, make it considerate and say, “Once we update these sections together, we can wrap up for the day.”

6. Completeness

It means giving all the information the receiver needs to understand and act. A complete message usually answers questions like who, what, when, where, why, and how (5W’s 1H), so no important detail is missing. Using exact facts, clear data, and real examples make the message complete. For example, instead of saying, “Meet me at the office later”, make it complete and say, “Meet me at the Seminar Hall at 3:00 PM today to discuss the budget.”

7. Courteous

To be courteous, the tone should be polite, respectful, and considerate of the receiver’s feelings and viewpoint. Avoid harsh or rude words; show empathy and goodwill, even when you disagree. For example, instead of saying, “Send me that file right now”, make it courteous and say, “Could you please send me that file by noon? Thank you!”

Self-Assessment Questions

Question 4: Fill in the blanks

1. When a message is easy to understand and uses simple words, it shows,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,, .
2. When a message is short but still gives all the important information, it shows..... and..... .
3. When a message is polite and respectful, it shows..... .
4. When a message uses exact numbers, dates, and examples, it shows
5. When a message is free from grammar and spelling mistakes, it shows
6. When a message keeps in mind the feelings and needs of the reader, it shows

Question 5: Identify the missing “C”

For each sentence, identify which one C is missing (Clarity, Correctness,

Conciseness, Courtesy, Concreteness, Consideration, and Completeness).

1. Send the work soon.
2. U better submit ur assignmnt 2day, ok???
3. As a matter of fact, I would like to inform you that, in my personal opinion, the meeting might possibly be held sometime next week.
4. Meeting tomorrow.
5. You people never do anything properly.
6. We sold many items last month.

1.9 Art of Mastering Effective Communication

1. Listen Actively

Most people think that communication is just talking, but real mastery starts with listening. Listening actively involves fully focusing, understanding, and responding to the speaker giving your undivided attention. There are some techniques the listener can utilise to listen actively.

- ✓ **Give full attention:** put away your phone, make eye contact, don't interrupt and block out any internal or external distractions
- ✓ **Show you're listening:** Nod, smile, lean in, say "hmm", "I see", or briefly repeat key points in your own words.
- ✓ **Clarify instead of assuming:** Restate the message in your own word to verify your comprehension. For example, ask questions like, "Do you mean...?", "So, what you're saying is...?"

2. Be Clear and Concise

Clear, simple language is stronger than complicated, "impressive" language. Sharing the main point and cutting the extra fluff can save time and stop people from getting confused. There are some core strategies to make your message clear and concise. They are:

- ✓ **Lead with the main point:** Say the important idea first, and then provide the supporting details. Do not hide the main goal at the end.
- ✓ **Use simple words:** Choose everyday, ordinary language. Avoid using hard industry words or technical jargons. Drop filler words like "um" and "like".
- ✓ **Keep sentences short:** Use short sentences and speak in

bite-sized chunks. Break long thoughts into tiny parts. Avoid long introductions like “I just wanted to say that maybe...”, go straight to the point: “I’d like to ask about...”.

3. Use Non-Verbal Cues and Tone Wisely

How you say something often matters more than the exact words. Aligning your body language, facial expressions, and voice with your actual words is required to achieve effective communication. When the non-verbal cues match with your message, you earn trust, build confidence and avoid miscommunication and misunderstandings.

- ✓ **Body language:** open posture, steady eye-contact, friendly facial expression, appropriate distance.
- ✓ **Voice:** moderate speed, clear pronunciation, not too loud or too soft, and vary your pitch to avoid flat, monotonous delivery.
- ✓ **Match words and body:** saying “I’m happy to help” with a bored face confuses the listener.

4. Show Empathy and Respect

Good communicators don’t only push their own point; they also understand the other person. They focus fully on the speaker and share the message with deep empathy and mutual respect. They listen to understand feelings, honour diverse worldviews, and validate personal dignity.

- ✓ **Use “I” statements:** “I felt that...” instead of “You always...”.
- ✓ **Emotional Validation:** Acknowledge feelings aloud. Say things like, “I understand you’re worried about...”
- ✓ **Respectful boundaries:** Respect the personal space of the speaker, understand diverse backgrounds and keep your tone warm.

5. Keep Practising and Seeking Feedback

Communication is a skill, not a one-time lesson. It grows stronger through steady practice and honest feedback. By testing new habits and learning how others respond can help you in improving your communication skills.

- ✓ **Openness to Feedback:** Be open to feedback and correction without becoming defensive. Request honest opinions from

trusted friends and co-workers.

- ✓ Make Changes: Apply the lessons you have learned to your next message or talk.

1.10 Let us Sum up

In this unit, we learned that **communication** is a two-way process of sharing ideas, information, and feelings between a sender and a receiver to create understanding. Good communication depends on clear messages, careful listening, and suitable channels (face-to-face, phone, writing, online, etc.).

We studied different **types and forms of communication**. Verbal communication uses words, and can be oral (speeches, conversations, phone calls, presentations) or written (letters, emails, notices, reports). **Non-verbal communication** uses body language, facial expressions, eye contact, gestures, space, touch, appearance, and even silence. We also saw visual and audio-visual communication, which use pictures, charts, videos, and other media to make messages clear and attractive. Communication can be **formal** (official, structured, through proper channels) or **informal** (casual, personal, flexible).

We discussed **oral and written communication** in detail. Oral communication is fast, flexible, gives quick feedback, and shows tone and body language, but it leaves no permanent record and can be easily forgotten or misunderstood. Written communication gives a permanent record, is better for complex information, and can reach many people, but it is slower, needs good language skills, and feedback is not immediate.

We also learned about barriers to communication or factors that block or disturb the smooth flow of messages. These include physical barriers (noise, distance), psychological or emotional barriers (fear, prejudice, stress), language and semantic barriers (jargon, difficult words, different meanings), cultural barriers (different customs and values), organizational barriers (too many levels, unclear channels), and technological barriers (poor internet, faulty devices). Knowing these barriers helps us reduce misunderstanding.

Finally, we studied the **7 C's of effective communication** namely Clarity, Correctness, Conciseness, Courtesy, Concreteness, Consideration, and Completeness. These principles guide us to choose simple and correct words, be polite, give enough information, stay specific, and think about

the listener's needs. We also looked at the art of mastering communication by using positive words, appropriate tone and speed, controlled emotions, and suitable body language.

By applying what we have learned in this unit, we can become clearer speakers, better listeners, and more confident communicators.

1.11 Keywords

Communication: The dynamic process of sending, receiving and sharing information, ideas, opinions or feelings between people or groups.

Communication skills: Ability to speak, listen, read, and write clearly and politely.

Sender: Person who starts the communication by creating a message.

Receiver: Person who gets the message and responds to it.

Message: Information, idea, opinion or feeling that is sent.

Channel/Medium: Way the message is sent (talk, phone, email, letter, video, etc.).

Encoding: Changing ideas into words, symbols, or pictures.

Decoding: Understanding the meaning of the message received.

Feedback: Reply or reaction of the receiver to the sender.

Noise/Barriers: Anything that blocks, changes, or confuses the message.

Formal communication: Official, structured communication through proper channels. **Informal communication:** Personal, casual communication between friends or colleagues. **Verbal communication:** Communication using words (spoken or written).

Oral communication: Communication by speaking (face-to-face, phone, meetings).

Written communication: Communication by writing (letters, emails, notices, reports).

Non-verbal communication: Communication without words; through body language, facial expressions, eye contact, etc.

Visual communication: Communication using pictures, charts, graphs, posters, signs, and symbols.

Audio-visual communication: Communication using both sound and visuals (films, TV, videos, PPT with sound).

Silence (as communication): Absence of speech that still sends a message (agreement, anger, respect, etc.).

Clarity: Using simple, clear language that is easy to understand.

Correctness: Message free from grammar, spelling, and factual errors.

Conciseness: Saying what is needed in few, exact words.

Courtesy: Being polite and respectful in communication.

Concreteness: Using specific facts, figures, and examples.

Consideration: Thinking about the reader's or listener's needs and feelings.

Completeness: Giving all important information (answering what, when, where, who, why, how).

1.12 Answers to Self-Assessment Questions

Question 1:

1. Formal, written, verbal communication
2. Informal, written, verbal communication
3. Formal, oral, verbal communication
4. Formal, written, verbal communication
5. Informal, non-verbal communication
6. Informal, oral, verbal communication

Question 2:

A – 4, B – 1, C – 2, D – 3.

Question 3:

1. Physical
2. Psychological (or Emotional)
3. Language or Semantic barriers
4. Cultural barriers
5. Organizational

Question 4

1 – Clarity, 2 – Conciseness and Completeness, 3 – Courtesy, 4 – Concreteness, 5 – Correctness, 6 – Consideration

Question 5

1 – Concreteness/Completeness, 2 – Correctness/Courtesy, 3 – Conciseness, 4 – Completeness, 5 – Courtesy/Consideration, 6 – Concreteness

1.13 Check Your Progress

1. In the basic communication process, which component is primarily responsible for converting ideas into a message that can be transmitted?
 - A. Receiver
 - B. Channel
 - C. Encoder (Sender)
 - D. Feedback
2. Which of the following best illustrates the principle of “Completeness” among the 7 Cs of effective communication?
 - A. Providing all necessary facts, explanations, and context so the receiver can act appropriately
 - B. Using complex vocabulary to show expertise and impress the audience
 - C. Focusing only on emotional appeal and ignoring factual information
 - D. Sending a brief message to save time, even if some details are missing
3. Which statement best differentiates oral communication from written communication in a business context?
 - A. Oral communication is always more formal than written communication
 - B. Oral communication is only used for informal conversations, and written communication is only used for formal documents
 - C. Written communication never needs planning, while oral communication always requires extensive preparation
 - D. Oral communication allows immediate feedback and is often more flexible, while written communication creates a permanent record and is better for complex, detailed information
4. Which of the following situations best demonstrates “noise” or barriers in the communication process?
 - A. A client misinterpreting a message because of technical jargon they do not understand
 - B. A manager sending a clear, well-structured email that everyone understands
 - C. Two colleagues discussing a project face-to-face in a quiet meeting room

- D. A speaker using simple language and checking for understanding throughout the presentation
- 5. Which principle of the 7 Cs is being neglected when a message contains vague phrases like “as soon as possible” or “do the needful” without specific instructions?
 - A. Courtesy
 - B. Correctness
 - C. Concreteness
 - D. Conciseness
- 6. In the communication process, what is the primary function of “feedback”?
 - A. To act as the physical medium carrying the message
 - B. To indicate whether the receiver has understood and how they respond
 - C. To eliminate all barriers from the communication
 - D. To encode the original message
- 7. Which of the following best reflects the “Courtesy” principle among the 7 Cs of effective communication?
 - A. Using respectful language, showing consideration for the receiver’s feelings, and avoiding insulting or biased expressions
 - B. Focusing only on grammatical perfection and spelling accuracy
 - C. Writing in a strict, commanding tone to ensure compliance
 - D. Eliminating all descriptive words to make the message as short as possible
- 8. Which example best demonstrates “Clarity” in communication?
 - A. “Do the thing we discussed before”
 - B. “Please submit the revised marketing report, including updated sales figures from January to March, by 5 PM on Thursday”
 - C. “Fix the document and send it fast”
 - D. “We might consider some changes soon”
- 9. Which of the following is an example of a psychological barrier to effective communication?
 - A. A noisy construction site making it hard to hear the speaker

- B. Different native languages between sender and receiver causing misunderstanding
 - C. A receiver who is angry and therefore interprets a neutral message as hostile
 - D. A poor internet connection causing a video call to drop repeatedly
10. In a team meeting, the leader speaks very fast, uses complex terminology, and does not invite questions. Which barrier to communication is most evident in this scenario?
- A. Physical barrier
 - B. Organizational barrier
 - C. Technological barrier
 - D. Semantic (language) barrier

Answer Key

1 – C, 2 – A, 3 – D, 4 – A, 5 – C, 6 – B, 7 – A, 8 – B, 9 – C, 10 – D

2.14 References

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Notes

UNIT – II

Lesson 2.1 - Listening Skills

2.1 Introduction

Listening is the most frequently used communication skill, yet it is often the least consciously developed. It is the ability to receive, understand, and interpret messages in the communication process. Effective listening helps learners understand content, build relationships, and respond appropriately in academic, professional, and everyday situations. The importance of listening has increased manifold especially in this age of screen time, digital distractions, and short attention span.

This unit on Listening Skills aims to make learners aware of how listening works, why it matters, and how they can improve it through focused practice. It highlights how good listening supports learning, reduces misunderstandings, and enhances teamwork and problem-solving. Learners will see that listening is not a passive activity; it is an active process that involves attention, interpretation, and evaluation of what is heard. Learners will also study the different types of listening, such as active listening, passive listening, critical listening, empathetic listening, and informational listening, each used for different purposes. The unit also addresses the barriers to listening, including physical distractions, emotional reactions, prejudices, and lack of concentration that prevent messages from being received accurately. Finally, the unit also discusses the importance of developing note-taking skills to effectively listen to spoken texts such as lectures, talks, or discussions and converting key ideas into clear, concise notes.

2.2 Learning Objectives

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Understand the importance of effective listening for academic success, professional communication, and interpersonal relationships.
- Identify and recognise the major types of listening and apply appropriate types in different real-life situations.

- Recognise and overcome the common physical, psychological, and linguistic barriers to effective listening.
- Listen to short talks, lectures, or discussions and produce well-organized notes that capture main ideas and key supporting details accurately

2.3 Definition of Listening

Listening is something we do all the time in daily life. We listen when we talk with friends and family, when we watch the news on TV, when we enjoy music, and in many other situations. Listening is not just hearing sounds; it is an active skill where we pay attention and try to understand the message. When we listen carefully, we focus on the speaker's words, ideas, and feelings so that we can clearly understand what they mean.

Communication experts describe listening as an active process. The International Listening Association defines listening as “the active process of receiving, constructing meaning from, and responding to spoken and/or non-verbal messages.” It means listening involves receiving messages (both spoken and nonverbal), making meaning from them, and then responding to them. Michael Purdy (1997) considered listening as “an active process through which listeners attend to, perceive, interpret, remember, and provide feedback on sounds and messages.” In simple terms, listening is the ability to understand what others are saying.

Listening is of utmost importance to all effective communication. To become better listeners, it is helpful to remember three important points. First, listening is a skill that can be learned and improved with practice, just like speaking, reading, or writing. Second, listening is an active process that uses both mind and body and involves both words (verbal messages) and actions such as facial expressions, gestures, tone of voice, and body language (nonverbal messages). Third, good listening helps us to be open and responsive to other people's needs, feelings, and ideas, as well as to what is happening around us, so that we can build better relationships and make wiser decisions.

2.3.1 Importance of Listening

Listening is a key language skill and the foundation of effective communication. It is more than just hearing sounds; it is an active process of receiving, understanding, interpreting, and responding to spoken messages. When learners listen attentively, they connect new information with what they already know, which strengthens comprehension and memory.

In an academic context, good listening helps students follow lectures, instructions, and discussions accurately. It reduces misunderstandings, improves classroom participation, and supports better performance in examinations and presentations. In everyday life and the workplace, effective listening builds trust, shows respect, and helps maintain healthy relationships by allowing people to understand others' ideas, emotions, and needs.

Listening also supports the development of other language skills. As learners listen carefully, they unconsciously notice the speaker's accent and pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, sentence patterns, and discourse markers, which enhance their speaking, reading, and writing. Thus, listening is not a passive or secondary skill; it is central to learning, critical thinking, and successful communication in all areas of life.

2.3.2 Listening vs. Hearing

In everyday language, people often use the words hearing and listening as if they mean the same thing. However, in communication skills, they are quite different.

Every day we hear a lot of sounds, but we may not listen to them. Imagine that you are sitting in a classroom and a scooter passes outside on the road. You notice the horn. You did not try to pay attention to it, but you still heard the sound. Or consider that you are studying in your room and your neighbour is playing loud music. Even if you are not interested in the song, you still hear it. In these cases, your ears receive the sound, but your mind may not be actively focusing on it. You are not paying attention to the sound or concentrating on what you hear. Thus, hearing is the natural, physical process of receiving sound. It happens automatically when our ears and auditory system are working. It does not need effort, attention, or concentration.

In contrast, listening is more than just hearing. For instance, your teacher is explaining an important concept for the exam. You look at the teacher, stay focused, think about what is being said, and maybe write down notes. Here, you are listening, not just hearing. Consider another situation in which your friend is telling you about a problem at home. You keep your phone aside, maintain eye contact, nod your head, ask questions, and try to understand how they feel. This is careful, empathetic listening. Therefore, listening is an active process in which you pay attention to the sounds, try to understand the meaning, and often respond. It needs concentration and

mental effort. It involves both the ears and the brain, and sometimes the eyes (to notice facial expressions and body language).

Hearing is passive, but listening is active. Hearing happens without any effort; as long as your ears work, you will hear many sounds around you. Listening, on the other hand, requires you to make a choice. You decide to focus on a particular sound or speaker, think about what is being said, and often give some kind of response.

Hearing is just about sound entering the ears, but listening is about understanding. When you hear, you may not know or care what the sound means. When you listen, you try to understand the message, remember it, and sometimes act on it. For example, you might hear your teacher's voice, but you are truly listening only when you focus on the explanation and understand the content.

Hearing does not always lead to good communication, but listening does. If you only hear someone speaking, you might miss important information or misunderstand them. When you listen carefully, you can follow instructions correctly, answer questions properly, and show respect to others by giving them your full attention.

Hearing	Listening
The natural ability to receive sounds with the ears	The active process of paying attention to sounds and understanding them
Physical, automatic, and passive	Mental and physical, conscious, and active
No special effort or concentration needed	Requires focus, concentration, and interest
Can happen even when we are not truly aware of the sounds	We are aware and choose to pay attention
Involuntary – happens by itself when ears are working	Voluntary – we decide whom or what to listen to
To detect sound in the environment	To understand messages, ideas, and feelings
Just awareness of sound	Understanding, remembering, and often responding

2.3.3 The Process of Listening

The process of listening occurs in six stages. Each stage has a different focus, but they all work together to help us understand and remember what we hear. Let's look at your six stages one by one.

1. Hearing: This is the first and most basic stage. Hearing means that sound enters your ears. It is a physical process and happens automatically when your ears and hearing system are working. At this stage, you may not yet be paying full attention.

Example: You are in class and the teacher starts talking. You can hear the teacher's voice, the fan, and maybe students whispering. All these sounds reach your ears.

2. Understanding and Recognising: In this stage, you start to recognise the words and understand the basic meaning. Your brain identifies the language, the words, and the simple message.

Example: From the teacher's voice, you recognise that she is saying, "Tomorrow there will be a test on Unit 3." You understand that "test" and "Unit 3" are important.

3. Interpreting: Interpreting means going deeper into the meaning. You connect what you hear with your previous knowledge, feelings, and the situation. You think: What does this mean for me?

Example: When you hear about the test, you interpret the message: "I need to revise Unit 3 today," or "This test will affect my marks."

4. Evaluating: In this stage, you judge or assess the message. You think about whether the information is important, correct, fair, or relevant. You may also judge the speaker's ideas or attitude.

Example: You may evaluate: "This test is important because it is for internal marks," or "The teacher is right; we need practice," or even "I think the time given to prepare is too short."

5. Responding: Responding means giving feedback, either verbally or nonverbally. This shows the speaker that you have listened and understood (or that you did not).

Example: You may nod your head, write the test date in your notebook, and raise your hand to ask a question, or say, "Ma'am, can you repeat the portion for the test?" All these are responses.

6. Remembering: In the final stage, you store the important information in your memory so you can use it later. Good listeners use strategies (like note taking, repetition, and review) to remember better.

Example: You write the test details in your diary, revise Unit 3 in the evening, and recall the teacher's instructions when you sit for the test the next day. This shows that you have remembered the message.

2.3.4 Good Listening vs. Poor Listening

Good listening is an active, focused effort to understand the speaker's message and feelings. It usually includes:

- Giving full attention (eye contact, facing the speaker, reducing distractions)
- Being patient (not interrupting, allowing the speaker to finish)
- Showing interest (nodding, short verbal responses like "yes", "I see", "go on") Trying to understand both words and emotions
- Asking questions or paraphrasing to check understanding

Good listening tends to occur when:

- ✓ The listener respects or cares about the speaker
- ✓ The topic is important (exam instructions, safety rules, serious news)
- ✓ The listener is genuinely curious or involved
- ✓ The situation demands responsibility (doctor–patient, teacher–student, supervisor–employee)

Example: A student listens carefully while the teacher explains exam instructions. The student looks at the teacher, notes key points, and asks for clarification if something is unclear. This is good listening because the student is focused, responsible, and wants to understand correctly.

Poor listening is when the listener hears the sounds but does not really pay attention or try to understand. It often includes:

- Being easily distracted (phone, friends, daydreaming) Interrupting or finishing the speaker's sentences
- Pretending to listen (nodding while thinking of something else) Judging the speaker quickly instead of understanding
- Listening only for "facts" and missing the main idea or feelings

Poor listening often occurs when:

- ✓ The listener thinks the topic is boring or “not important”
- ✓ The listener is tired, stressed, or preoccupied
- ✓ The listener dislikes the speaker or has strong prejudices
- ✓ The environment is noisy or full of distractions
- ✓ The listener is more interested in replying than in understanding

Example: A friend is sharing a problem, but the listener keeps checking their phone, interrupts with their own stories, and gives advice without really understanding. Here, the listener is physically present but mentally absent. This is a clear case of poor listening.

Self-Assessment Questions

Question 1: Write each of the following behaviours under Good Listening or Poor Listening:

- silent concentration
- attention
- receptive body language
- restating the message
- questioning / clarifying
- empathy
- strategic pauses
- interrupting and finishing sentences
- communicating with someone else in the room
- correcting or undermining what was said
- inappropriate level of eye contact
- waiting impatiently for our chance to speak
- giving no non-verbal signals
- being non-evaluative
- paraphrasing
- reflecting implications
- inviting further contributions
- responding non-verbally

Good Listening	Poor Listening

Question 2: Spot Good and Poor Listening

Read each short situation. Decide whether it shows **Good Listening** or **Poor Listening**. Then, answer the following questions.

1. Situation A

The teacher is explaining an important topic. Riya keeps her notebook open, looks at the teacher, nods sometimes, and writes down key points. She asks one question to clarify a doubt.

- Is this good listening or poor listening?
- Underline what she does that shows this.

2. Situation B

Arjun is talking to his friend about a family problem. His friend keeps checking messages on the phone, looks around the room, and says, “Hmm... yeah...” without really paying attention.

- Is this good listening or poor listening?
- What should the friend change to become a better listener?

3. Situation C

The teacher asks a question in class. Before the teacher finishes, one student interrupts, answers quickly, and starts talking about something only loosely related to the question.

- Is this good listening or poor listening?
- Which poor listening habit do you notice here?

4. Situation D

In a group discussion, one student listens silently, then says, “So, if I understood correctly, you are saying that...,” and restates their friend’s main idea in their own words. They then ask, “Did I get it right?”

- Is this good listening or poor listening?
- Which good listening habits are shown in this situation?

2.4 Types of Listening

In everyday life, we do not always listen in the same way. The way we listen in class is different from how we listen to a friend's problem or to our favourite song. Each situation needs a different kind of listening.

To become good communicators, we need to recognise these different types of listening and know when to use them. Some types help us learn new information, some help us understand people's feelings, and others help us enjoy stories or music. Let's take a look at the different types of listening.

1. Active Listening

Active listening is the most important type of listening for students. It means really paying attention to the speaker, understanding the message, and responding in a thoughtful way.

What Active Listening looks like?

- Looking at the speaker and observing non-verbal cues
- Avoiding distractions (like phones or talking to friends)
- Asking simple, relevant questions
- Giving feedback with words (like "Yes", "I see") or body language (nodding, smiling)

Example: In class, when the teacher explains a new lesson, an active listener sits upright, looks at the teacher, listens carefully, takes notes, and asks a question if something is not clear.

2. Passive Listening

Passive listening happens when we hear the message but do not really get involved or respond much. We are not completely ignoring the sound, but we are not fully focused either.

Examples of Passive Listening

- Listening to announcements over the school speaker
- Hearing background music while studying
- Hearing people talk while not joining the conversation

Passive listening needs less effort. However, if students use only passive listening in class, they may miss important points and not remember the lesson well.

3. Critical Listening

Critical listening means listening carefully and then thinking about what we heard. We analyse the ideas, check if they make sense, and decide whether we agree or not.

Why Critical Listening is useful?

- It helps students think for themselves
- It allows them to judge whether information is true, fair, or useful
- It supports better decision-making

Example: During a debate or a speech, a student uses critical listening to examine the speaker's arguments and evidence before forming an opinion.

4. Empathetic Listening

Empathetic listening focuses on understanding the speaker's feelings and point of view. The aim is not to criticise or quickly give advice, but to show care and support.

Benefits of Empathetic Listening

- Builds trust and respect between friends
- Improves relationships with classmates and family
- Helps students become more emotionally aware and kind

Example: When a friend is upset and talks about a problem, an empathetic listener pays full attention, listens patiently, and responds gently, showing that they understand and care.

5. Informational Listening

Informational listening is used when we want to learn something new. The main goal is to understand and remember facts, steps, or explanations.

Examples of informational listening

- Listening to a teacher explain a new topic
- Following step-by-step instructions in a science experiment
- Listening to a story to understand what happened and why

Good informational listening helps students understand lessons clearly and perform better in tests and assignments.

6. Appreciative Listening

Appreciative listening happens when we listen for enjoyment or pleasure rather than for marks or evaluation. Here, the focus is on enjoying the sound, the story, or the experience.

Common situations

- Listening to stories or poems
- Enjoying music or songs
- Watching and listening to a play or performance

Appreciative listening helps students relax, use their imagination, and connect emotionally with what they hear.

Self-Assessment Questions

Question 3: Which Type of Listening Is This?

Read each situation carefully. Then decide which type of listening is shown in each of these situations. Explain in one sentence why you chose that type.

Situation 1

The teacher explains a new science concept. Meera sits straight, looks at the teacher, takes notes, and asks a question when she does not understand one part.

→ Type of listening:

→ Why:

Situation 2

Ravi is in the school bus. Music is playing, and he is looking out of the window, enjoying the song and feeling relaxed. He is not trying to learn anything from it.

→ Type of listening:

→ Why:

Situation 3

During a class debate, a student listens carefully to the speaker, checks if the arguments are logical, and thinks, “Do I agree with this? Is the evidence strong?”

→ Type of listening:

→ Why:

Situation 4

A friend is sad and sharing a personal problem. The listener keeps their phone aside, listens quietly, nods, and says, "I understand how you feel. That must be really difficult for you."

→ Type of listening:

→ Why:

Situation 5

The sports coach is giving step-by-step instructions for a drill. The student listens carefully to remember the order of actions and then follows them on the ground.

→ Type of listening:

→ Why:

Situation 6

In the morning assembly, the principal reads out several announcements. Most students hear them, but they don't focus much, and only remember a few points.

→ Type of listening:

→ Why:

2.5 Barriers of Listening

Even when we want to listen well, some problems can stop us from understanding properly. These problems are called barriers to listening. They can be psychological, emotional, linguistic, socio-cultural, physiological, or environmental.

1. Psychological Barriers: These barriers are related to our mind and thoughts.

- Inability to pay attention: Sometimes we cannot focus because we are not interested in the topic, or we have a closed mind and are not willing to listen.
- Preoccupation and tiredness: If we are tense, worried, or exhausted, our mind may wander, and we miss what the speaker is saying.
- Ego: When we feel that our own ideas are more important than the speaker's ideas, we do not listen sincerely.

2. Emotional Barriers: These barriers are related to our feelings and attitudes.

- Strong beliefs and opinions: If we have strong views about topics like religion, politics, gender, or business, we may reject what the speaker says without really listening.
- Fear and anxiety: Worry about problems at home or work, or about someone's health, can disturb our focus.
- Sadness or anger: Painful memories or anger towards a person can stop us from paying attention, especially if the speaker is our boss or someone we feel afraid to disagree with.

3. Linguistic (Semantic) Barriers: These barriers are related to language.

- Difficult words and phrases
- Very different accents
- Complex grammar
- Very fast speech
- Unclear pronunciation or a dull, monotonous voice
- Jargon or specialist technical language

When these appear, students may find it hard to understand the message clearly.

4. Socio-Cultural Barriers: These barriers come from differences in culture and social background.

- People from different cultures may use different accents, expressions, or ways of speaking.
- These differences can cause confusion or misunderstanding if listeners are not used to them or are not open-minded.

5. Physiological and Environmental Barriers: These barriers are related to the body and surroundings.

- Physiological: Hearing problems, illness, physical disability, tiredness, discomfort, or pain can reduce concentration.
- Environmental: Noisy surroundings, loud music, poor seating, heat, or other physical discomforts can distract listeners and disturb listening.

How Can We Overcome Listening Barriers?

Barriers are normal in any interaction, but good listeners try to notice them and reduce their effect. Here are some simple ways to improve listening:

1. Avoid physical distractions

Try to choose a quiet place, put away your phone, and sit comfortably so you can focus.

2. Empathise with the speaker

Try to understand how the speaker feels. This makes you more patient and open.

3. Try to see the speaker's point of view

Even if you disagree, listen first and try to understand their reasons.

4. Be calm while listening

Take a deep breath, relax your mind, and set aside worries so psychological barriers do not take over.

5. Listen and read actively

When listening to important lectures, take brief notes, underline key ideas, and review them later.

6. Be aware of cultural differences

Remember that people from different cultures may speak differently. Be respectful and open to new styles of communication.

7. Use positive body language

Sit with good posture, face the speaker, and maintain appropriate eye contact. Nodding and other positive signals show that you are listening and help you stay engaged.

You can also improve your listening by regularly listening to good English through TV, radio, online videos, and other audio-visual materials, paying attention to pronunciation, tone, and accent.

Self-Assessment Questions

Question 4: Read the short situations below and identify which barrier

appears in each.

Situation A: The teacher is explaining an important topic, but Rohan is very tired after sports practice. His eyes keep closing, and he cannot focus on what is being said.

➤ Barrier:

Situation B: The class is listening to a guest speaker from another country. The speaker uses many unfamiliar words and speaks very fast in English. Several students cannot follow the message.

➤ Barrier:

Situation C: A student strongly disagrees with the speaker's political views. As soon as the topic starts, the student decides, "This is wrong," and stops listening carefully.

➤ Barrier:

Situation D: Meena is worried about her grandmother who is in hospital. During the maths class, her mind keeps going back to her family, and she misses many points.

➤ Barrier:

Situation E: The classroom is next to a busy road. There is loud traffic noise and construction work outside. Students find it hard to hear the teacher clearly.

➤ Barrier:

Situation F: During a group discussion, one student thinks, "My ideas are better than everyone else's," and does not really listen when others are speaking.

➤ Barrier:

Question for Reflection: Which barrier to listening do I face most often in class, and what is one thing I can do to reduce it?

2.6 Listening and Note Taking

As students, you often listen to lectures, explanations, stories, and discussions. To remember and use this information later, you need to take good notes. Note-taking helps us:

- Follow the lecture more easily
- Remember the important points later
- Prepare answers for tests, assignments, and presentations

If notes are neat and clear, we can look at them after some days or weeks and still understand them well enough to write a paragraph or essay.

Why Note-Taking Helps Listening

When we take notes, we have to listen carefully to find out:

- What the main ideas are
- Which details are important
- How ideas are connected

This keeps our mind active and improves concentration. Instead of daydreaming, we listen with a purpose: “What should I write down?”

Features of Good Notes

Good notes are:

- Neat and easy to read: If notes are messy, even the student who wrote them may not want to look at them later.
- Organised: They show the main points and then the supporting details under each main point.
- Useful: They contain enough information (examples, keywords, and important terms) to help us revise and write longer texts later.
- Simple tips:
 - Do not try to write every word the teacher says. Do more listening than writing. Focus on key ideas.
 - Always write the date and topic at the top of your notes so you can find them easily later.
 - Leave wide margins and some space between points. This allows you to add extra information during or after the lecture.

How to Take Notes While Listening

1. Identify Main Points and Supporting Details

As you listen, try to separate:

- **Main points:** Big ideas or headings
- **Supporting details:** Examples, explanations, definitions, numbers

Teachers often give clues about what is important. They may:

- Repeat a point
- Write it on the board or show it on a slide
- Give a clear example

- Change their tone of voice (speak louder or slower)

When you notice these clues, mark that idea as important in your notes (for example: underline it or use a star).

2. Use Short Forms and Symbols

You should learn to condense your notes, so you can write quickly while listening. Use:

- **Short forms (abbreviations):**

- eg. = example
- dept = department
- max = maximum
- b/4 = before
- b/c = because

- **Symbols:**

- → for “leads to” or “results in”
- & for “and”
- = for “is” or “means”

You do not need to use full sentences. Write key words and phrases that will remind you of the idea later.

3. Organise Your Notes Clearly

You can use bullets, numbers, or simple headings:

- Write the **main point** as a heading.
- Under it, write **supporting points** with bullets or numbers.
- Use indentation (moving the line a little to the right) for details under each main point.

Example layout:

1. Main idea
 - Detail 1
 - Detail 2
 - Example

Example: Note-Making from a Short Passage

Benefits of Reading

Reading is one of the most useful habits for students. It helps them gain new knowledge, improve their language skills, and develop their imagination. When students read regularly, they learn new words and see how sentences are formed, which makes their speaking and writing better. Reading also helps them relax and reduce stress because it allows them to enter different worlds and forget their worries for a while. In addition, reading stories about different people and cultures helps students become more understanding and empathetic towards others.

Benefits of Reading

1. Reading = useful habit

- esp for students
- gives new knowledge
- Language improvement

2. Language Improvement

- new words (vocab)
- see sentence patterns
- better speaking & writing

3. Emotional benefits

- helps relax
- reduces stress
- escape into diff worlds

4. Understanding others

- stories about ppl & cultures
- builds empathy & understanding

Practising Listening and Note-Taking

To improve, students can:

2. Listen to short talks (in class, on TV, or online) and practise taking notes.
3. Compare notes with a friend to see what each person considered important.
4. Try turning their notes into a short paragraph to check if they captured the meaning correctly.

Regular practice will improve accent awareness, pronunciation, fluency, and understanding, and will make both listening and note-taking easier over time.

2.7 Let us Sum up

In this unit, we explored **listening skills** and their importance in everyday life and in the classroom. We learned that listening is not just hearing sounds; it is an active process of paying attention, understanding the message, and often responding to it. Good listening helps us learn better, build stronger relationships, and avoid misunderstandings.

We then looked at the **difference between hearing and listening**. Hearing is a natural, passive process where the ears receive sounds. Listening is active and intentional; it involves the ears, the brain, and often the eyes, and it aims at understanding and remembering what is said.

Next, we studied the **main types of listening**, such as active, passive, critical, empathetic, informational, and appreciative listening. Each type is used in different situations – for example, active and informational listening in class, critical listening in debates, empathetic listening with friends, and appreciative listening when we enjoy music or stories.

We also discussed various **barriers to listening**, including psychological, emotional, linguistic, socio-cultural, physiological, and environmental barriers. These barriers can disturb our concentration and reduce understanding. We learned some simple strategies to overcome them, such as avoiding distractions, being calm, empathising with the speaker, being open to different cultures, and using positive body language.

Finally, we saw how **listening and note-taking** work together. Good note-taking helps us focus during lectures and remember important points later. We learned that effective notes are neat, organised, and use short forms, symbols, and clear headings to show the main ideas and supporting details.

2.8 Keywords

Listening: Paying attention to sounds or speech and trying to understand the message.

Hearing: The natural act of receiving sounds with the ears, without necessarily trying to understand.

Active listening: Listening with full attention, thinking about the message,

and responding appropriately.

Passive listening: Hearing the message without much focus, effort, or response.

Critical listening: Listening and then judging the ideas, checking if they are logical, true, or convincing.

Empathetic listening: Listening to understand how someone feels and showing care for their emotions.

Informational listening: Listening mainly to learn and remember facts, ideas, or instructions.

Appreciative listening: Listening for enjoyment, such as listening to music, stories, or poetry.

Listening process: The step-by-step way listening happens: hearing, understanding, interpreting, evaluating, responding, and remembering.

Good listening habits: Behaviours that help us listen well, like focusing, not interrupting, asking questions, and using positive body language.

Poor listening habits: Behaviours that stop us from listening well, like getting distracted, interrupting, or pretending to listen.

Barriers to listening: Problems that prevent good listening, such as worry, noise, strong opinions, difficult language, or tiredness.

Psychological barriers: Mental or thinking-related problems (like lack of interest, ego, or tension) that reduce attention.

Emotional barriers: Feelings (such as anger, fear, sadness, or strong beliefs) that stop us from listening openly.

Linguistic/Semantic barriers: Language-related difficulties, such as hard words, strong accents, fast speech, or technical jargon.

Socio-cultural barriers: Problems caused by differences in culture, values, or social background.

Physiological barriers: Physical conditions (like illness, hearing problems, pain, or tiredness) that affect listening.

Environmental distractions: Outside factors like noise, heat, or uncomfortable seating that disturb concentration.

Non-verbal communication: Communication without words, using facial expressions, gestures, posture, and eye contact.

Body language: The way we use our body (posture, movements, facial

expressions) to show feelings and attitude.

Empathy: The ability to understand and share another person's feelings.

Feedback: The response given to a speaker to show we have listened (for example, questions, comments, or nodding).

Note-taking: Writing down important points while listening so we can remember and use them later.

Main ideas: The most important points or central messages in what we hear or read.

Supporting details: Examples, explanations, and extra information that explain or prove the main ideas.

Abbreviations and symbols: Short forms and signs used in notes to save time and space (like "b/c" for "because" or "&" for "and").

Effective communication: Sharing information and ideas clearly so that others can understand and respond properly.

2.9 Answers to Self-Assessment Questions

Question 1:

Good Listening	Poor Listening
➤ silent concentration ➤ attention ➤ receptive body language ➤ empathy ➤ questioning / clarifying ➤ restating the message	➤ communicating with someone else in the room
	➤ interrupting and finishing sentences
	➤ correcting or undermining what was said
➤ inappropriate level of eye contact	➤ waiting impatiently for our chance to speak
	➤ giving no non-verbal signals
➤ strategic pauses ➤ being non-evaluative ➤ paraphrasing ➤ reflecting implications ➤ inviting further contributions ➤ responding non-verbally	

Question 2:

1. Situation A

a) Good listening

b) Behaviours that show good listening:

- Keeps her notebook open (ready to take notes)
- Looks at the teacher (eye contact / attention)
- Nods sometimes (non-verbal feedback)
- Writes down key points (active note-taking)
- Asks one question to clarify a doubt (questioning/clarifying)

2. Situation B

a) Poor listening

b) Changes needed to become a better listener:

- Stop checking messages on the phone (remove distractions)
- Stop looking around the room and instead focus on the speaker
- Replace “Hmm... yeah...” with real responses that show understanding (ask questions, paraphrase, show empathy)

3. Situation C

a) Poor listening

b) Poor listening habit shown:

- Interrupting before the teacher finishes
- Answering quickly without fully hearing the question
- Talking about something only loosely related (not staying on topic)

4. Situation D

a) Good listening

b) Good listening habits shown:

- Listens silently (attentive, not interrupting)
- Restates their friend's main idea in their own words (paraphrasing / restating the message)
- Asks “Did I get it right?” (questioning/clarifying, checking understanding)

Question 3:

Situation 1

- Type of listening: Active listening / Informational listening
- Why: She is fully focused on the teacher, taking notes, and asking questions to understand and learn the new concept.

Situation 2

- Type of listening: Appreciative listening
- Why: He is listening mainly for enjoyment and relaxation, not to learn or analyse the content.

Situation 3

- Type of listening: Critical listening
- Why: The student is analysing and evaluating the arguments to judge whether they are logical and convincing.

Situation 4

- Type of listening: Empathetic listening
- Why: The listener is focusing on the friend's feelings, showing understanding and emotional support.

Situation 5

- Type of listening: Informational listening
- Why: The student is listening to learn and remember instructions so they can perform the drill correctly.

Situation 6

- Type of listening: Passive listening
- Why: Students hear the announcements but are not actively engaged or concentrating, so they remember little.

Question 4:

Situation A - **Physiological barrier** (Tiredness and physical exhaustion are affecting his ability to concentrate.)

Situation B - **Linguistic / semantic barrier** (Difficult language, unfamiliar words, accent, and speed of speech make understanding hard.)

Situation C - Emotional / psychological barrier (Strong opinions and attitude toward the topic stop the student from listening openly.)

Situation D - **Emotional barrier** (Worry and anxiety about a family member distract her from the lesson.)

Situation E - **Environmental barrier** (Noise and surroundings interfere with hearing and concentration.)

Situation F - **Psychological barrier** (The student's ego and attitude prevent real listening.)

Check Your Progress

1. In your own words, explain the difference between hearing and listening.
2. Describe active listening. Mention at least three behaviours that show someone is actively listening.
3. Choose any two types of listening (for example, critical and empathetic). Explain what each type is and give one school-based example for each.
4. List the six stages of the listening process and briefly explain what happens in any two of those stages.
5. What is the role of non-verbal communication (eye contact, facial expressions, body language) in good listening?
6. Name any four barriers to listening and classify each as psychological, emotional, linguistic, socio-cultural, physiological, or environmental.
7. Think of a time when you did not listen well in class. Identify which barrier was present and describe how it affected your understanding.
8. Choose one barrier (for example, "lack of interest" or "noise"). Write two practical steps you can take to reduce its effect in your own listening.
9. Why is it important to be aware of cultural differences when listening to people from different backgrounds?
10. Why does note-taking make listening more effective during a lecture?
11. Describe what good notes look like. Mention at least three features.
12. Look at your own notebook from a recent lesson. Do your notes show main ideas and supporting details clearly? If not, what could you change next time?

13. Which type of listening do you use most in your daily school life (for example, informational, empathetic, appreciative)? Explain with an example.
14. Which listening habit do you want to improve first (for example, avoiding distractions, asking questions, or showing more empathy)? Why?
15. After studying this chapter, write one specific goal for your listening in the next month (for example, “I will take notes in at least two subjects every day” or “I will not use my phone when someone is talking to me”).

2.10 References

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2. Konar, Nira. *Communication Skills for Professionals*. PHI Learning Pvt. Ltd..



UNIT - III

Lesson 3.1 - Speaking Skills

3.1 Introduction

Speaking is an essential part of effective communication. In academic, professional, and social situations, a person must be able to express ideas clearly, listen carefully, interact with others, and respond confidently. Speaking skills are especially important during speeches, presentations, group discussions, and interviews.

This unit develops the learner's ability to communicate effectively in formal speaking situations. It covers the complete process of preparing and delivering a speech, beginning with setting a clear objective and generating ideas. It also introduces group discussions as a method of exchanging ideas and solving problems, and interviews as a formal communication process used for selection, evaluation, and information gathering. The unit emphasizes not only what a person says but also how it is said. Voice modulation, pronunciation, vocabulary, confidence, eye contact, posture, gestures, listening, courtesy, and logical thinking all contribute to successful speaking.

3.2 Learning Objectives

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Prepare and deliver effective speeches by setting clear objectives, generating ideas, organizing content, and using appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication.
- Participate confidently in group discussions by expressing ideas logically, listening actively, cooperating with others, and handling agreement or disagreement respectfully.
- Identify and explain different types of interviews and understand the basic structure and purpose of each type.
- Perform effectively in interviews by answering questions clearly, demonstrating professional behaviour, using suitable body language, and presenting personal skills confidently.

3.3 Importance of Speaking Skills

Speaking is one of the most important forms of human communication. We use speaking skills every day to express our thoughts, share information, ask questions, explain ideas, solve problems, and build relationships. Effective speaking is not simply the ability to speak fluently; it also involves clear pronunciation, suitable vocabulary, correct organization of ideas, active listening, confidence, and appropriate body language.

In academic and professional life, speaking skills are required in many situations, such as classroom discussions, presentations, seminars, group discussions, interviews, meetings, and public functions. A person may possess excellent knowledge, but that knowledge becomes useful only when it can be communicated clearly and confidently.

Speaking may be informal or formal. Informal speaking takes place during ordinary conversations with friends, family members, and colleagues. Formal speaking takes place when a person addresses an audience, participates in a group discussion, or answers questions in an interview. This module focuses mainly on these formal speaking situations.

3.4 Public Speaking

Among the various forms of formal speaking, public speaking is one of the most important. It requires a speaker to present ideas before an audience in a clear, organized, and confident manner.

Public speaking is a planned, formal presentation of ideas to an audience with a clear purpose such as informing, persuading, motivating, entertaining, or honouring someone or something. It is different from casual conversation because the speaker usually prepares in advance, organizes ideas carefully, and speaks to many people at the same time.

In public speaking, the speaker must think about:

- What to say (content),
- How to say it (language, voice, body language),
- To whom it is said (audience), and
- Why it is being said (purpose).

Importance of Public Speaking

Public speaking is important in study, work, and daily life. It helps a person to:

1. *Express ideas clearly and confidently*

- Many people have good ideas but cannot express them. Public speaking trains a person to choose the right words, arrange thoughts logically, and speak without confusion.
- Over time, this builds confidence not only on stage but also in everyday conversations.

2. *Influence opinions and persuade people*

- Leaders, teachers, managers, and social workers all use public speaking to change people's attitudes or behaviour (for example, about health, environment, or safety).
- A persuasive speech uses facts, examples, emotional appeal, and logical arguments to influence listeners.

3. *Share information effectively*

- In schools, colleges, and offices, people must present reports, research, project work, or instructions.
- Clear public speaking ensures that the audience understands the information correctly and can use it.

4. *Develop leadership qualities*

- Leaders must guide, motivate, and coordinate others; this requires speaking to groups frequently.
- Public speaking improves decision-making, responsibility, and the ability to inspire others, which are core leadership skills.

5. *Participate successfully in meetings, seminars, presentations, and interviews*

- Many academic marks and job opportunities now depend on oral presentations, viva voce exams, group discussions, and interviews.
- Public-speaking skills, namely clarity, structure, confidence, directly improve performance in these situations.

6. *Overcome fear and improve personality*

- Stage fear (glossophobia) is very common, but practice in public speaking helps a person face and reduce this fear.
- As confidence grows, body language, voice, posture, and self-image also improve, leading to overall personality development.

7. *Build professional and social relationships*

- Good speakers are often noticed, respected, and remembered.
- Public speaking opens doors to networking, collaboration, leadership roles, and social influence.

Essential Qualities of a Good Speaker

1. Clear pronunciation

- Words should be spoken correctly so that every syllable is understandable.
- Avoid mumbling or swallowing words. Clear pronunciation shows respect for the audience and improves understanding.

2. Appropriate volume and pace

- Volume: The voice should be loud enough for everyone to hear, but not shouting.
- Pace: Speaking too fast confuses listeners; too slow makes them bored. A good speaker uses a moderate pace and changes speed slightly for interest.

3. Good vocabulary

- A rich but appropriate vocabulary helps the speaker express ideas exactly and effectively.
- However, using very difficult words can confuse the audience, so word choice must match the listeners' level.

4. Logical organization of ideas

- Ideas should follow a clear order: beginning, middle, and end.
- Within the body of the speech, each point should connect naturally to the next so that the audience can easily follow the argument.

5. Confidence and enthusiasm

- Confidence shows in steady voice, firm posture, and composed behaviour.
- Enthusiasm shows that the speaker cares about the topic; it makes the audience attentive and interested.

6. Proper eye contact

- Eye contact creates a connection with the audience and makes the speech more personal.
- The speaker should look at different sections of the audience, not stare at the floor, the ceiling, or notes all the time.

7. Suitable facial expressions and gestures

- Facial expressions (smiling, serious look, concern) and hand movements should match the message.
- Natural gestures make the speech lively, but overacting or distracting movements should be avoided.

8. Knowledge of the subject

- A good speaker understands the topic deeply, not just memorizes lines.
- This allows the speaker to explain clearly, answer questions, and handle unexpected situations.

9. Ability to understand the audience

- The speaker should consider the audience's age, background, knowledge level, and interests.
- This helps in choosing examples, language, and style that the audience can relate to.

10. Effective use of pauses

- Pauses give the audience time to understand and think.
- Strategic pauses before or after an important point can create emphasis and avoid "filler" words like "um," "uh," "like," and "you know."

3.4.1 Setting Clear Objectives

Before writing or delivering a speech, the speaker must first decide why the speech is being given. This is called setting the objective or deciding the purpose of the speech. When the objective is clear, it becomes easier to choose ideas, organize points, and select the right style of delivery. Without a clear purpose, even a well-written speech can feel confusing or weak.

Objectives help the speaker to:

- Focus only on relevant points.

- Choose suitable examples and stories.
- Decide whether to be serious, emotional, or light and humorous.
- Judge whether the speech was successful after delivering it.

Main Objectives of Public Speaking

Although there can be many small purposes, most speeches fall into one or more of these main categories:

1. To Inform

The goal is to increase the audience's knowledge or understanding. The speaker explains facts, concepts, processes, or procedures in a clear, concise and simple way. Typical situations in which the speaker informs the audience include describing how a new technology works, explaining a scientific concept, providing instructions or guidelines, and presenting a report or research findings. In each of these situations, the purpose is to present information clearly and systematically so that the reader can understand the subject, process, or findings effectively.

Key features of an Informative Speech:

- Uses clear definitions and explanations.
- Includes examples, data, or visuals if needed.
- Avoids unnecessary emotional appeal or strong opinion.
- Focuses on accuracy and clarity.

2. To Persuade

The aim is to change what the audience thinks or what they do. The speaker wants listeners to accept a viewpoint, support a cause, or take some action. Typical situations in which the speaker tries to persuade the audience include arguing for a social issue or cause, encouraging people to adopt a new habit, or supporting a policy, rule or project.

Key features of a Persuasive Speech:

- Uses reasons, evidence, and examples.
- Often includes emotional appeal and strong language.
- May address opposing views and answer them.
- Ends with a clear call to action (what the audience should do).

3. To Motivate

The objective is to inspire and energize the audience so that they feel more confident, hopeful, or determined. Motivation is about strengthening attitude and willpower. Typical situations in which the speaker tries to motivate the audience include a teacher motivating students before exams, a team leader encouraging members before a project, or a guest speaker inspiring youth at a programme.

Key features of a Motivational Speech:

- Uses real-life stories, personal experiences, or success examples.
- Emphasizes hope, effort, and possibilities.
- Uses positive, uplifting language.
- Often repeats key messages for impact.

Many motivational speeches also persuade, but the main focus is on emotions and confidence, not detailed arguments.

4. To Entertain

Here, the main purpose is to give enjoyment to the audience. The speech may still contain a message, but the central goal is to keep people interested and relaxed. Situations in which the speaker tries to entertain the audience include after-dinner speeches, cultural or farewell functions, or storytelling and humorous talks.

Key features of an Entertaining Speech:

- Uses humour, stories, and light-hearted comments.
- Simple and engaging language.
- Often builds a friendly connection with the audience.
- May contain a gentle lesson or reflection at the end.

5. To Commemorate or Honour

This type of speech is used to remember, appreciate, or celebrate a person, event, or achievement. National day speeches, speeches at award function, farewell or condolence speeches, and tributes to great leaders or role models come under speeches to commemorative speech.

Key features of a Commemorative Speech:

- Respectful and dignified tone.
- Highlights values, achievements, or sacrifices.
- Often includes anecdotes or memories.
- May aim to inspire the audience through the person or event being honoured.

Features of a Clear Objective

A well-defined objective has certain important qualities. It should be:

1. Specific

- The purpose must be narrow and clearly stated, not vague.
- “To talk about health” is too general; “to explain three simple habits for better mental health” is specific.

2. Audience-centred

- The objective should focus on what the audience will gain, not just what the speaker wants to say.
- Think: “What will be useful for these listeners?”

3. Realistic

- The goal should be achievable in the given time and situation.
- For example, in a five-minute speech, it is realistic to give a basic overview, not to teach an entire subject.

4. Easy to understand

- The objective should be written in simple, clear language so that both the speaker and teacher/examiner can easily see what is intended.

5. Possible within time

- The content and depth must match the time available.
- Trying to cover too many points in a short time makes the speech rushed and confusing.

General and Specific Objectives

When planning a speech, it helps to think at two levels: general

objective and specific objective.

General Objective

This is the broad purpose of the speech. It is usually one of the main categories:

1. To inform
2. To persuade
3. To motivate
4. To entertain
5. To commemorate

Example: “To inform the audience about online education.”

This tells us the type of speech but not exactly what the audience will be able to do after listening.

Specific Objective

This is a clear, detailed statement of the result expected in the audience after the speech.

It describes exactly what they should know, understand, feel, or be ready to do.

Example: “At the end of the speech, the audience will be able to state three advantages and three limitations of online education.”

This is better because:

- It is measurable (three advantages and three limitations).
- It focuses on the audience’s ability, not just on the topic.
- It guides the speaker to include exactly those points.

3.4.2 Generating Ideas

Generating ideas is the planning stage of speech writing. Instead of starting to write full sentences immediately, a good speaker first collects and develops points from many angles. This helps to avoid confusion, repetition, and “blank mind” during writing or speaking. When you give yourself time to explore a topic:

- You discover more content than you first thought.
- You can choose the best points instead of using the first ideas only.

- Your speech becomes richer, clearer, and better organized.

Sources of Ideas

You can get ideas for a speech from many places:

- Personal experiences: Things you have done, seen, or felt (school events, family situations, travel, failures, successes).
- Books, newspapers, magazines: Articles, stories, essays, reports.
- Current affairs: News about society, politics, technology, environment, sports, etc.
- Classroom discussions: Points raised by teachers and classmates.
- Internet research: Reliable websites, videos, online articles.
- Interviews and conversations: Talking to people who know about the topic.
- Observation of people and society: Watching how people live, behave, and face problems.
- Statistics and examples: Numbers, data, surveys, case studies.
- Historical events: Past wars, movements, discoveries, reforms.
- Stories, quotations, incidents: Short anecdotes and famous sayings that support your message.

When preparing a speech, you don't need to use all these sources, but combining even two or three makes your ideas stronger and more interesting.

Techniques for Generating Ideas

There are methods through which a speaker explores a topic and collects useful points before writing the actual speech. Instead of starting with full sentences, the speaker first tries to see the topic from different angles and gather as many thoughts as possible.

1. Brainstorming

One of the most common techniques is brainstorming. In brainstorming, the speaker takes a sheet of paper, writes the topic at the top, and then spends a few minutes writing down every idea, word, phrase, or example that comes to mind. During this stage, there is no judgement as ideas are not labelled as good or bad. For example, for the topic "Importance of Reading", the speaker might quickly note: improves vocabulary, increases

knowledge, develops imagination, reduces stress, improves concentration, helps academic performance, builds empathy, provides entertainment. After the brainstorming list is ready, the speaker reads through it and selects the most relevant and strong points, usually two or three main ideas for a short speech, and ignores or combines weaker or repeated ideas. This simple process removes fear of the blank page and shows how much the speaker already knows.

2. Mind Mapping

Another helpful technique is mind mapping, a visual method of organizing ideas around a central topic. Here, the speaker writes the main topic in the centre of a page and draws a circle around it, then draws branches outward for major subtopics. For “Pollution”, central branches might be: causes, types, effects, examples, prevention, individual responsibility, government responsibility. From “types”, smaller branches can show air, water, noise, and land pollution; from “prevention”, branches might show reduce, reuse, recycle, laws, public awareness. Mind mapping helps the speaker see the relationships between ideas clearly and ensures that no important area is forgotten. It is especially useful when the topic is broad and has many parts, because the visual structure later becomes the basis for organizing the speech into sections or paragraphs.

3. Question Technique

The question technique uses question words to dig deeper into a topic. The speaker systematically asks: What is it? Why does it happen or why is it important? Who is affected or involved? When does it occur or become serious? Where does it occur? How does it work or how can it be changed? What are the effects? What solutions are possible? For example, for “Cyberbullying”, the speaker might answer: what (definition and forms), why (reasons such as anonymity and peer pressure), who (students, young people, social media users), when and where (online platforms, late-night usage), effects (emotional and psychological damage), and solutions (reporting tools, school policies, awareness campaigns, parental guidance). By answering these questions, the speaker automatically generates material for different parts of the speech, like definition, causes, effects, and remedies, without struggling to think randomly.

4. Clustering

Clustering is similar to mind mapping but works best for abstract topics like success, freedom, happiness, courage. The speaker writes the central abstract word (for example, “Success”) in the middle and quickly notes any related words that come to mind all around it: hard work, discipline, failure, goals, patience, learning, opportunity, luck, persistence, self-belief. Later, these words can be grouped, such as “success and failure”, “success and discipline”, “success and opportunity”, and each group becomes a potential paragraph or point. Clustering helps the speaker turn an abstract idea into concrete, discussable aspects, so the speech does not stay vague or empty.

5. Listing

Listing is a more straightforward technique. Here, the speaker uses categories and directly lists points under them: facts, causes, effects, advantages, disadvantages, examples, and solutions. For example, for “Mobile Phones for Students”, the speaker could list advantages (quick communication, access to information, educational apps), disadvantages (distraction, addiction, reduced face-to-face interaction), and solutions (screen-time limits, responsible use rules, parental control, school guidelines). Listing is useful when the speaker already has some knowledge of the topic and needs to organize it quickly into meaningful groups.

6. 5W1H Method

Finally, the 5W1H method uses six guiding questions – What, Who, When, Where, Why, and How – to explore a topic completely. For “Plastic Waste”, the answers might be: what is the issue (excessive plastic use and improper disposal), who is affected (environment, animals, humans, future generations), when (daily use in shopping, packaging, events), where (homes, markets, landfills, rivers, oceans), why it is important (pollution, health risks, ecological damage), and how it can be solved (reducing use, recycling, government regulations, awareness campaigns). Because 5W1H is structured, it ensures that the speech covers definition, impact, and remedies in a logical way.

Selecting the Best Ideas

Once these techniques have produced many ideas, the speaker must select the best ones. Good ideas are those that are directly relevant to

the topic, useful and interesting to the audience, accurate and believable, easy to explain within the given time, logically connected to each other, and supported by examples, stories, or evidence. For a short speech, it is better to choose two or three strong main points and develop each with explanation and examples than to mention many small points without depth. In this way, idea-generation techniques lead from a raw collection of thoughts to a clear, focused set of arguments that can be turned into a well-organized speech.

3.4.3 Preparing the Speech

Preparing a speech is a step-by-step process that starts long before you stand in front of the audience. It involves research, organization, language selection, practice, and delivery planning.

Steps in Preparing a Speech

Step 1: Understand the Topic

First, you must understand the topic clearly by identifying what it really covers and what it does not. If you speak about ideas that are only loosely connected to the topic, the speech becomes unfocused and confusing.

Step 2: Know the Audience

After understanding the topic, you need to know your audience: their age, level of education, occupation, background knowledge, interests, expectations, and cultural values. The same topic would be explained very differently to school students compared to business professionals, because what they already know and what they care about are not the same.

Step 3: Decide the Objective

Once you understand the topic and the audience, the next step is to decide the objective of your speech. You should be clear whether you want to inform, persuade, motivate, entertain, or honour, because this purpose will guide the style and content of your speech.

Step 4: Collect Information

Then you collect information to support your objective. This includes facts, examples, stories, quotations, definitions, comparisons, and statistics. The information must be accurate and suitable for the audience; too much complex data or very technical material can make the speech hard to

follow, while simple, relevant examples can make it easier to understand and remember.

Step 5: Organize the Ideas

After collecting information, you organize your ideas into a clear structure with an introduction, body, and conclusion. The introduction should catch attention and introduce the subject, often by asking a question, using a quotation, telling a short story, presenting a problem, or referring to a common experience. It should also show the purpose of the speech and give a brief overview of the main points. The body contains the main content, usually two to four major points, each developed through explanation, examples, evidence, comparison, cause and effect, personal experiences, or short stories. Linking expressions such as “first of all”, “another important point is”, “for example”, “as a result”, and “finally” help the audience follow the flow of ideas. The conclusion must bring the speech to a clear and memorable end by summarizing the main points, giving a recommendation, making a call to action, using a quotation, or returning to the opening question or story.

A. Introduction

The introduction should attract attention and introduce the subject.

Methods of beginning a speech include:

- Asking a question.
- Giving an interesting fact.
- Using a quotation.
- Telling a short story.
- Presenting a problem.
- Making a surprising statement.
- Referring to a common experience.

Example:

“How many hours do we spend looking at our phones every day? Technology has become an essential part of our lives, but excessive use can affect our health and relationships.”

A good introduction should:

- Gain attention.

- Introduce the topic.
- Establish the purpose.
- Give an overview of the main points.

B. Body

The body contains the main content of the speech. It should have two to four major points. Each point can be developed using:

- Explanation.
- Example.
- Evidence.
- Comparison.
- Cause and effect.
- Personal experience.
- Short story.

Useful linking expressions include:

- First of all.
- Let us now examine.
- Another important point is.
- For example.
- In contrast.
- As a result.
- In addition.
- Finally.

C. Conclusion

The conclusion should bring the speech to a clear and memorable end.

It may include:

- A summary of the main points.
- A recommendation.
- A call to action.
- A quotation.
- A powerful final statement.
- A return to the opening question or story.

Example:

“Technology is not the enemy. The real challenge is to use it responsibly. Let us make technology serve our lives instead of controlling them.”

Language of a Good Speech

Language and delivery are just as important as content.

Use language that is:

- Simple.
- Direct.
- Conversational.
- Positive.
- Audience-friendly.
- Grammatically correct.
- Appropriate to the occasion.

Avoid:

- Very long sentences.
- Unnecessary technical terms.
- Difficult vocabulary.
- Repetition.
- Offensive language.
- Excessive fillers such as “um,” “like,” and “you know.”

Delivery of a Speech

- ☐ Effective delivery includes:
- ☐ Maintaining eye contact.
- ☐ Standing upright.
- ☐ Using natural gestures.
- ☐ Speaking at a moderate speed.
- ☐ Varying voice pitch.
- ☐ Emphasizing important words.
- ☐ Using suitable pauses.
- ☐ Avoiding distracting movements.
- ☐ Showing interest and confidence.

Here's an example of a speech on the Importance of Reading.

Importance of Reading

Good morning everyone,

Today, I would like to speak about a habit that looks simple but can change our lives in a powerful way – the habit of reading. In a world filled with screens and quick messages, many people feel that reading books is old-fashioned. However, reading is still one of the most effective ways to grow our knowledge, sharpen our mind, and improve our personality.

First, reading increases our knowledge and understanding of the world. Through books, newspapers, and articles, we learn about science, history, different cultures, and new ideas that we may never see in our daily life. A student who reads regularly finds it easier to understand classroom lessons, because reading builds a strong base of information and vocabulary.

Second, reading develops our thinking and imagination. When we read stories, biographies, or novels, we enter different worlds and see life from other people's points of view. This helps us to imagine situations, think creatively, and become more sensitive to others' feelings. People who read widely can usually express their thoughts more clearly because they have seen many ways of thinking.

Third, reading reduces stress and improves concentration. Spending quiet time with a book allows our mind to slow down and focus. Unlike social media, where information changes quickly, reading trains us to stay with one idea for a longer time. This ability to concentrate is very useful in studies, exams, and professional work.

In conclusion, reading is not just a school activity; it is a lifelong tool for learning, imagination, and mental peace. Even if we are busy, we can start with a few pages a day and gradually make reading a regular part of our routine. Let us choose books that interest us and help us grow, and make reading a habit that strengthens both our mind and our character.

Self-Assessment Questions

Question 1: Prepare a speech on the following topics.

- Artificial Intelligence and the Future
- Climate Change and Our Responsibility
- The Importance of Time Management

3.5 Group Discussion

A group discussion is a planned, structured conversation in which a small group of people talk about a specific topic, problem, or issue. The aim is not just to speak, but to exchange ideas, analyse information, and arrive at a better understanding or solution together. Unlike casual chatting, a GD has a purpose, a time limit, and usually a moderator or evaluator watching the participants.

Group discussions are widely used in colleges, competitive exams, campus placements, MBA admissions, and corporate training because they reveal how a person thinks, communicates, listens, and works with others. A good GD is not a shouting match or a race to speak the most; it is a joint effort where every member is expected to contribute meaningfully and respectfully.

What makes GDs valuable is that they test multiple skills at the same time: knowledge of the topic, clarity of thought, logical reasoning, confidence, listening, teamwork, and the ability to handle disagreement. The best participants help the group to understand the topic from different angles, keep the discussion focused, and move it towards a conclusion.

Objectives of a Group Discussion

A GD is conducted for several reasons, and understanding these objectives helps you perform better:

- **Exchange ideas:** Members share their thoughts, experiences, and information so that the group can see the issue from many viewpoints.
- **Analyse a problem:** Instead of staying at the surface level, the group examines causes, effects, and possible consequences of a situation.
- **Reach a decision:** Sometimes the group is expected to arrive at a recommendation or common stand. For example, choosing the best solution or policy.
- **Generate solutions:** Participants suggest and evaluate different ways of solving a practical problem.
- **Test communication skills:** Evaluators check how clearly, logically, and confidently each participant speaks and listens.
- **Assess leadership and teamwork:** GDs show who can take initiative, guide the discussion, encourage others, and cooperate.

- **Evaluate knowledge and reasoning:** Participants are judged on how well they understand the topic and how logically they argue.
- **Observe interpersonal skills:** Respect, politeness, patience, and the ability to disagree without conflict are all visible in a GD.

When you participate in a group discussion, remember: the aim is not just to “show off” knowledge, but to contribute to these objectives.

Skills Evaluated in a GD

In a typical GD for admissions or recruitment, evaluators focus on several key skills:

- **Subject knowledge:** Do you know enough about the topic to speak meaningfully?
- **Clarity of thought:** Are your points organized and easy to understand?
- **Communication ability:** Is your language clear, fluent, and appropriate?
- **Logical reasoning:** Do your arguments follow a sensible pattern with causes, effects, and evidence?
- **Confidence:** Do you speak steadily and calmly, without appearing arrogant?
- **Listening skills:** Do you pay attention to others and respond to what they say?
- **Leadership:** Do you help start, organize, or guide the discussion when needed?
- **Cooperation:** Are you willing to share speaking time and build on others' points?
- **Respect for others:** Do you avoid interrupting, insulting, or dismissing others?
- **Ability to handle disagreement:** Can you disagree politely and keep the discussion constructive?
- **Time awareness:** Are you brief and to the point, leaving time for others?
- **Overall participation:** Do you contribute regularly, without dominating or remaining silent?

The goal is to show a balanced profile exhibiting good content and good behaviour.

Basic Process of a GD

Most group discussions follow a simple sequence:

1. Moderator announces the topic and rules

The moderator or panel tells the group the topic, duration (for example, 10–20 minutes), and any special instructions (like “no opening speeches”, “everyone must speak at least once”).

2. Participants think about the topic

There is usually a short thinking period, sometimes just a minute or two, where participants quickly plan points and structure.

3. One or more participants begin the discussion

Someone starts with a definition, background, or key issue. Beginning well can show initiative, but starting too quickly without understanding can be risky.

4. Members present arguments and examples

Participants share views, give reasons, and support them with facts, figures, stories, or examples.

5. Participants respond to one another

They agree, disagree, clarify, ask questions, and connect points. This interaction is the heart of a GD.

6. The group analyses different viewpoints

As the discussion progresses, the group compares pros and cons, considers practical aspects, and refines ideas.

7. The discussion ends with a summary or conclusion

Either a participant or the moderator summarizes the key points or states the common decision reached by the group.

Good Behaviour in a GD

Positive Behaviours (Do)

- ***Understand the topic before speaking:*** Take a few seconds to think and avoid jumping in without clarity.
- ***Begin only when you have a relevant point:*** Opening the discussion with a strong, clear point can create a good impression.

- ***Speak clearly and briefly:*** Long speeches irritate others and reduce group interaction.
- ***Give reasons and examples:*** Statements become stronger when supported with logic or evidence.
- ***Listen actively:*** Show attention through eye contact, nodding, and responding to others' points.
- ***Build on others' ideas:*** Use phrases like "Adding to that..." to show collaboration.
- ***Invite silent members to participate:*** This reflects leadership and team spirit.
- ***Disagree politely:*** Use calm tone and respectful phrases when you present a different view.
- ***Maintain eye contact:*** Look at various members, not just the moderator or your notes.
- ***Help the group reach a conclusion:*** Near the end, try to summarize or move towards an agreed position.

Negative Behaviours (Do Not)

- ***Shout or speak aggressively:*** This shows poor emotional control and disrespect.
- ***Interrupt repeatedly:*** Occasional interruption may happen, but constant cutting-off is harmful.
- ***Dominate the discussion:*** Speaking too much stops group participation and creates a bad impression.
- ***Remain completely silent:*** Silence suggests lack of interest or confidence, and you cannot be evaluated positively.
- ***Make personal attacks:*** Criticize ideas, not people.
- ***Repeat the same point:*** Repetition without adding value wastes time.
- ***Give unsupported facts:*** Avoid random claims without explanation or source.
- ***Change the topic unnecessarily:*** Stay focused; avoid drifting away.
- ***Use offensive or discriminatory language:*** Always keep the language respectful and inclusive.
- ***Treat the discussion as a personal debate:*** The goal is group understanding, not winning an argument.

Useful GD Expressions

Learning some standard phrases makes it easier to speak politely and professionally.

Beginning

- “I would like to begin by saying that...”
- “In my opinion, the central issue is...”
- “This topic can be understood from two perspectives...”
- “I would like to draw attention to...”

Agreeing

- “I agree with that point because...”
- “I would like to add to this idea...”
- “That is an important observation.”

Disagreeing Politely

- “I understand your point, but I see the issue differently.”
- “I partly agree; however, another factor is...”
- “May I offer an alternative view?”
- “That may be true in some situations, but...”

Bringing Others into the Discussion

- “Would you like to add something?”
- “We have heard one perspective; perhaps we can consider another.”
- “I would be interested to know your view.”

Concluding

- “To conclude, the group appears to agree that...”
- “We have discussed the issue from social, economic, and practical perspectives.”
 - “The main points emerging from the discussion are...”
- Using such expressions shows maturity and makes your speech smoother.

3.5.1 Types of Group Discussions

Different organizations design GDs differently, but these are the most common types you need to know:

1. Topic-Based GD

In a topic-based GD, participants are given a simple, direct topic or statement to discuss.

- Example: “Is social media beneficial for students?”
- The topic may be social, political, economic, educational, or technological.

Here, there is usually no one correct answer. The quality of reasoning is more important than taking a “right” side. You are expected to:

- Define or explain the topic.
- Present different sides (advantages and disadvantages).
- Support your views with examples or simple data.
- Move towards a balanced conclusion.

2. Factual or Knowledge-Based GD

This type depends more on general knowledge and current affairs. Participants are expected to know basic facts and recent developments.

- **Example:** “Impact of artificial intelligence on employment.”

The focus is on:

- How well you know the subject.
- How clearly and logically you can use facts, events, and examples.
- Whether you can relate the topic to society, economy, or daily life.

This type rewards candidates who regularly read newspapers, articles, and reports.

3. Abstract GD

An abstract GD uses a single word, phrase, colour, or idea that doesn't have a fixed meaning.

- **Examples:** “Silence”, “Zero”, “A blank page”, “Red”, “The journey is more important than the destination”.

This type tests:

- Creativity and imagination.
- Ability to interpret and give meaning.

- Logical thinking even when the topic is not factual.

Good approach:

- Connect the abstract idea to life (for example, “Silence” and mental health, communication, conflict).
- Use stories, metaphors, and reflections.
- Then show what we can learn or do from that idea.

4. Case Study GD

Participants receive a short case describing a business, social, or organizational problem. This type tests analytical ability, practical thinking, and structured problem-solving.

- **Example:** A company is losing customers because of poor service. What steps should management take?

A strong approach:

1. Identify the main problem.
2. Find possible causes.
3. Suggest different solutions.
4. Compare these solutions.
5. Recommend the best solution.

This type checks:

- Analytical skills.
- Practical thinking.
- Ability to work step-by-step with the group.

5. Problem-Solving GD

The group is given a real-world problem and asked to suggest solutions.

- Example: “How can a college reduce plastic waste?”

Participants should:

- Generate many ideas.
- Evaluate which ideas are realistic.
- Combine good ideas into a clear plan.

This tests cooperation, creativity, and decision-making.

6. Role-Play GD

Each participant is given a role or position and must speak from that point of view.

- **Example roles:** manager, employee, customer, government representative.

This type tests:

- Adaptability (can you think like your role?).
- Empathy (can you understand others' roles?).
- Negotiation and communication skills.

You need to remember your role's aims and responsibilities while discussing.

7. Debate-Based GD

Participants are divided into for and against sides for a proposition. This type looks like a debate but usually stays in GD format.

- Example: "Online examinations should replace traditional examinations." Good performance means:
- Presenting strong arguments for your side.
- Listening to the other side.
- Responding respectfully to opposing points.

Even while arguing, you must keep the tone professional and avoid personal attacks.

8. Structured and Unstructured GD

- **Structured GD** Has clear rules: fixed speaking order, time limits, roles (like opener, summarizer).
- It is more controlled and formal.

Unstructured GD

- No fixed order; participants manage turn-taking themselves.
- Very common in campus placements and job GDs.
- Tests initiative, self-control, and group management.

9. Fishbowl Discussion

In a fishbowl:

- A small group sits in an inner circle and discusses the topic.
- Others sit in an outer circle and observe.
- Rules may allow observers to replace inner members at certain points.

It is often used in training or classrooms to show good and bad GD behaviour. It tests both speaking and observing skills.

10. Brainstorming Discussion

The main goal is idea generation, not immediate judgement.

- Participants are asked to suggest as many ideas as possible about a problem or topic.
- Criticism and detailed evaluation are postponed until later.

This encourages creativity and prevents people from feeling afraid of suggesting unusual ideas. Once enough ideas are collected, the group may move to another stage where they select and refine the best ones.

Self-Assessment Questions

Question 2: GD Type Identification

For each topic below, decide what type of GD it is (topic-based, factual, abstract, case study, problem-solving, role-play, debate-based):

1. “Is online gaming harmful for teenagers?”
2. “Blue”
3. “A company’s sales have dropped for three years. What should it do?”
4. “How can our college improve cleanliness?”
5. “Online exams should completely replace offline exams.”

Question 3: GD Role Practice (Solo)

Pick one GD topic, for example, “Impact of Social Media on Students.”

- Write one opening sentence you would use to start the GD.
- Write one agreeing sentence and one polite disagreeing sentence.
- Write 3–4 lines of summary that you would speak at the end.

Question 4: Do’s and Don’ts Table

Make a two-column table in your notebook:

- Left: “Good GD Behaviour”
- Right: “Poor GD Behaviour”

Fill it with at least 6 items in each column (e.g., listen actively vs. interrupt repeatedly).

3.6 Interviews

An interview is a planned, formal conversation between two sides:

- the **interviewer** (or interview panel), and
- the **interviewee** (the candidate).

It is conducted for a specific purpose, such as selecting a person for a job or course, understanding someone’s views, checking their skills, or collecting information. It is not just “questions and answers”; it is a two-way process. The interviewer communicates through the questions and reactions, and the interviewee communicates through answers, body language, appearance, listening, and even the questions they ask at the end.

Objectives of an Interview

An interview is used for several reasons, often at the same time:

- **Select a suitable candidate:** Choose the person who best fits a job, course, scholarship, or position.
- **Assess knowledge and skills:** Check if the candidate’s subject knowledge, technical skills, and abilities match the requirements.
- **Understand personality and attitude:** See how the candidate thinks, behaves, and responds, whether they are positive, responsible, and respectful.
- **Verify qualifications and experience:** Confirm that the details in the resume or application are true and understood by the candidate.
- **Collect information:** Gather facts or opinions about a topic, organization, or experience (especially in research or informational interviews).
- **Identify strengths and weaknesses:** Understand what the candidate does well and where they need improvement.
- **Examine problem-solving ability:** See how the candidate approaches difficult situations or decisions.
- **Assess communication and interpersonal skills:** Observe clarity of speech, listening, politeness, and ability to interact professionally.

Qualities of a Good Interviewee

A strong candidate is not just knowledgeable; they show certain key qualities:

- **Well prepared:** Knows about the organization, role, and their own résumé. Has thought about common questions and examples.
- **Punctual:** Arrives on time or a little early; online interviews are joined before the scheduled time.
- **Courteous:** Uses polite language, greets properly, thanks the interviewer, and respects everyone present.
- **Confident but not arrogant:** Speaks steadily, maintains eye contact, but does not boast or insult others.
- **Honest:** Gives truthful answers, admits when they do not know something, and does not exaggerate achievements.
- **A good listener:** Pays full attention to questions, does not interrupt, and answers what is actually asked.
- **Clear and concise:** Answers are direct and structured, not confusing or too long.
- **Professionally dressed:** Clothing is neat, simple, and appropriate to the organization and role.
- **Familiar with their resume:** Can explain every point in their CV, namely projects, grades, roles, without confusion.
- **Knowledgeable about the organization:** Has basic information about the company, its work, values, and recent developments.
- **Capable of giving examples:** Uses real-life situations to show skills, such as teamwork, leadership, or problem-solving.

Types of Interviews

Interviews are divided into four main types based on purpose, structure, participants, and method. Each type helps people get information in a different way.

A. According to Purpose

1. Selection Interview

Used to choose a candidate for a job, course, scholarship, or position. The focus is on suitability, skills, and fit with the role.

2. *Appraisal Interview*

Conducted in organizations to review an employee's performance, achievements, challenges, and future goals. Often linked to promotions, increments, or training decisions.

3. *Promotion Interview*

Held to decide whether an existing employee is ready for a higher position or more responsibility.

4. *Exit Interview*

Conducted when an employee leaves the organization. The aim is to obtain feedback about the job, working conditions, and reasons for leaving.

5. *Counselling Interview*

Used to understand a person's problem or difficulty and provide guidance, support, or solutions. Common in educational and HR settings.

6. *Informational Interview*

Conducted to collect information about a profession, organization, subject, or experience. For example, a student interviewing a professional to learn about a career.

7. *Disciplinary Interview*

Held when rules are violated or performance is seriously poor. The purpose is to discuss the issue, understand reasons, and decide on corrective steps or penalties.

B. According to Structure**1. *Structured Interview***

The interviewer asks a fixed set of questions in a predetermined order. This gives consistency and makes responses easier to compare.

2. *Unstructured Interview*

The interviewer has no fixed list of questions and allows the conversation to develop naturally. It provides flexibility but may be less consistent.

3. *Semi-Structured Interview*

The interviewer prepares key questions but may ask follow-up questions. It combines consistency with flexibility. Interviews are

commonly described along a range from tightly scripted structured interviews to open-ended unstructured interviews.

C. According to Participants

1. *One-to-One Interview*

One interviewer and one candidate. This is the most common format.

2. *Panel Interview*

A group of interviewers (for example, 3–5 people) interview one candidate. Each panel member may focus on a different area: HR, technical, management.

3. *Group Interview*

Several candidates are interviewed together. They may be given tasks, discussions, or questions in front of each other. This often tests group behaviour and communication.

4. *Board Interview*

A formal interview conducted by a board or committee, often used in high-level positions or official selections (for example, public services).

D. According to Method

1. *Face-to-Face Interview*

The interviewer and interviewee meet in person. Body language and physical presence are very important.

2. *Telephone Interview*

Conducted over a phone call. Voice clarity, listening, and brief answers matter, as visual cues are absent.

3. *Video or Online Interview*

Held on digital platforms (Zoom, Teams, etc.). Requires good internet, proper background, camera positioning, and online etiquette.

4. *Walk-In Interview*

Candidates can attend without individual prior appointment, usually during specified hours or days. Used when many candidates are needed quickly.

5. *Stress Interview*

The interviewer deliberately creates pressure or challenging

situations to see how the candidate reacts. For example, using tactics like rapid questioning, mild criticism, or unusual tasks to see if the interviewee stays calm or loses temper. The candidate should remain calm, polite, and professional.

6. *Technical Interview*

Focuses on subject knowledge, technical skills, and practical problem-solving in fields like engineering, IT, finance, etc. Questions may be problem-based or application-based.

7. *Behavioural Interview*

Uses questions about past behaviour to predict future behaviour. Example: “Describe a time when you solved a conflict in a team.” A useful answer pattern is STAR:

- **Situation:** Briefly describe the background.
- **Task:** Explain what your responsibility or goal was.
- **Action:** Describe what you actually did.
- **Result:** State the outcome or what you learned.

Using STAR keeps answers clear, structured, and focused on evidence.

Basic Interview Structure

A typical interview follows five main stages:

1. Opening and Greeting

The interviewer welcomes the candidate and sets the tone.

The interviewee should:

- Greet politely (“Good morning/afternoon”).
- Smile naturally.
- Wait to be invited to sit.
- Sit upright, with open posture.
- Maintain appropriate eye contact.
- Keep documents ready but not in a messy pile.

This stage creates the first impression, which strongly influences the rest of the interview.

2. Introduction

Often the interviewer says, “Tell us about yourself.”

A good answer:

- Mentions name and educational background.
- Highlights relevant skills or experience.
- Includes one major achievement or interest.
- Connects these to the position or course.

It should not include unnecessary personal details (full family history, unrelated hobbies).

3. Main Questioning

This is the longest stage. Questions may cover:

- Education and academic performance.
- Skills (technical, communication, teamwork).
- Work or project experience.
- Strengths and weaknesses.
- Career goals and future plans.
- Subject knowledge.
- Achievements and responsibilities.
- Teamwork and leadership experiences.
- Problem-solving situations you handled.
- Knowledge about the organization and role.
- Reasons for choosing the field or applying.

Common questions include:

- “Tell me about yourself.”
- “Why do you want this position?”
- “What are your strengths?”
- “What is one weakness you are working to improve?”
- “Why should we select you?”
- “Describe a difficult situation you handled.”
- “Where do you see yourself in five years?”
- “What do you know about our organization?”
- “Why did you choose this field?”
- “Do you have any questions for us?”

Your answers should be honest, clear, and supported by examples where possible.

4. Candidate's Questions

Near the end, the interviewer may ask: "Do you have any questions for us?"

Suitable questions are:

- "What would be the main responsibilities of this role?"
- "What skills are most important for success in this position?"
- "How is performance evaluated here?"
- "What learning or training opportunities are available?"

Avoid:

- Asking questions already clearly stated in the job description.
- Focusing only on salary, holidays, or benefits in the first round.
- Good questions show that you are serious, interested, and thinking long-term.

5. Closing

The interviewee should:

- Thank the interviewer for their time.
- Express continued interest in the role.
- Leave politely, without rushing or chatting casually.
- Avoid negative comments or frustration after leaving the room.

Example:

"Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak with you. I enjoyed learning more about the position and would be happy to contribute to your organization."

This final stage leaves a lasting impression.

Interview Preparation

1. Before the Interview

- **Study the organization:** Know its main work, values, and recent achievements.

- **Understand the job description:** Know required skills and responsibilities.
- **Review your resume:** Be ready to explain every point clearly.
- **Prepare examples of achievements:** Projects, leadership roles, problem-solving stories.
- **Practise common questions:** Say your answers aloud to check clarity and time.
- **Prepare suitable questions to ask:** Show interest and seriousness.
- **Organize certificates and documents:** Keep them neat and easy to access.
- **Select professional clothing:** Clean, simple, appropriate to the workplace.
- **Check location or online link:** Avoid last-minute confusion.
- **Arrive early or join online before time:** Shows punctuality and respect.

2. During the Interview

- **Listen carefully:** Understand the full question before answering.
- **Take a moment before answering:** Think; don't rush blindly.
- **Answer honestly:** Admit limits instead of giving wrong information.
- **Give specific examples:** Use STAR pattern for behavioural questions.
- **Keep answers relevant:** Stick to the question; avoid long side stories.
- **Use positive language:** Focus on what you can do, not just what you can't.
- **Maintain appropriate eye contact:** With all interviewers, not just one.
- **Do not interrupt:** Wait for the interviewer to finish speaking.
- **Ask for clarification if needed:** "Could you please repeat or clarify the question?"
- **Avoid criticizing previous teachers, employers, or institutions:** It appears unprofessional and negative.

3. After the Interview

- **Review your performance:** Think about what went well and what was difficult.
- **Note difficult questions:** Prepare better answers for next time.

- **Identify areas for improvement:** For example, technical gaps or nervousness.
- **Send a polite follow-up message if appropriate:** Thanking them and restating interest.

Self-Assessment Questions

Question 5: Write the interview type for each situation:

1. A student talks to a software engineer to learn about IT careers.
2. A manager meets an employee to discuss poor attendance.
3. A candidate is interviewed by four people sitting at a table.
4. A company calls a candidate for a short interview on Zoom.
5. An employee is leaving and is asked about reasons and feedback.

Question 6: “Tell Me About Yourself” Practice

Write and practise a 1–2 minute answer that includes:

- Your name and education.
- 2–3 skills or experiences.
- 1 achievement or interest.
- How these connect to the position/course you want.

Question 7: STAR Method Exercise

Think of one situation from your life (team project, event, problem solved). Write your answer to: “Describe a time when you worked successfully in a team” using:

1. Situation
2. Task
3. Action
4. Result

Quick Review: Public Speaking, Group Discussion, and Interview

Feature	Public Speaking	Group Discussion	Interview
Main purpose	Deliver a prepared message	Exchange and analyse ideas	Assess or obtain information

Participants	One speaker and an audience	Several active participants	Interviewer and interviewee
Direction	Mostly one-way	Multi-way	Mainly question-and-answer
Preparation	Speech structure and delivery	Knowledge, reasoning, and interaction	Organization research and personal preparation
Main skills	Clarity, confidence, presentation	Listening, teamwork, leadership	Answering, personality, and suitability
Success depends on	Effective message delivery	Useful and respectful contribution	Relevant, honest, confident responses

3.7 Let us Sum up

In this unit, we explored **speaking skills and their importance** in academic, professional, and everyday life. Speaking is not just talking; it is the ability to express ideas clearly, confidently, and appropriately in different situations such as public speaking, group discussions, and interviews. Good speaking skills help us share information, influence opinions, participate in classroom and workplace activities, and present ourselves positively to others.

We first studied **public speaking** as the formal act of addressing an audience with a clear purpose – to inform, persuade, motivate, entertain, or honour. We saw that effective public speaking requires clear objectives, good idea generation, proper organization of the speech into introduction, body, and conclusion, suitable language, and confident delivery using eye contact, voice, gestures, and posture. We also understood that a good speaker plans carefully, thinks about the audience, and uses examples and stories to make the message engaging and easy to understand.

Next, we learned how to **generate and organize ideas before writing a speech**. Instead of starting to write immediately, a good speaker first explores the topic using techniques such as brainstorming, mind mapping, question technique, clustering, listing, and the 5W1H method. These techniques help collect many possible points and then select the most

relevant, accurate, and useful ideas. We saw that a short speech works best when it has only two or three strong main points, each developed clearly with explanations and examples.

We then studied **group discussions (GD)** as structured conversations where a small group exchanges ideas, analyses problems, and tries to reach understanding or solutions. In GDs, success depends not only on speaking but also on listening, reasoning, cooperation, and respect for others. We examined different types of GDs – topic-based, factual, abstract, case-study, problem-solving, role-play, debate-based, structured/unstructured, fishbowl, and brainstorming discussions – and noted the good behaviours (clarity, brevity, polite disagreement, inviting others) and poor behaviours (interrupting, shouting, dominating, staying silent) that affect performance.

Finally, we explored **interviews** as planned two-way conversations used to select candidates, assess skills, understand personality, and gather information. We looked at the objectives of interviews, the qualities of a good interviewee (prepared, punctual, courteous, confident, honest, clear, professionally dressed), and the **different types of interviews** based on purpose, structure, participants, and method. We also studied the **basic interview structure** – opening and greeting, introduction, main questioning, candidate's questions, and closing – and saw how careful preparation, appropriate answers (often using the STAR method), and professional behaviour improve our chances of success.

3.8 Keywords

- **Speaking skills:** Ability to express ideas clearly and appropriately in different situations.
- **Public speaking:** Formal speaking before an audience for a specific purpose.
- **Brainstorming:** Writing all ideas that come to mind without judging them at first.
- **Mind mapping:** Drawing the topic in the centre and connecting related subtopics around it.
- **Question technique:** Using questions like what, why, who, when, where, how to explore a topic.
- **Clustering:** Linking related words around an abstract idea.
- **Listing:** Making simple lists of causes, effects, advantages, disadvantages, examples, etc.

- **5W1H:** Method using what, who, when, where, why, and how to understand a topic fully.
- **Group discussion (GD):** Structured talk where a small group exchanges ideas on a topic.
- **Moderator:** Person who announces the topic and controls the GD.
- **Topic-based GD:** Discussion on a clear given topic or statement.
- **Factual GD:** GD based on current affairs and general knowledge.
- **Abstract GD:** GD on an idea, word, or phrase with no fixed meaning.
- **Case study GD:** GD based on a short problem situation that must be analysed.
- **Problem-solving GD:** GD aimed at finding solutions to a practical problem.
- **Role-play GD:** GD where each participant speaks from a given role.
- **Debate-based GD:** GD where participants argue for or against a proposition.
- **Structured GD:** GD with fixed rules or speaking order.
- **Unstructured GD:** GD where participants manage the discussion themselves.
- **Fishbowl discussion:** Some members discuss in the centre while others observe around them.
- **Brainstorming discussion:** GD focused on generating many ideas without early criticism.
- **Interview:** Planned conversation between interviewer and candidate for a purpose.
- **Interviewer:** Person or panel asking questions.
- **Interviewee:** Candidate answering questions.
- **Selection interview:** Interview to choose someone for a job or course.
- **Appraisal interview:** Interview to review an employee's performance.
- **Promotion interview:** Interview to decide on giving a higher position.
- **Exit interview:** Interview when an employee leaves, to get feedback.
- **Counselling interview:** Interview to understand problems and give guidance.

- **Informational interview:** Interview to collect information about a career or organization.
- **Disciplinary interview:** Interview to discuss rule violations or serious problems.
- **Structured interview:** Interview with fixed questions and order.
- **Unstructured interview:** Interview with flexible, free-flow questions.
- **Semi-structured interview:** Interview with some fixed questions plus follow-ups.
- **One-to-one interview:** One interviewer with one candidate.
- **Panel interview:** Several interviewers with one candidate.
- **Group interview:** Several candidates interviewed together.
- **Face-to-face interview:** Interview done in person.
- **Telephone interview:** Interview done over a phone call.
- **Video / online interview:** Interview done through an online platform.
- **Walk-in interview:** Interview where candidates can come without individual prior appointment.
- **Stress interview:** Interview where pressure is created to test reactions.
- **Technical interview:** Interview focused on subject or technical skills.
- **Behavioural interview:** Interview asking about past behaviour to predict future behaviour.
- **STAR method:** Answer pattern: Situation, Task, Action, Result.

3.9 Answers to Self-Assessment Questions

Question 2

1. Topic-based GD
2. Abstract GD
3. Case Study GD
4. Problem-solving GD
5. Debate Based GD

Question 4

Good GD Behaviour	Poor GD Behaviour
Understand the topic before speaking	Speaking without understanding the topic
Speak clearly and briefly	Speaking for too long or confusingly
Give reasons and examples	Making statements without reasons or facts
Listen actively to others	Ignoring others or not paying attention
Disagree politely	Shouting, arguing aggressively, or attacking others
Invite quieter members to speak	Dominating the discussion and not letting

Question 5

1. Informational interview
2. Disciplinary interview
3. Panel interview
4. Video/online interview
5. Exit interview

3.10 Check Your Progress**Short-Answer Questions**

1. Define public speaking. How is it different from normal conversation?
2. Mention any four main objectives of public speaking.
3. What is meant by a specific objective of a speech? Give one example using the formula "At the end of my speech, the audience will be able to...".
4. What is idea generation? Why should a speaker generate ideas before writing the speech?
5. Name any four techniques for generating ideas.
6. What are the three main parts of a speech?
7. State any three qualities of good language in a speech.

8. What is a group discussion? Why is it used in recruitment or admissions?
9. Mention any four skills that evaluators look for in a GD.
10. List any four good behaviours and any four poor behaviours in a GD.
11. What is an interview? Write any four objectives of an interview.
12. Name any four types of interviews according to purpose.
13. What is a panel interview?
14. What is the STAR method in behavioural interviews?
15. Write any four qualities of a good interviewee.

Long-Answer Questions

1. Explain the importance of public speaking in academic and professional life.
2. Discuss the steps involved in preparing an effective speech, from understanding the topic to delivery.
3. Describe in detail any three techniques for generating ideas, with suitable examples.
4. Explain the structure of a speech—introduction, body, and conclusion—with guidelines for each part.
5. Define group discussion and explain its objectives, process, and skills evaluated.
6. Discuss different types of group discussions (topic-based, factual, abstract, case study, problem-solving, role-play, debate-based) with examples.
7. Explain the do's and don'ts of group discussion and how they affect a candidate's performance.
8. Define an interview and describe the main types of interviews according to purpose, structure, participants, and method.
9. Explain the basic structure of an interview: opening and greeting, introduction, main questioning, candidate's questions, and closing.
10. Discuss the preparations a candidate should make before, during, and after an interview to improve their chances of success.

Practice Questions

1. Write a specific objective for a 3-minute speech on "Exam Stress in Students" using the correct objective formula.
2. Using any one idea-generation technique (brainstorming, mind

mapping, listing, or 5W1H), generate points for a speech on “Healthy Lifestyle for Young People.”

3. Prepare an outline (introduction, 3 body points, conclusion) for a speech on “Impact of Social Media on Students.”
4. Given the topic “Online learning vs classroom learning”, identify what type of GD this is and write two points for and two points against.
5. Write a 1–2 minute “Tell me about yourself” answer suitable for a job or course interview, including education, skills, achievements, and link to the position.

3.11 References

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UNIT- IV

Lesson 4.1 - Reading Skills

4.1 Introduction

We now realised the importance of developing listening and speaking skills in order to achieve communicative competence. In this unit, we focus on developing reading skills.

Reading is more than recognising the words on a page. It is an active process by which we try to comprehend the written or printed word by interpreting the symbols that are used. It plays a vital role in acquiring proficiency in any language. Acquiring effective reading skills can enable students to grasp information quickly, think critically and become independent learners. Reading also has an added significance among the four communication skills. Unlike the other three skills, reading may be done alone. Furthermore, the act of reading facilitates us to broaden the horizons of our imagination along with strengthening our vocabulary. And it is with the help of reading that we familiarise ourselves with various styles of writing. As we progress in acquiring and developing new skills of reading, we reinforce the associated skills of listening, speaking and writing.

In the contemporary world, students come across a wide variety of reading material. It includes novels and stories, textbooks, newspapers, research articles, websites and blogs, and even instructions and manuals. Different styles of reading suit different situations. The technique you choose will depend on the purpose. In some instances, we read carefully to retain all the information in the text. While at other times, we reach quickly to spot or locate specific information. This unit introduces the students to various reading strategies including general and technical comprehension, skimming, scanning, intensive reading, and extensive reading. Utilising these techniques can help the students improve their speed of reading and comprehend information effectively, thus making them confident readers in academic, professional and everyday contexts.

4.2 Learning Objectives

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Understand the importance of reading skills in academic, professional, and everyday communication.
- Differentiate the sub-skills of reading – skimming, scanning, intensive reading and extensive reading.
- Enhance comprehension skills by interpreting and analysing different reading materials.

4.3 Importance of Reading

“Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; writing an exact man.” – Francis Bacon

Reading is at the heart of learning. When students read well, they understand better, think more clearly, and communicate more confidently. This makes reading one of the most important skills for success in school, college, and future careers. Reading is more than “seeing words on a page.” When you read, your brain recognises written words and their sounds, connects them to meanings already stored in your mind, builds ideas and images from those meanings, and relates these ideas to your own experiences. So, reading is an active process where your eyes see the text, but your mind builds the meaning.

Reading is a key to academic success because almost every subject uses textbooks, articles, and notes. If you cannot read them well, learning becomes difficult. Exams often test not just memory, but your ability to understand, analyse, and interpret what you read. Good readers can quickly grasp a concept, list out the important points, and connect different ideas across chapters or subjects. In this way, strong reading skills directly support better performance in tests and assignments.

Reading is also essential for professional life. In any job, reading continues through emails, reports, instructions, manuals, policies, and notices. Online resources, guidelines, and research are also mostly in written form. Someone who reads accurately and quickly can follow instructions correctly, understand new information without much help, and communicate clearly with colleagues and clients. This makes reading a practical life skill, not just a classroom activity, and it supports growth in any career.

Regular reading naturally strengthens language skills. You meet new words in context and slowly understand their meaning, and seeing the same words in different texts helps you remember and use them correctly. You notice how words are combined and used politely, formally, or informally, and you learn which words fit different situations. By reading good sentences, your brain learns patterns of grammar and structure, which helps you write clearer, more accurate sentences. Reading also shows you how ideas are introduced, explained, and concluded, so you learn to organise your own writing with topic sentences, supporting details, and examples. In short, the more you read, the more naturally you begin to speak and write well.

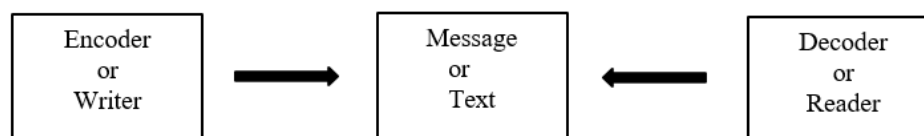
Many students believe that if they read fast, they will understand less, but effective reading often works the opposite way. When you practise reading regularly, your eyes move more smoothly and your brain recognises words faster. Because your mind is not stuck on every single word, it can focus more on overall meaning. This often leads to better comprehension at a higher speed. The key is not to rush blindly, but to train yourself to read with concentration, adjust your speed depending on the purpose, and focus on the message, not on each individual word. Over time, good reading habits make both speed and understanding grow together.

In any text, two people are involved: the writer, who sends a message using words, sentences, and structure, and the reader, who receives and interprets that message. Reading becomes meaningful when you try to understand what the writer wants to say and why, and when you ask questions in your mind such as “What is the main point?” or “Do I agree with this?” This turns reading into an interactive and thinking process, not just a passive activity. Instead of simply “taking in” information, you respond to it and connect it with your own ideas and experiences.

Developing a regular reading habit helps students in many ways. It allows you to learn independently without always depending on teachers, and it helps you stay updated with new ideas, discoveries, and events. It makes you feel more confident when handling textbooks, reference books, and exam passages, and it lets you enjoy stories, articles, and literature, which can both relax and inspire you. Even fifteen to twenty minutes of focused reading each day can gradually improve your language, understanding, and confidence.

4.4 The Reading Process

Reading is an active and interactive process through which a reader constructs meaning from a written text. It is not simply the act of looking at words or pronouncing them aloud. The reader uses visual information from the text, knowledge of language, previous experience, and understanding of the subject to interpret the writer's message. Therefore, meaning is created through the interaction between the reader and the text. It is a psychological process in which the reader decodes or deciphers the message intended by the writer.



The reading process usually takes place in three main stages: pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading. These stages help readers prepare for a text, understand its content, and evaluate what they have learned. Although the stages are presented separately, effective readers often move between them continuously while reading.

Pre-Reading

Pre-reading is the preparation stage. Before reading the complete text, the reader looks at the title, headings, subheadings, illustrations, charts, introduction, and other visible features. This gives a general idea about the subject and the type of text. The reader may also think about what they already know about the topic and predict what the text might discuss. Setting a purpose is also important. A person may read to obtain general information, find a specific fact, study a subject, follow instructions, or enjoy a story.

At this stage, the reader may ask questions such as, “What is this text about?”, “Who wrote it?”, “Why was it written?”, and “What information do I expect to find?” Skimming and scanning may also be used before detailed reading. Pre-reading activates the reader's background knowledge and creates expectations, which makes it easier to understand the text.

While-Reading

While-reading is the stage in which the reader engages directly with the text and constructs meaning. The reader recognises words, understands sentences, identifies important ideas, and connects one sentence with another. At the same time, the reader observes the organisation of the text

and notices how the writer develops the topic. Reading involves both the recognition of language forms and the interpretation of their meaning in context.

During reading, the reader should concentrate on the main message instead of giving equal attention to every word. Important words and ideas may be underlined or noted. The reader can use the surrounding words to guess the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary rather than stopping at every difficult word. It is also useful to ask questions, make predictions, identify supporting details, and draw conclusions while reading.

Good readers continuously monitor their understanding. If a sentence or paragraph is unclear, they may read it again, slow down, examine the surrounding context, or connect it with information presented earlier. They may also distinguish between the main idea and supporting details. In this way, reading becomes a process of thinking, questioning, predicting, confirming, and correcting understanding.

Post-Reading

Post-reading is the stage of reviewing and evaluating the text after it has been read. The reader checks whether the original purpose has been achieved and considers the important ideas presented by the writer. At this stage, the reader may summarise the passage, paraphrase its main points, answer questions, prepare notes, or organise the information in a diagram or table.

Post-reading also involves deeper thinking. The reader may decide whether the information is reliable, compare the writer's ideas with personal knowledge, identify the writer's attitude, and form an opinion about the subject. The reader may also return to the predictions made before reading and check whether they were correct. These activities help to strengthen understanding and connect new information with previous knowledge.

Reading as an Interactive Process

The reading process involves two important sources of information: the text and the reader's knowledge. The text provides words, sentences, facts, examples, and ideas. The reader contributes vocabulary, life experiences, cultural knowledge, expectations, and reasoning ability. These two sources work together to produce meaning. For example, a reader who knows something about climate change may understand an article on global

warming more easily than a reader who has no background knowledge of the subject.

Reading therefore involves both bottom-up and top-down processes. In the bottom-up process, the reader begins with letters, words, sentences, and grammatical structures and gradually builds meaning. In the top-down process, the reader uses previous knowledge, context, predictions, and general understanding to interpret the text. Effective reading combines both processes instead of depending entirely on one of them.

4.5 Methods to Improve Reading

Improving reading requires regular practice and the use of suitable strategies. An effective reader does not read every text in exactly the same way. The reading method may change according to the purpose, difficulty, length, and type of material. The following methods can help readers improve their speed, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.

1. Building a Strong Vocabulary

A strong vocabulary makes reading easier because familiar words can be understood quickly and accurately. Readers should develop the habit of noticing unfamiliar words while reading and trying to understand their meanings from the surrounding sentences. Context clues, word roots, examples, and opposites can often help explain a new word without immediately using a dictionary.

New words should not be memorised as isolated items. They should be studied in meaningful sentences and used in speaking and writing. Keeping a vocabulary notebook is useful. For each new word, the reader can write its meaning, pronunciation, part of speech, one example sentence, a synonym or antonym, and any related words. Repeated exposure to a word in different contexts and regular use of it help make the word part of the reader's active vocabulary.

Readers should also pay attention to technical and subject-specific vocabulary. A word may have one meaning in everyday language and another meaning in science, law, technology, or commerce. Understanding such specialised terms is important for academic and professional reading. Word webs, flashcards, vocabulary lists, and short revision activities can support vocabulary development.

2. Understanding Graphics and Visual Aids

Reading does not always involve paragraphs alone. Textbooks, newspapers, reports, websites, and professional documents often contain photographs, maps, diagrams, tables, charts, graphs, symbols, and flowcharts. These visual aids present information in a compact form and often clarify or add to the ideas expressed in the written text. Therefore, readers should study the written material and the visual information together instead of ignoring either one.

Visual aids should always be connected with the surrounding text. A paragraph may explain the reason for a trend shown in a graph, while the graph may provide numerical evidence for the writer's explanation. Understanding both forms of information improves comprehension and helps readers interpret data more accurately.

3. Previewing the Text

Previewing is an activity by which the reader examines a text before reading it in detail. The reader looks at the title, author, headings, subheadings, opening paragraph, concluding paragraph, pictures, highlighted words, tables, and the general length of the text. This gives an initial idea about the subject, purpose, organisation, and level of difficulty of the material.

Before beginning, the reader should establish a clear purpose. The purpose may be to understand the general idea, locate a particular fact, study the writer's argument, follow instructions, or enjoy a story. The reader can also ask questions such as, "What do I already know about this topic?" and "What information am I likely to find?" These questions prepare the mind for reading and help the reader focus on relevant information.

Previewing is especially useful for long chapters, academic articles, reports, and technical documents. It prevents the reader from approaching the text without direction. It also helps the reader decide whether to skim, scan, or read the material intensively. A short preview can make detailed reading more organised and purposeful.

4. Reading in Thought Groups

Reading in thought groups means reading words together in meaningful phrases instead of reading each word separately. A thought

group is a group of words that expresses one complete idea. For example, the sentence “The rapid growth of digital technology / has changed the way people communicate” can be read in two meaningful groups. The reader understands the relationship between the words more easily than when reading each word in isolation.

Reading word by word can make reading slow and unnatural. It may also cause the reader to forget the beginning of a sentence before reaching its end. Reading in phrases allows the eyes and mind to process larger units of meaning. It improves fluency, supports better understanding, and helps the reader recognise sentence structure.

To practise this method, readers can mark short pauses with a slash while reading a passage. They can begin with simple sentences and gradually practise longer and more complex ones. For example: “Although the journey was difficult / the explorers continued their search / for new sources of water.” The reader should pause briefly between ideas, not after every individual word.

Reading in thought groups does not mean rushing. Difficult phrases should be read slowly and carefully. The aim is to develop a natural reading rhythm in which the reader understands words as connected units of meaning.

5. Avoiding Unnecessary Re-reading

Some readers repeatedly go back to the same words or phrases even when they have understood them. This habit is called unnecessary regression. It interrupts the natural flow of reading and may reduce confidence and reading speed. Instead of returning to every sentence, readers should first continue to the end of the paragraph. The meaning of an unclear word or sentence may become clear from the information that follows.

Readers can reduce unnecessary re-reading by using a pointer, finger, or visual guide to maintain a steady movement across the line. They should focus on groups of words rather than individual words and try to understand the general meaning of each sentence. Setting a reasonable reading time for a short passage can also encourage forward movement.

However, re-reading is not always a bad practice. It is useful when a sentence contains an important idea, when the text is technical or difficult, or when the reader needs to remember precise information. The goal is

not to avoid re-reading completely, but to re-read with a purpose. A reader should return to a section to clarify meaning, confirm a detail, or examine an important argument.

6. Regular Practice

These methods become effective through regular practice. Reading a small amount every day is generally more useful than reading a large amount only occasionally. Readers can practise with newspapers, stories, academic passages, reports, manuals, and digital texts. They should vary their reading speed according to the purpose: faster when searching for general information and slower when studying a difficult idea.

A useful routine is to preview a text, read it in thought groups, note important vocabulary, study any graphics, and write a short summary afterwards. This routine develops both fluency and comprehension. Active reading strategies such as asking questions, taking notes, and adjusting reading speed help readers engage with the text instead of moving their eyes passively across the page.

Thus, reading can be improved by strengthening vocabulary, interpreting visual aids, previewing the text, reading in meaningful groups, and avoiding unnecessary re-reading. Together, these methods help readers become faster, more confident, and more accurate in understanding written information.

4.6 Barriers to Reading

Several factors can reduce a person's interest, speed, and understanding while reading. Some barriers are related to the reading material, while others are connected with the reader's habits, concentration, confidence, and motivation.

1. Uninteresting Subject Matter

A reader may lose interest when the subject is unfamiliar, irrelevant, too difficult, or unrelated to personal experience. When the material does not seem meaningful, concentration decreases and the reader may read mechanically without understanding the ideas. Difficult vocabulary, long sentences, and a lack of background knowledge can also make the subject appear boring. Reading materials become more engaging when they are connected with the reader's interests, real-life experiences, and personal or social concerns.

2. Lack of Motivation

Motivation gives a reader a reason to continue reading. A person may lack motivation because the purpose of reading is unclear, the text seems too difficult, or previous unsuccessful experiences have reduced confidence. Limited access to interesting materials and teaching methods that do not encourage participation can also discourage reading. Motivation can be improved by setting a clear purpose, choosing suitable texts, beginning with short passages, and setting achievable reading goals.

3. Vocalisation

Vocalisation means reading the words aloud while looking at the text. Reading aloud is useful for pronunciation practice, classroom activities, and children who are developing basic reading skills. However, it can become a barrier when the reader tries to read every text aloud, because speech is generally slower than silent reading. Vocalisation may prevent the eyes from moving smoothly across phrases and may cause the reader to concentrate more on pronunciation than on meaning.

4. Lip Reading or Lip Movement

Some readers move their lips, tongue, or jaw silently while reading. This habit is sometimes called lip reading or silent vocalisation. Even though no sound is produced, the reader may still process the text word by word as if speaking. This can reduce reading speed and interrupt the flow of meaning. Readers can gradually reduce this habit by reading in thought groups, focusing on ideas rather than individual words, and using a pointer to guide the eyes across the line.

5. Subvocalisation

Subvocalisation is the habit of “hearing” the words in an inner voice while reading silently. Many readers experience some subvocalisation, and it can support pronunciation, understanding, and memory, especially when the text is difficult. Therefore, it should not be treated as a problem in every situation. However, excessive word-by-word subvocalisation may slow down reading because the reader processes the text at almost speaking speed.

To reduce unnecessary subvocalisation, readers can practise reading groups of words, preview the passage before reading closely, use a finger or pen to maintain a steady pace, and focus on the meaning of complete

phrases. The aim is not to eliminate the inner voice completely, but to prevent it from becoming so dominant that it limits fluent reading.

Self-Assessment Questions

Question 1: Fill in the blanks with suitable words.

1. Reading words aloud while looking at the text is called
2. Repeating words silently in the mind is known as
3. A reader may lose interest when the subject matter is unfamiliar or
4. Setting a clear purpose can help improve reading
5. Moving the lips while reading silently can reduce reading

Question 2: Read each situation and identify the barrier to reading.

1. Meena reads every word aloud, even when she is reading silently in the library.
2. Arun does not want to read the article because he feels that the topic has no connection with his life.
3. While reading silently, Joseph moves his lips as if he is pronouncing every word.
4. Priya hears each word in an inner voice while reading and therefore reads very slowly.
5. Rani avoids reading because she thinks that she will not understand the passage.

4.7 Sub-Skills of Reading

Reading is not a single, simple ability. It is made up of several smaller, connected abilities called subskills. These subskills help readers understand different types of texts for different purposes. Good readers use them flexibly, sometimes without even noticing.

Reading subskills are specific, focused abilities that work together to support overall reading comprehension. For example, one subskill helps you find a date quickly in a timetable, while another helps you understand the main argument in an essay. Together, they allow you to read efficiently and effectively. Some of the most important reading subskills include: Skimming, Scanning, Intensive Reading and Extensive Reading.

4.7.1 Skimming

Imagine that you are reading a newspaper. You won't probably read it word-by-word; instead you look at the headlines, subheading, and the first sentence of the story to know what has happened. Or imagine that you are visiting a bookstore to purchase a book. You will read the title and the subtitle, scan the back cover blurb, and check the first lines to see whether if the book interests you. Here the reader was reading the key parts of the text to quickly identify the main ideas in it. This strategic and selective reading method by which the reader gathers the overall and general idea of a text is called skimming. Usually readers choose this technique when they have lots of material to read in a limited time. So they deliberately opt to skim or skip text that provides details. Through the process of skimming, you are assessing the overall quality of the book or article and trying to comprehend the content of it.

Skimming involves numerous strategies. Some people read the first and last paragraph using headings, summaries and other organisers as they move down the page. Some might read the title, subtitles, headings, subheadings, and look through the illustrations. There is another strategy where the reader will read the first sentence of each paragraph. Italicized or highlighted phrases and sentences can also provide relevant information. Skimming also helps find information like dates, names or places. It can be used to review graphs, tables, and charts as well.

Examples of skimming

- Browsing through the magazines to identify the articles that are to be read in detail.
- Reading the travel brochure to get the necessary information that we seek.
- Scrolling past websites and blogs to see if the page has any useful information.

Self-Assessment Questions

Skim through the passage in one minute.

Do you ever feel like your thoughts are moving slowly, or that simple tasks take more effort than usual? You are not the only one. A recent survey found that nearly 40% of adults in the UK experience “mental tiredness” several times a week. This feeling is often called brain fog, though experts sometimes refer to it as mild cognitive difficulty.

Brain fog is not a medical diagnosis, but a common way people describe problems with thinking, focus and memory. It can make you feel confused, forgetful or unable to concentrate, as if your mind is covered by a thick cloud. Unlike a one-off moment of distraction, brain fog tends to happen often and can affect daily life, work and relationships.

Scientists do not yet know the exact cause of brain fog. Some researchers believe it may be linked to small changes in brain chemistry, blood flow or low-level inflammation in the body. However, certain factors are known to make it worse. Lack of sleep is one of the biggest triggers, because poor rest changes how the brain processes and stores information. Stress, pain and anxiety can also slow down thinking, since they take up mental energy and attention. In some cases, health conditions such as long Covid, thyroid problems or autoimmune diseases like lupus can increase the risk.

Although there is no single cure, simple lifestyle changes can reduce symptoms. Getting enough high-quality sleep is essential, so try to keep a regular bedtime and avoid screens before sleeping. Diet also plays a key role. Ultra-processed foods, such as ready meals and sugary snacks, are often low in nutrients like magnesium, iron and omega-3 fats, which support brain health. Instead, aim for a balanced diet rich in whole grains, vegetables, fruit, nuts and oily fish. Blueberries, for example, contain natural compounds that have been shown to support memory in some studies. Staying well hydrated is important too, since even mild dehydration can make you feel tired and less alert.

If you often feel mentally foggy, start by tracking your sleep, food and stress levels for a week. You may notice patterns that help you identify personal triggers. Small changes, such as drinking more water, taking short walks, or cutting back on processed snacks, can gradually improve your mental clarity. If symptoms continue or get worse, speaking to a doctor can help rule out underlying conditions and provide tailored advice.

Question 3: Choose the most suitable title for the passage.

- a) The History of Sleep Disorders
- b) Understanding Brain Fog and How to Reduce It
- c) The Benefits of Blueberries
- d) Medical Discoveries about the Brain

Question 4: Complete the summary.

Brain fog is a common feeling of(1)..... that makes it hard to think, focus or remember. It can become worse because of poor (2), stress, pain and some health conditions. Eating a balanced (3), drinking enough (4), and getting enough good-quality (5) can help reduce symptoms.

Question 5: Match the paragraph with its main idea.

Paragraph	Main Idea
1	A. Possible causes and factors that make it worse
2	B. Ways to reduce brain fog
3	C. Summary and final advice
4	D. Introduction to brain fog and how common it is
5	E. What brain fog means and how it affects people

4.7.2 Scanning

Imagine that you are looking up a word in the telephone directory or a dictionary. Or imagine looking for specific bits of information like the date, time, and venue in a wedding invitation card. The relevant points are taken into consideration and all other unrelated bits of data are ignored. This reading technique in which the reader scans the text looking for relevant information is called scanning. It is a speedy search for an important point or idea. Practice in scanning will help the reader to scan over unimportant words, thereby increasing the reading speed. For scanning to be successful, the reader needs to understand how the material is structured as well as understand what is being read so as to locate the specific information that is needed. Scanning also allows the reader to find details and other information quickly. Scanning is done when searching the indexes of books or looking for a friend's telephone number or finding the meaning of a word from a dictionary.

Scanning involves moving your eyes quickly down the page to seek a specific word or a phrase. When we are searching for a word in a dictionary, we scan the dictionary page for the specific entry. If we have to spot the meaning of the word 'caricature' in the dictionary, we take the page that begins with 'c' and search the word and the meaning given on the page.

Now, let's see the difference between skimming and scanning. Skimming is a lot like scanning, except you are not looking for anything in particular. You are simply looking through the content. For example, you might pick up a book on democracy and skim through it, looking at the main ideas

in the paragraphs, glancing at the chapter headings, and so on, just to see whether or not the book is likely to be useful. If you were scanning the book, you might have been looking for a particular idea or topic, like the birth of democracy in India. Everything else would be ignored in your search. Thus, when you scan, you are searching for something specific.

Examples of scanning

- Reading the time schedule of trains or flights to find one specific arrival time.
- Glancing over a restaurant food list to find the price of a pastry.
- Scrolling past through your phone contact list to find a friend's name.

Self-Assessment Questions

Question 6: Scan the passage and answer the questions below.

Oakwood Primary School 2025/2026 – Information Booklet

ATTENDANCE

Sickness

If your child cannot come to school, please call the main office on the first morning. When they return, you must give a short written note explaining the reason for the absence so that our records stay correct. Please try to arrange doctor and dentist visits outside school time unless this is not possible.

Term-time holidays

The school asks families not to plan holidays during the school term. In special cases, the headteacher may allow up to ten days of absence, but this should be a last resort. Missing lessons can affect learning and exam preparation (see page 7 for details about tests).

SCHOOL CLOTHING

Wearing the school colours is not a rule, but it is strongly recommended so that all pupils feel they belong to the school.

Wearing the school colours is not a rule, but it is strongly recommended so that all pupils feel they belong to the school.

Boys

Boys should wear white or light-blue polo shirts with navy trousers and the school sweatshirt. The blue-and-white striped tie should be worn every day.

Girls

Girls should wear a navy skirt or trousers with a white or light-blue polo shirt and the school sweatshirt.

Shoes and other items

All pupils must wear plain black shoes. Sports trainers are not allowed during the school day. Small earrings may be worn but must be taken out for PE.

The school runs a second-hand uniform sale twice a year to help families save money.

AFTER-SCHOOL CLUBS

There are many clubs for different ages. Children in Reception can join football, dance or swimming. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 can also choose from art, coding, Spanish and study support. Taking part in at least one club is warmly encouraged.

1. What telephone number or office should parents contact if their child is absent?
2. What must parents provide when their child returns to school after illness?
3. How many days of term-time absence may the headteacher allow in special cases?
4. Is wearing the school clothing compulsory at Oakwood Primary?
5. What colour shoes must all pupils wear?
6. Are sports trainers allowed during the school day?
7. What must girls do with their earrings for PE lessons?
8. How often does the school run a second-hand uniform sale?
9. Which after-school clubs are available for Reception children?
10. Name two clubs that pupils in Years 1 to 6 can join.

4.7.3 Intensive Reading

Intensive reading means studying a text very closely with clear learning goals and specific tasks. It is most often used with materials designed for deep learning, such as textbooks. In this approach, the reader works carefully to understand every detail.

This method is sometimes referred to as narrow reading. It usually takes place in a classroom, where the reader focuses deeply on the content of the text. The main attention is on language features and meaning. For example, learners analyse basic grammar structures and work out the exact meanings of words and sentences.

The text is read slowly, thoroughly and often more than once. The main aim is not just to practise reading, but to gain new knowledge and understanding. Although intensive reading is common in schools, it is also used in many real-life situations. People use it when they read contracts, financial reports, research papers, or any document that demands full concentration and careful interpretation.

Features of Intensive Reading

- ✓ **Short, challenging texts:** The material is often brief but difficult, such as a textbook chapter, a news article, or a legal document.
- ✓ **Clear learning goals:** The reader has specific aims, like learning new vocabulary, understanding grammar, or analysing arguments.
- ✓ **Slow, careful reading:** The text is read slowly and attentively to catch every detail.
- ✓ **Focus on language and meaning:** Attention is given to words, sentence structures, grammar patterns and precise meanings.
- ✓ **Repeated reading:** The same passage may be read several times to deepen understanding.
- ✓ **Classroom-based or task-based:** It often happens in class with guided activities, but can also be done independently with serious texts.
- ✓ **Knowledge-building:** The main purpose is to gain knowledge and understanding, not just to practise reading fluency.
- ✓ **Used for important documents:** It is applied to texts that require full attention, such as contracts, reports, academic papers and official forms.

Example: In an English class, students read one page of a news report about climate change. They look up unknown words, underline key ideas, and then answer questions like:

- What does the word “emissions” mean in paragraph 2?
- Why does the author mention solar energy?
- What is the main argument in the third paragraph?

This is intensive reading because the text is short but studied deeply.

4.7.4 Extensive Reading

Extensive reading means reading in a relaxed way, mainly for enjoyment. This method is sometimes referred to as free reading. Its main aim is to build the reader’s confidence and comfort with the language, not to test grammar or vocabulary knowledge. This kind of reading helps people gain a broad understanding of a topic rather than detailed knowledge.

It is closely linked to reading for pleasure. People usually choose novels, short stories, magazine pieces, blogs or other light material. There is no expectation to understand every single word; instead, readers focus on the overall meaning and the flow of the text.

During extensive reading, individuals interact with the language in a natural and meaningful way, moving at their own speed and in their own time. This makes the experience enjoyable and less stressful, encouraging more reading over time.

Features of Extensive Reading

- ✓ **Longer, easier texts:** Readers choose books, stories, articles or other materials that are at or slightly below their level.
- ✓ **Fast, relaxed pace:** Reading is done smoothly and quickly, without stopping for every unknown word.
- ✓ **Focus on overall meaning:** The goal is to understand the main ideas and follow the story or argument, not to analyse every detail.
- ✓ **No pressure to understand everything:** Readers are not expected to know every word; they learn to guess meaning from context.
- ✓ **Learner choice:** People often select their own books or topics based on interest, which increases motivation.
- ✓ **Builds confidence and fluency:** Regular extensive reading helps readers feel more comfortable and natural in the language.
- ✓ **Minimal or no exercises:** There are usually few or no comprehension questions or grammar tasks attached to the reading.

Example: A student chooses a graded reader at their level and reads one chapter every evening for two weeks. They do not look up every new word; they try to guess meaning from context and enjoy the story. At the end, they might write a short summary or talk about the plot with a friend.

This is extensive reading because the focus is on quantity and fluency, not detailed analysis.

Aspect	Intensive reading	Extensive reading
Text length	Short	Long
Difficulty	Challenging	Easier, at or below learner's level
Purpose	Deep understanding, language study	Fluency, enjoyment, general comprehension
Speed	Slow, careful	Faster, more natural
Focus	Words, grammar, details	Main ideas, overall meaning
Typical activities	Exercises, questions, analysis	Reading for pleasure, simple summaries

4.8 Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the ability to understand, interpret and make meaning from written text. It goes beyond simply recognising words; it involves thinking about what those words mean, how they connect, and how they relate to what the reader already knows. In simple terms, reading comprehension is understanding what you read.

Reading comprehension is the main goal of learning to read. Without it, reading is just decoding symbols without gaining knowledge or enjoyment. Good comprehension helps people:

- Learn new information from textbooks, articles and reports
- Follow instructions and complete tasks correctly
- Enjoy stories, novels and other literary texts
- Think critically and form their own opinions
- Succeed in exams and in many jobs

Comprehension is an active process that happens before, during and after reading.

Readers:

- Use their prior knowledge to connect new ideas to what they already know
- Make predictions about what will come next
- Ask questions to check their understanding
- Create mental images of scenes or concepts
- Draw inferences (“read between the lines”) to understand implied meanings
- Identify the main ideas and separate them from less important details
- Summarise or retell the key points in their own words

Steps to Build Strong Comprehension Skills

1. *First reading – grasp the main idea*

Read the whole passage once to understand its overall message. At this stage, focus on getting a clear sense of what the text is mainly about.

2. *Second reading – identify the author’s perspective*

Go through the passage again, more attentively, to discover the writer’s point of view. Try to follow the flow of their argument or line of thinking.

3. *Third reading – locate key vocabulary*

Read the text once more with special attention to important words and expressions. Mark or note these key terms, as they often carry the core meaning and help clarify the content.

4. *Summarise the essential points*

Jot down the most important ideas you have underlined or noted. Use these points to form a concise summary that captures the general meaning of the passage.

5. *Handle questions strategically*

Read each question carefully. When answering, return to the relevant part of the text instead of relying only on memory. This helps ensure accuracy.

6. *Avoid jumping to conclusions*

Do not form opinions or interpretations too quickly. Premature assumptions can lead to misunderstanding the text and missing the author’s true message or central theme. Stay open-minded until you have considered the whole passage.

Self-Assessment Questions

Question 7: Read the passage and answer the following questions.

The Power of Small Habits

Many people believe that big changes in life come from big actions. They think that to become healthier, smarter or more successful, they must make dramatic moves. However, research shows that small, daily habits often have a greater impact over time.

A habit is a behaviour that is repeated regularly and becomes almost automatic. Brushing your teeth, tying your shoelaces and checking your phone in the morning are all examples of habits. Good habits, such as reading for ten minutes a day, drinking enough water or doing a short exercise routine, may seem insignificant at first. Yet, when practised consistently, they can lead to remarkable results.

Scientists explain this using the idea of “compound growth”. Just as a small amount of money can grow into a large sum through interest over many years, small positive actions can build up into major improvements in health, knowledge or skills. For instance, reading ten pages a day may not seem important, but in one year it adds up to more than 3,000 pages – several books.

The key to building good habits is consistency, not intensity. It is better to study for fifteen minutes every day than to study for five hours once a week. Starting with small, manageable steps makes it easier to stay motivated and avoid burnout. Over time, these small actions become part of your identity: you no longer say “I am trying to exercise”, but “I am someone who exercises regularly”.

In a world that values quick results, it is easy to underestimate the power of small, steady progress. Yet, lasting change rarely happens overnight. It is the result of many small choices made day after day.

A. Short-answer questions

1. What is the main idea of the passage?
2. According to the passage, what is a habit?
3. Give two examples of good habits mentioned in the text.
4. How does the writer explain the idea of “compound growth”?
5. Why is consistency more important than intensity when building habits?

B. Multiple-choice questions

6. The writer suggests that big changes in life usually come from:
 - a) One-time dramatic actions
 - b) Watching motivational videos
 - c) Small, repeated daily habits
 - d) Having a lot of free time
7. Which of the following is NOT given as an example of a habit?
 - a) Brushing your teeth
 - b) Tying your shoelaces
 - c) Checking your phone in the morning
 - d) Eating a huge meal once a month
8. Reading ten pages a day can lead to:
 - a) About 100 pages in a year
 - b) Exactly 365 pages in a year
 - c) More than 3,000 pages in a year
 - d) No real change in reading ability
9. The passage says that starting with small steps helps you to:
 - a) Stay motivated and avoid burnout
 - b) Finish tasks quickly
 - c) Impress other people
 - d) Spend less money
10. According to the text, lasting change is usually the result of:
 - a) Sudden, dramatic events
 - b) Many small choices made over time
 - c) Following other people's advice
 - d) Having natural talent

4.9 General and Technical Comprehension

General Comprehension

General comprehension refers to understanding everyday, non-specialised texts such as stories, news articles, essays, letters and general information passages. The main goal is to grasp the overall message,

main ideas, supporting details and the writer's point of view. General comprehension helps in daily life, exams, interviews and general learning.

Features of general comprehension

- Deals with common topics and language that most readers can understand.
- Focuses on main idea, theme, tone, inference and evaluation.

Requires skills like:

- Identifying the central idea
- Understanding the sequence of events
- Making inferences ("reading between the lines")
- Recognising the writer's attitude or purpose
- Summarising the passage in your own words

Example

Reading a newspaper article about a new park in your city and being able to answer:

- What is the article mainly about?
- Why is the park important?
- What do local people think about it?
- This is general comprehension.

Technical Comprehension

Technical comprehension involves understanding specialised, subject-specific texts such as science textbooks, engineering manuals, computer documentation, medical reports, legal documents and research papers. These texts contain technical terms, concepts, data, diagrams and procedures. The goal is not only to understand the general message but also to interpret precise information, follow procedures, and apply the knowledge correctly. Technical comprehension is essential for academic success in science and technology fields, and for many jobs that involve manuals, reports and procedures.

Features of technical comprehension

- Deals with specialised subjects (science, technology, medicine, law, etc.).

- Contains technical vocabulary, formulas, symbols, tables and diagrams.

Requires:

- Understanding definitions of key terms
- Following step-by-step instructions or processes
- Interpreting graphs, charts and technical illustrations
- Recognising cause-effect, problem-solution and classification patterns
- Applying information to solve problems or perform tasks

Example

Reading a user manual for a new printer and being able to:

- Understand what each button does
- Follow the steps to install the printer
- Troubleshoot a specific error message using the guide

This is technical comprehension.

Aspect	General Comprehension	Technical Comprehension
Type of text	Stories, articles, essays, general information	Textbooks, manuals, reports, research papers
Language	Everyday, familiar vocabulary	Specialised, technical vocabulary
Purpose	Understand main ideas and overall meaning	Understand precise details and apply knowledge
Focus	Theme, inference, opinion, summary	Definitions, procedures, data, diagrams, formulas
Skills needed	Skimming, scanning, inferring, summarising	Understanding terms, following steps, interpreting data
Example	News article, short story	Science lab manual, legal contract, technical report

Self-Assessment Questions

Question 8: Answer the following questions after reading the passage.

A Rainy Afternoon

It had been raining since early morning. The sky was grey and heavy clouds covered the sun completely. Children who had planned to play outside were disappointed, but some of them quickly found other ways to enjoy the day.

Riya sat by the window with a thick storybook. She had been meaning to read it for weeks, but she never had enough time. Now, with the rain tapping gently on the glass, she finally had a quiet afternoon. Her younger brother, Arjun, built a small tent using chairs and a bedsheet in the living room. He pretended it was a castle and spent the afternoon “defending” it from imaginary dragons.

Their mother made hot chocolate and served it with biscuits. The smell of chocolate mixed with the fresh, wet smell of rain. By evening, the rain slowed down and a faint rainbow appeared in the west. The children ran to the balcony to take a picture. Although their outdoor plans had failed, they agreed that the day had turned out to be memorable in its own way.

1. What was the weather like in the passage?
2. How did Riya spend her afternoon?
3. What did Arjun build in the living room and why?
4. What did the mother prepare for the children?
5. What appeared in the sky by evening?
6. What is the main idea of the passage?
7. What does the passage suggest about dealing with changed plans?

Question 9: Answer the following questions after reading the passage.

How a Solar Panel Works

A solar panel converts sunlight into electricity using photovoltaic cells. Each cell is made of semiconductor materials, usually silicon. When sunlight hits the cell, it transfers energy to the electrons in the silicon. This energy makes the electrons move, creating an electric current.

The current produced by a solar panel is direct current (DC). Most homes and offices, however, use alternating current (AC). Therefore, an inverter is used to change DC into AC before the electricity can be used in the building. Any extra electricity that is not used immediately can be stored in batteries or sent back to the main power grid.

Solar panels work best in bright, direct sunlight, but they can still produce some electricity on cloudy days. The amount of power generated depends on the size of the panel, the quality of the cells and the intensity of the sunlight. Regular cleaning of the panel surface is important, because dust and dirt can block sunlight and reduce efficiency.

1. What is the main function of a solar panel?
2. Which material is commonly used to make photovoltaic cells?
3. What happens to electrons in the silicon when sunlight hits the cell?
4. What type of current is produced by a solar panel?
5. Why is an inverter needed in a solar power system?
6. Name two factors that affect the amount of power a solar panel generates.
7. Why is it important to clean solar panels regularly?
8. What can be done with extra electricity that is not used immediately?

Question 10: Read the short story and answer the following questions

The Last Train

It was almost midnight when Rahul reached the small railway station. The platform was nearly empty, except for an old man sitting on a wooden bench and a stray dog sleeping near the ticket counter. A cold wind blew through the open shed, making Rahul pull his jacket tighter.

He checked his watch again. The train was late, as usual. He had missed the last bus home, and this train was his only chance to reach the city before morning. The old man looked up and smiled. "First time here?" he asked. Rahul nodded. "You'll get used to the delays," the man said with a quiet laugh.

After what felt like an hour, lights appeared in the distance. The train slowly pulled in, its brakes squeaking loudly. Rahul climbed into a nearly empty compartment and sat by the window. As the train began to move, he saw the old man still sitting on the bench, waving gently. Rahul waved back, suddenly feeling less alone.

The journey was long and dark, but the rhythmic sound of the wheels on the tracks calmed him. By the time the city lights appeared, Rahul had decided that sometimes, being late was not entirely a bad thing.

1. What time did Rahul reach the railway station?
 - A) Early evening
 - B) Around sunset
 - C) Almost midnight
 - D) Early morning
2. Who else was on the platform when Rahul arrived?
 - A) A group of students
 - B) An old man and a stray dog
 - C) A ticket collector and a vendor
 - D) His friend and a policeman
3. Why was this train so important for Rahul?
 - A) It was the fastest train of the day
 - B) He wanted to meet someone on the train
 - C) He had a special meeting in the morning
 - D) It was the only train to the city that night
4. What did the old man say about the delays?
 - A) "You'll get used to the delays."
 - B) "You should complain to the manager."
 - C) "This never happens here."
 - D) "You should take a bus instead."
5. What did Rahul see as the train started moving?
 - A) The old man running after the train
 - B) His family waiting on the platform
 - C) The old man waving from the bench
 - D) The station lights going off

6. How did Rahul feel by the end of the journey?
 - A) More angry and frustrated
 - B) More lonely and sad
 - C) Tired and bored
 - D) Calmer and less alone
7. What does the last sentence suggest about Rahul?
 - A) He has decided never to travel by train again.
 - B) He is still very upset about the delay.
 - C) He has become more accepting of delays.
 - D) He plans to move to the small town.
8. Which word best describes the mood of the passage?
 - A) Cheerful and lively
 - B) Quiet and reflective
 - C) Fearful and dangerous
 - D) Exciting and adventurous

Question 11: Read the poem and answer the following questions.

The Old Tree

In the corner of the field it stands,
With twisted roots and weathered hands.
Its bark is rough, its branches wide,
A silent guard where birds reside.

Children climb its sturdy knees,
And rest beneath in summer breeze.
It watches seasons come and go,
In quiet strength and steady glow.

Though storms have torn some limbs away,
It still remains through night and day.
No voice it has, no song to sing,
Yet life it gives to everything.

1. Where is the old tree located?
2. What two phrases describe the tree's appearance?
3. Who uses the tree for play and rest?
4. What does the tree "watch" according to the poem?

5. How has the tree been affected by storms?
6. What does the poet mean by “No voice it has, no song to sing, / Yet life it gives to everything”?
7. What is the main theme of the poem?
8. Identify one example of personification in the poem and explain its effect.

Question 12: Understanding a Bus Timetable and Travel Rules

A city transport authority has introduced a new express bus service, Route E5, connecting the Central Station to the Tech Park. The timetable and rules are given below.

Route E5 – Weekday Timetable (Morning)

Bus No.	Departure from Central Station	Arrival at Tech Park	Stops
E501	07:15	07:45	Market, Hospital, University
E502	07:45	08:10	Hospital, University
E503	08:15	08:40	Market, University
E504	08:45	09:05	University only

Fares

- Single journey: ₹40
- Weekly pass (unlimited travel on Route E5): ₹180
- Student concession (with ID): 25% off on single journey

Rules for Passengers

1. Passengers must board only at designated stops.
2. Large bags must be kept in the luggage area; they are not allowed on seats.
3. Priority seats are reserved for senior citizens, pregnant women and persons with disabilities.
4. Food and open drinks are not allowed inside the bus.
5. If a passenger misses their stop, they must get off at the next stop and travel back on a later bus. No refund is given for extra travel.

Special Notice

On public holidays, Route E5 will run every 45 minutes instead of every 30 minutes. The first bus will leave Central Station at 07:30 and the last at 20:00.

1. Which bus should a student take if they want to reach Tech Park by 08:15 on a weekday?
 - A) E501
 - B) E502
 - C) E503
 - D) E504
2. How long does bus E501 take to travel from Central Station to Tech Park?
 - A) 20 minutes
 - B) 25 minutes
 - C) 30 minutes
 - D) 35 minutes
3. Which stops does bus E502 make?
 - A) Market and Hospital
 - B) Hospital and University
 - C) Market and University
 - D) University only
4. What is the cost of a single journey for a student with a valid ID?
 - A) ₹10
 - B) ₹20
 - C) ₹30
 - D) ₹40
5. Which of the following is NOT allowed inside the bus?
 - A) Small backpacks
 - B) Mobile phones
 - C) Open drinks
 - D) Water bottles with caps

6. What should a passenger do if they miss their intended stop?
 - A) Ask the driver to stop immediately.
 - B) Get off at the next stop and travel back later.
 - C) Demand a refund for the extra distance.
 - D) Stay on the bus until it returns to Central Station.
7. On a public holiday, how often will Route E5 buses run?
 - A) Every 15 minutes
 - B) Every 20 minutes
 - C) Every 30 minutes
 - D) Every 45 minutes
8. What is the main purpose of this passage?
 - A) To advertise a new shopping mall
 - B) To explain how to apply for a job
 - C) To give travel information and rules for a bus route
 - D) To describe the history of the city

4.10 Let us Sum up

In this unit, we explored **reading skills and their importance** in academic, professional, social, and global life. We learned that reading is not merely looking at written words or pronouncing them aloud; it is an active process of receiving, interpreting, and understanding the message communicated by a writer. Effective reading helps us gain knowledge, improve vocabulary, develop language skills, think critically, and communicate more clearly.

We then studied **the reading process**. We learned that reading generally involves three stages: pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading. During pre-reading, we preview the text, examine the title and headings, recall what we already know, predict the content, and set a purpose. During while-reading, we identify the main ideas, understand details, interpret unfamiliar words, ask questions, make connections, and monitor our understanding. During post-reading, we review the text, summarise the main points, evaluate the writer's ideas, and apply the information gained.

Next, we explored several **ways to improve reading skills**. Strengthening vocabulary helps us understand texts more easily and use new words accurately. Previewing prepares the mind for reading and gives an overview of the material. Understanding charts, graphs, diagrams,

tables, and other visual aids helps us interpret information presented in different forms. Reading in thought groups enables us to understand phrases and complete ideas instead of reading one word at a time. Avoiding unnecessary re-reading also improves reading fluency, although rereading is useful when a passage is difficult or contains important information.

Then, we identified **common barriers to effective reading**, such as uninteresting subject matter, lack of motivation, vocalisation, lip movement, and excessive subvocalisation. These barriers may reduce reading speed, concentration, and comprehension. We learned that readers can overcome them by choosing meaningful materials, setting a clear purpose, practising regularly, reading silently, focusing on phrases, and concentrating on meaning rather than on individual words. Effective reading is therefore a purposeful, flexible, and interactive skill that supports lifelong learning, professional success, and meaningful participation in an increasingly connected world.

We also discussed **different methods of reading**, including skimming, scanning intensive reading, and extensive reading. Skimming helps us obtain the general idea or main points of a text quickly, while scanning helps us locate particular information such as names, dates, numbers, keywords, or facts. Intensive reading is used for detailed understanding of short and difficult texts. Extensive reading involves reading longer texts for pleasure, general knowledge, and fluency. The method chosen depends on the purpose and type of reading.

Finally, we examined **reading comprehension**, which is the ability to understand, interpret, and respond to a written text. We distinguished between **general and technical comprehension**. General comprehension helps us understand everyday texts such as stories, newspapers, notices, and articles, while technical comprehension helps us understand specialised texts such as manuals, reports, research papers, instructions, and professional documents. Technical reading often requires careful attention to subject-specific vocabulary, definitions, diagrams, symbols, and sequences of instructions.

4.11 Keywords

Reading: An active process of understanding and interpreting written language.

Receptive skill: A language skill through which information is received and understood; reading and listening are receptive skills.

Pre-reading: The stage before detailed reading, when the reader previews the text, recalls prior knowledge, and sets a purpose.

While-reading: The stage during which the reader understands, questions, predicts, connects, and checks meaning.

Post-reading: The stage after reading, when the reader reviews, summarises, evaluates, and applies the information.

Previewing: Examining the title, headings, visuals, introduction, and conclusion before reading in detail.

Skimming: Reading quickly to obtain the general idea or gist of a text without studying every detail.

Scanning: Reading quickly to locate particular information such as a name, date, number, keyword, or fact.

Intensive reading: Careful and detailed reading of a short text to understand its meaning, vocabulary, grammar, and details.

Extensive reading: Reading longer texts for pleasure, general knowledge, fluency, and overall understanding.

Thought groups: Groups of words read together because they express one meaningful idea or phrase.

Reading barrier: Any difficulty or habit that reduces reading speed, concentration, accuracy, or comprehension.

Vocalisation: Reading words aloud while looking at the text.

Lip movement: Moving the lips silently while reading, as though pronouncing each word.

Subvocalisation: Repeating or hearing words silently in the mind while reading.

Regression: Moving the eyes back to words or phrases that have already been read.

Reading comprehension: The ability to understand, interpret, connect, and respond to information in a text.

General comprehension: Understanding the overall meaning, main ideas, and important details of ordinary texts.

Technical comprehension: Understanding specialised texts, terms, instructions, symbols, diagrams, and procedures related to a particular subject or profession.

4.12 Answers to Self-Assessment Questions

Question 1

1. Vocalisation
2. Subvocalisation
3. uninteresting
4. motivation
5. speed

Question 2

1. Vocalisation
2. Uninteresting subject matter
3. Lip movement
4. Subvocalisation
5. Lack of motivation

Question 3

b) Understanding Brain Fog and How to Reduce It

Question 4

- (1) mental tiredness
- (2) sleep
- (3) diet
- (4) water
- (5) sleep

Question 5

1 – D, 2 – E, 3 – A, 4 – B, 5 – C

Question 6

1. Parents should contact the **main office** (by phone) if their child is absent.
2. Parents must provide a **short written note** explaining the reason for the absence.
3. The headteacher may allow up to **ten days** of term-time absence in special cases.

4. No, wearing the school clothing is **not compulsory** (but it is strongly recommended).
5. All pupils must wear **plain black shoes**.
6. No, **sports trainers are not allowed** during the school day.
7. Girls must **take their earrings** out for PE lessons.
8. The school runs a second-hand uniform sale **twice a year**.
9. Reception children can join **football, dance or swimming** clubs.
10. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 can join clubs such as **art, coding, Spanish and study support** (any two).

Question 7

1. Small, consistent daily habits are more powerful for long-term change than occasional big actions.
2. A habit is a behaviour that is repeated regularly and becomes almost automatic.
3. Any two of: reading for ten minutes a day, drinking enough water, doing a short exercise routine.
4. By comparing small positive actions to money growing through interest over many years.
5. Because regular, manageable actions are easier to maintain and lead to steady progress without burnout.
6. c)
7. d)
8. c)
9. a)
10. b)

Question 8

1. It was rainy and cloudy. It had been raining since early morning, the sky was grey, and heavy clouds covered the sun.
2. Riya spent her afternoon sitting by the window and reading a thick storybook that she had been meaning to read for a long time.
3. Arjun built a small tent using chairs and a bedsheet. He pretended it was a castle and spent the afternoon “defending” it from imaginary dragons.

4. Their mother prepared hot chocolate and served it with biscuits.
5. By evening, a faint rainbow appeared in the west.
6. The main idea is that even when plans change because of bad weather, people can still find enjoyable and memorable ways to spend their time.
7. It suggests that instead of being upset about changed plans, we can adapt, find new activities, and still have a positive and meaningful experience.

Question 9

1. The main function of a solar panel is to convert sunlight into electricity using photovoltaic cells.
2. Silicon is commonly used to make photovoltaic cells.
3. When sunlight hits the cell, it transfers energy to the electrons in the silicon, making them move and creating an electric current.
4. An inverter is needed to change the direct current (DC) produced by the solar panel into alternating current (AC), which is used in homes and offices.
5. A solar panel produces direct current (DC).
6. An inverter is needed to change the direct current (DC) produced by the solar panel into alternating current (AC), which is used in homes and offices.
7. Any two of the following: The size of the panel, The quality of the cells, The intensity of the sunlight
8. It is important to clean solar panels regularly because dust and dirt can block sunlight and reduce their efficiency.

Question 10

- C) Almost midnight
- B) An old man and a stray dog
- D) It was the only train to the city that night
- A) "You'll get used to the delays."
- C) The old man waving from the bench
- D) Calmer and less alone
- C) He has become more accepting of delays.
- B) Quiet and reflective

Question 11

1. The tree is in the corner of a field.
2. “Twisted roots and weathered hands” and “bark is rough, its branches wide”.
3. Children climb the tree to play and rest beneath it.
4. The tree watches the seasons come and go.
5. Storms have torn some of its limbs away, but the tree still remains standing.
6. Although the tree cannot speak or sing, it supports life by providing shelter, shade and a home for birds and other living things.
7. The main theme is the quiet strength and selfless contribution of nature, represented by the old tree.
8. “Weathered hands” and “sturdy knees” personify the tree as an old human being. This makes the tree seem wise, strong and caring, helping readers feel an emotional connection to it.

Question 12

1. B) E502 (E502 arrives at Tech Park at 08:10, which is before 08:15.)
2. C) 30 minutes (07:15 to 07:45 is 30 minutes.)
3. B) Hospital and University
4. C) ₹30 (25% off ₹40 = ₹10 discount, so ₹40 – ₹10 = ₹30.)
5. C) Open drinks
6. B) Get off at the next stop and travel back later.
7. D) Every 45 minutes
8. C) To give travel information and rules for a bus route

4.13 Check Your Progress**A. Choose the correct answer.**

1. Reading is called a receptive skill because it involves:
 - a) Producing speech
 - b) Receiving and understanding written information
 - c) Writing paragraphs
 - d) Memorising words

2. Reading comprehension means:
 - a) Pronouncing every word correctly
 - b) Reading very quickly
 - c) Understanding and interpreting a written text
 - d) Copying information from a text
3. General comprehension mainly deals with:
 - a) Specialised technical instructions
 - b) Grammar exercises only
 - c) Mathematical formulas
 - d) The overall meaning of ordinary texts
4. Technical comprehension requires the reader to understand:
 - a) Only the title of a text
 - b) Specialised terms, instructions, symbols, and procedures
 - c) Only the writer's name
 - d) The length of a paragraph
5. Which stage comes before detailed reading?
 - a) Post-reading
 - b) While-reading
 - c) Pre-reading
 - d) Re-reading
6. Intensive reading is mainly used for:
 - a) Reading a novel for pleasure
 - b) Understanding a short text in detail
 - c) Finding a telephone number
 - d) Looking at pictures
7. Extensive reading is generally done for:
 - a) Detailed grammatical analysis
 - b) Finding one particular date
 - c) Pleasure, general understanding, and fluency
 - d) Memorising every sentence

8. Skimming is used to:

- a) Find a specific number
- b) Study every word carefully
- c) Pronounce difficult words
- d) Understand the general idea of a text

9. Scanning is used to find:

- a) Specific information such as names, dates, or numbers
- b) The general theme of a novel
- c) The emotional effect of a poem
- d) The structure of every sentence

10. Reading in thought groups means:

- a) Reading each word separately
- b) Reading only the first word of each sentence
- c) Reading meaningful groups of words together
- d) Reading aloud continuously

B. Fill in the blanks.

1. Reading involves the interaction between the and the writer.
2. The three stages of reading are pre-reading, while-reading, and
3. is reading quickly to obtain the gist or main idea.
4. is reading quickly to locate particular information.
5. A word's meaning can often be understood through..... clues.
6. Charts, graphs, maps, and diagrams are examples of aids.
7. Reading words aloud while looking at the text is called
8. Repeating words silently in the mind is called

C. Answer the following questions briefly.

1. Why is reading considered an active process?
2. What is the difference between general and technical comprehension?
3. What activities are performed during the pre-reading stage?
4. State two purposes of intensive reading.

5. How does extensive reading improve language ability?
6. What is the difference between skimming and scanning?
7. Why is vocabulary important for reading comprehension?
8. How do visual aids support reading?
9. What is meant by reading in thought groups?
10. How can excessive subvocalisation become a barrier to reading?

D. Identify the suitable reading method.

1. Write intensive reading, extensive reading, skimming, or scanning for each situation.
2. You want to find the departure time of a train in a timetable.
3. You read a novel during your free time.
4. You study a passage carefully for an examination.
5. You look through a newspaper to decide which article to read.
6. You search a technical manual for a particular safety instruction.
7. You read a collection of short stories to improve fluency.
8. You examine a research article carefully and make detailed notes.
9. You look at the headings and first sentences to understand the topic of a chapter.

Answers

A. Multiple choice

1. b
2. c
3. d
4. b
5. c
6. b
7. c
8. d
9. a
10. c

B. Fill in the blanks

1. reader
2. post-reading
3. Skimming
4. Scanning
5. context
6. visual
7. vocalisation
8. subvocalisation

D. Suitable reading method

1. Scanning
2. Extensive reading
3. Intensive reading
4. Skimming
5. Scanning
6. Extensive reading
7. Intensive reading
8. Skimming

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UNIT - V

Lesson 5.1 - Writing Skills

1.1 Introduction

Writing is treated as both a skill and a process. It is an essential part of effective communication in academic, professional, and everyday contexts. Through writing, we express ideas, share information, record events, and influence others, using language that is clear, accurate, and appropriate to the situation and audience. Strong writing skills help learners organise their thoughts logically, select suitable words and sentences, and present their message in a way that readers can easily understand and act upon.

This unit trains learners to express their ideas clearly, correctly, and appropriately through different forms of writing such as paragraphs and essays, reports, letters, resumes, emails, notices, agendas, and minutes. The focus is on functional grammar and practical formats so that students can handle real-life tasks like applying for jobs, reporting events, and participating in organisational communication.

The unit not only improves accuracy in language (grammar, vocabulary, punctuation) but also develops the ability to organise ideas logically and present them in standard, acceptable formats used in institutions and workplaces. By the end of the unit, learners should be able to move from simple sentence-level writing to complete, well-structured documents suitable for formal contexts.

5.2 Learning Objectives

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Apply functional grammar correctly in their writing by using proper sentence structure, subject–verb agreement, tenses, articles, prepositions, and punctuation to avoid common errors.
- Write coherent paragraphs and essays that present a clear central idea, use supporting details logically, and maintain unity and appropriate tone for academic contexts.
- Prepare standard professional documents such as reports, formal and informal letters, resumes, and emails using correct format, style, and level of formality for different purposes and audiences.

- Draft organisational communication texts including notices, agendas, and minutes with clear structure, precise language, and correct conventions to record and convey information effectively.

5.3 Importance of Writing

Writing is the physical form of language. It is a way of recording ideas from one mind so that they can be understood by another, using words, phrases, and sentences arranged according to the rules of a particular language. When we write, we use a system of symbols (letters and punctuation) to represent sounds, meanings, and relationships between ideas. Good writing turns thoughts into clear, organised text that others can read, understand, and respond to.

Writing is important because it is essential for communication in daily life, in personal messages and letters, in academic assignments and projects, and in professional reports and applications where clear and correct expression helps us interact effectively with others. It shows learning, intellect, and creativity, since a written piece reflects the author's understanding, thinking power, and imagination, and examinations and professional documents often judge a person's ability through their writing. Writing also preserves ideas for the future, as written records such as books, articles, reports, and digital posts can be stored, revisited, and shared across time and space, keeping knowledge, culture, and personal memories alive. It expresses your individual self by making your thinking visible so that others can see your point of view, feelings, and values through the words you choose and the way you organise ideas.

Writing is crucial in education and careers because almost all university and competitive exams test writing skills, academic writing is central to higher studies and research, and many jobs require strong writing for emails, documents, proposals, manuals, and online content. With digital technology, the scope of writing has expanded further: computers and word processors make drafting and editing easier, the internet allows anyone to publish blogs, social media posts, and online articles, and good writing skills open doors to fields like content writing, technical writing, copywriting, digital marketing, and journalism. As students write more, through assignments, journals, and blogs, they develop discipline, clarity of thought, confidence, and strong writing skills that support personal expression, academic achievement, and future employment.

Functional Writing

Functional writing is writing with a clear, practical purpose: to give information, instructions, advice, invitations, applications, requests, or records in real-life situations. It includes letters, emails, notices, reports, memoranda, circulars, applications, CVs/resumes, and most academic and official documents.

The emphasis is on clarity, correctness, and usefulness for the reader, rather than personal expression or creativity. Functional writing often turns complex information into simple, understandable language so that readers can quickly grasp what they must know, decide, or do. Because these texts are used in institutions and workplaces, they follow standard formats and conventions, especially for letters, reports, minutes, and reviews.

Key purposes of functional writing

- **To inform:** giving facts, announcements, updates (e.g., notices, reports, circulars).
- **To educate/explain:** making procedures or ideas clear (e.g., instructions, guidelines, academic writing).
- **To explore/analyse:** examining issues, presenting arguments, or evaluating situations (e.g., analytical reports, review articles).
- **To request/invite:** applying, asking for permission, inviting someone (e.g., letters of request, invitation emails).

Features of Functional Writing

- **Purpose-driven:** every sentence must support the task (apply, inform, request, record, etc.).
- **Reader-focused:** language and tone depend on the target audience (friend vs. principal vs. newspaper editor).
- **Standard format:** uses accepted layouts and structures for letters, CVs, reports, notices, agendas, and minutes.
- **Clear and concise:** avoids unnecessary details, emotional language, and long, complex sentences.
- **Correct grammar and punctuation:** errors can cause misunderstanding or appear unprofessional.

Functional writing	Personal writing
Less freedom in structure and tone.	More freedom and creativity (stories, diaries, personal essays).
Follows fixed formats (e.g., address, date, salutation, subject in letters; heading and details in notices).	Tone can be emotional or informal.
Focused on tasks, decisions, and information	Structure is flexible

5.4 Functional Grammar and Common Errors

Functional Grammar

Functional grammar is an approach to grammar that focuses on how language is used to make meaning in real situations, not just on rules and labels like “noun”, “verb”, or “adjective”. It looks at grammar as a resource for communication, not as a list of rules to memorize. It asks: *What is this sentence doing? What is the writer trying to achieve ?* (For example, requesting leave, giving information in a report, inviting someone to a meeting).

- It connects form (structure) with function (purpose):
- Imperative forms ➔ used for instructions and commands.
- Interrogative forms ➔ used for questions and requests.
- Modal verbs (can, should, must) ➔ used to show possibility, obligation, advice.

Why it matters

Grammar errors can change meaning, reduce clarity, and make writing sound unprofessional. Good functional grammar helps you write sentences that are correct, direct, and easy to understand.

a) Sentence Types and their Functions

1. Declarative Sentences: give information, state facts, make statements.

Function: informing, reporting.

Example: *The meeting will start at 10 a.m.* (notice/report)

2. Interrogative Sentences: ask questions.

Function: requesting information, clarifying.

Example: *Could you send the report by tomorrow?* (email)

3. Imperative Sentences: give instructions or commands.

Function: directing, ordering, advising.

Example: *Submit your assignments by Friday.* (notice)

4. Exclamatory Sentences: express strong feelings.

Function: emotional reaction (rare in formal writing, more in personal writing).

Example: *What a wonderful presentation!*

Sentence Structure

A sentence is a group of words that expresses a complete thought. In functional writing, sentence structure matters because it helps the reader follow your ideas logically.

Types of sentences

- **Simple sentence:** one main clause.

Example: *The teacher explained the lesson.*

- **Compound sentence:** two main clauses joined by a connector like and, but, or.

Example: *The teacher explained the lesson, and the students took notes.*

- **Complex sentence:** one main clause and one dependent clause.

Example: *The students took notes because the teacher explained the lesson.*

Common mistake

Many learners write long sentences without proper punctuation or connection. A good test is: can the sentence be understood in one reading without confusion?

Subject-Verb Agreement

Subject-verb agreement means the verb must match the subject in number. Singular subjects take singular verbs, and plural subjects take plural verbs.

- Singular subject → singular verb: *The student writes the report.*
- Plural subject → plural verb: *The students write the report.*

Typical problem areas include:

- Indefinite pronouns: *Everyone is invited* (not are).

- Phrases between subject and verb: *The list of items is attached.*
- Words like each, every, everyone, somebody are singular: *Each student **has** a copy.*
- *All students **have** a copy.*

Tense choice and consistency

Function: Tense shows the time of an action: past, present, or future. In paragraphs and reports, tense should stay consistent unless the time changes.

- Present tense: general truths, routines, current policies.
→ *The company provides free training.*
- Past tense: completed events, reports of what happened.
→ *The workshop was conducted on 10 July.*
- Future tense: plans, announcements.
→ *The interview will be held next Monday.*

Two functional rules:

1. Match tense with purpose:

- Report on past event → mainly past tense.
- Instructions/manual → mostly present tense.

2. Stay consistent within a paragraph unless the time clearly changes.

Example to illustrate:

- Incorrect: *The seminar was held yesterday and it discusses safety issues.*
- Correct: *The seminar was held yesterday and it discussed safety issues.*
- Incorrect: *The program begins at 10 a.m. and ended at 1 p.m.*
- Correct: *The program began at 10 a.m. and ended at 1 p.m.*

Articles and Specificity

Articles are grammatical words that show whether a noun is general or specific. They are important because they make writing precise.

- **a / an** – non-specific, one of many:
* *a meeting, an interview* (any meeting, any interview)

- **the** – specific, known to both writer and reader:
 - * *the meeting* (the one already mentioned or known)

Articles can change meaning:

- *a report* = any report.
- *the report* = a particular report everyone knows about.

Use of 'a' and 'an'

- Use 'a' before words beginning with a consonant sound: a pen, a university
- Use an before words beginning with a vowel sound: an *application*, an *hour*.

Use of 'the'

- Use the when the noun is specific or already known. Example: The book on the table is mine.

Common Indian-English errors

- Omission of articles:
 - * Wrong: *He is teacher in college.*
 - * Correct: *He is a teacher in a college.*
- Wrong use of *the* before general plurals:
 - * Wrong: *The students must obey the rules in the school.* (if speaking generally)
 - * Better: *Students must obey school rules.*
- *The* with proper nouns unnecessarily:
 - * Wrong: *The Ram went to the Chennai.*
 - * Correct: *Ram went to Chennai.*

Prepositions

Prepositions show relation in time, place, direction, or manner. Common ones include in, on, at, to, for, by, with, from, and of.

- **Time:** *at, on, in*
 - * *at* + clock times, *festivals*: *at 6 p.m., at Diwali*
 - * *on* + days, dates: *on Monday, on 15 August*
 - * *in* + months, years, long periods: *in July, in 2024, in winter*

➤ **Place:** *in, on, at*

* *in* + enclosed space / country / city: *in the room, in India, in Puducherry*

* *on* + surface: *on the table, on the wall*

* *at* + point: *at the bus stop, at the corner*

Common errors

➤ Wrong: *He lives at India.* → Correct: *He lives in India.*

➤ Wrong: *The book is in the table.* → Correct: *The book is on the table.*

➤ Wrong: *We will meet in 5 p.m.* → Correct: *We will meet at 5 p.m.*

➤ Wrong: *The exam is in Monday.* → Correct: *The exam is on Monday.*

Punctuation

Punctuation helps the reader understand where one idea ends and another begins. It is especially important in formal writing.

Main marks

➤ **Full stop:** ends a statement.

➤ **Comma:** separates items or clauses.

➤ **Question mark:** ends a question.

➤ **Apostrophe:** shows possession or contraction.

➤ **Capital letters:** used for sentence beginnings, names, places, and days.

Examples

➤ Correct: We visited Chennai, Madurai, and Salem.

➤ Correct: Where are you going?

➤ Correct: Ram's book is on the table.

Common mistake

➤ Without commas, a sentence may become hard to read.

Incorrect: After lunch we went to the library and then to the lab.

Better: After lunch, we went to the library and then to the lab.

Common Indian-English Errors

Indian-English errors are expressions that sound natural in daily speech but are not standard in formal English.

Examples:

- Incorrect: Discuss about the problem.
- Correct: Discuss the problem.
- Incorrect: Return back.
- Correct: Return.
- Incorrect: Cousin brother.
- Correct: Cousin.
- Incorrect: Pass out from college.
- Correct: Graduate from college.
- Incorrect: Request you to kindly...
- Better: I request that you...

These expressions can sound repetitive or incorrect in formal writing, especially in letters, resumes, and emails.

Common Errors in English

INCORRECT	CORRECT
One of the boys know the answer.	One of the boys knows the answer.
I and my sister go to college together.	My sister and I go to college together.
He is an European.	He is a European.
He entered into the hall.	He entered the hall.
I prefer reading than writing.	I prefer reading to writing.
He is senior than me.	He is senior to me.
He do not like tea.	He does not like tea.
She is having two brothers.	She has two brothers.
They goes to school by bus.	They go to school by bus.
Anu returned back from Chennai.	Anu returned from Chennai.
I didn't went to class yesterday.	I didn't go to class yesterday.
She is living here since 2019.	She has been living here since 2019.
The informations are incorrect.	The information is incorrect.
He gave me an advice.	He gave me some advice. / He gave me a piece of advice.
She told to me the news.	She told me the news.
He explained me the problem.	He explained the problem to me.

We discussed about the plan.	We discussed the plan.
The meeting was postponed to tomorrow.	The meeting has been postponed to tomorrow.
I am liking this book.	I like this book.
She is more smarter than him.	She is smarter than he is.
I am fond to eat sweets.	I am fond of eating sweets.
He resembles with his mother.	He resembles his mother.
We regret for the inconvenience.	We regret the inconvenience.
Let's go for a walk, do we?	Let's go for a walk, shall we?
One must do his duty.	One must do one's duty.
I am still remembering his service.	I still remember his service.
He is married with his cousin.	He is married to his cousin.
I am having an uncle in Madras.	I have an uncle in Madras.
We look forward to see you all.	We look forward to seeing you all.
My wife and myself like chocolate.	My wife and I like chocolate.
Each of the players were given a reward.	Each of the players was given a reward.
He has passed the examination four years ago.	He passed the examination four years ago.
He had gone to Delhi last week.	He went to Delhi last week.
You pressed your hand on my paining shoulder.	You pressed your hand on my aching shoulder.
Put your sign above the line.	Put your signature above the line.
Everyday he writes a new poetry.	Everyday he writes a new poem.
I am staying here for six years.	I have been staying here for six years.
He rang me up today morning.	He rang me up this morning.
The examination will commence from Wednesday	The examination will commence on Wednesday
Let us go by foot.	Let us go on foot.
Ten miles are a long distance to walk.	Ten miles is a long distance to walk.
One of the teachers are absent today.	One of the teachers is absent today.
I congratulated for his success.	I congratulated on his success.
Bread and butter are good for breakfast.	Bread and butter is good for breakfast.
He purchased equipments worth fifty thousand rupees.	He purchased equipment worth fifty thousand rupees.

Self-Assessment Questions**Question 1: Correct the following sentences.**

1. She do her homework every day.
2. Each of the students have a pen.
3. The teacher and the principal is in the office.
4. My friend don't know the answer.
5. He has wrote the report yesterday.
6. I am going to library every Sunday.
7. She finished her work and goes home.
8. The police is coming soon.
9. The news are very surprising.
10. He is one of the boy who was absent.
11. He returned back to his home town last week.
12. We are discussing about the new project.
13. He suggested me to take rest.
14. She told that do not be late.
15. He explained me about the rules.
16. I am having a headache now.
17. He did not understood the question.
18. She is good in mathematics.
19. Please reply me as soon as possible.
20. I requested to him for help.
21. He do not like coffee.
22. She went to school and meets her friends.
23. I am studying in Sunday.
24. She is good in English.
25. Please discuss about the matter.

Question 2: Correct the passage.

Yesterday, my friend Anu and I goes to the market. We was planning to buy some new clothes. When we reached there, we see a lot of crowd. Anu told me that she want to buy a dress for her sister's wedding. She tried many dresses but she could not found the right size. Finally, she buy a blue saree and pay cash. On the way back, we stops at a small restaurant and ordered tea. We enjoys our tea and returns home by evening.

5.5 Paragraphs and Essays

5.5.1 Paragraph

A paragraph is the basic unit of composition. A paragraph develops one main idea with supporting sentences and a concluding sentence. It should be coherent (logical sequence) and unified (all sentences related to the topic sentence). It is the basic unit of writing between a sentence and an essay. In academic and functional writing, each paragraph usually focuses on a single point that supports the overall purpose of the text.

Structure of a paragraph

A well-formed paragraph has three main parts:

1. Topic Sentence:

- Usually the first sentence.
- States the main idea or controlling idea of the paragraph.

Example: Reading plays an important role in a student's academic growth.

2. Supporting Sentences (body)

- Explain, describe, give reasons, examples, or evidence for the topic sentence.
- May include definitions, facts, illustrations, or short explanations.
- All supporting sentences must relate directly to the topic sentence.

3. Concluding Sentence

- The last sentence of the paragraph.
- Summarises the main idea or gives a final comment.
- Sometimes links to the next paragraph.

Topic sentence ➔ Supporting sentences ➔ Concluding sentence
Characteristics of a good paragraph

A good paragraph should have the following qualities:

1. Unity

- All sentences focus on one main idea expressed in the topic sentence.
- No sentence should be off-topic or introduce a new idea that belongs in another paragraph.

2. Coherence

- Ideas flow in a logical order.
- Sentences are connected with appropriate linking words (first, next, however, therefore, finally, for example).
- Repetition of key words or use of pronouns helps maintain continuity.

3. Adequate development

- The main idea is fully explained with enough details, examples, or reasons.
- The paragraph is neither too short (under-developed) nor too long and unfocused.

4. Clear topic sentence

- The controlling idea is clearly stated, usually at the beginning.
- Readers can quickly understand what the paragraph is about.

5. Appropriate length

- In academic writing, a paragraph is often 100–150 words (3–8 sentences), but the key is completeness, not word count.

Types of Paragraphs

Depending upon the purpose and the style, paragraphs are of various types.

1. Narrative Paragraph

- Tells a story or recounts an event in time order.
- Has characters, setting, and a sequence of actions.

Example: A paragraph describing how a student spent the first day at college.

2. Descriptive Paragraph

- Describes a person, place, object, or scene using sensory details (sight, sound, smell, touch, taste).
- Creates a vivid picture in the reader's mind.

Example: A paragraph describing a busy market or a school library.

3. Expository Paragraph

- Explains or informs about a topic.

- Gives facts, definitions, steps, or causes and effects.
- Common in academic writing, reports, and notices.

Example: A paragraph explaining the importance of time management.

4. Argumentative / Persuasive Paragraph

- Presents an opinion or claim and supports it with reasons and examples.
- Aims to convince the reader or influence their thinking.

Example: A paragraph arguing that mobile phones should be limited in classrooms.

Guidelines for writing good paragraphs

a) Before writing

Choose one clear main idea

- Ask: “What is the single point I want to make in this paragraph?”

Plan your supporting points

- Jot down 2–4 reasons, examples, or facts that support the main idea.

Decide on the order

- Time order (for narratives),
- Order of importance (most to least important),
- Logical order (cause → effect → suggestion).

b) While writing

Begin with a strong topic sentence

- Make it clear and specific.
- Avoid very general sentences like “This is about reading.”

Develop the body with relevant details

- Each supporting sentence should directly explain the topic sentence.
- Use examples, facts, or short explanations.

Use linking words for coherence

- Add, contrast, show result, give examples:
- Addition: also, moreover, in addition
- Contrast: however, but, on the other hand
- Result: therefore, so, as a result

- Example: for example, for instance

Keep sentences clear and varied

- Mix simple and compound/complex sentences.
- Avoid very long, confusing sentences.

End with a concluding sentence

- Restate the main idea in different words or give a final comment.
- Do not introduce a completely new idea here.

c) After writing

Check unity

- Remove any sentence that does not support the topic sentence.

Check coherence

- Ensure ideas flow smoothly; add or adjust linkers if needed.

Check grammar and punctuation

- Correct tense, subject–verb agreement, articles, prepositions, and capitalisation.

Check length and focus

- If the paragraph is too long, consider splitting it.
- If too short, add more relevant details or examples.

Model Paragraphs

Use of Mobile Phones by Students

Mobile phones have both advantages and disadvantages for students. On the one hand, they help students access online resources, contact teachers and classmates, and manage their time with reminders and calendars. On the other hand, mobile phones can be a major source of distraction during study hours and in the classroom. Many students spend too much time on social media and games, which affects their concentration and sleep. Therefore, students should use mobile phones carefully, limit their screen time, and follow rules set by their parents and teachers.

Importance of Reading

Reading plays an important role in a student's academic and personal growth. First, it helps to improve vocabulary and language skills, which are essential for writing and speaking. Second, reading exposes students to new ideas, cultures, and knowledge beyond their classroom. Third, it develops imagination and critical thinking by encouraging students to analyse different situations and characters. Therefore, students should make reading a regular habit to become more confident and informed individuals.

Self-Assessment Questions

Question 3: Write a paragraph of 120–150 words on any one topic:

- * Online Classes: Advantages and Disadvantages
- * Discipline in Student Life
- * Importance of Trees

5.5.2 Essay

An essay is a series of paragraphs oriented around a central theme, carrying a consistent tone, attitude and perspective. The word essay comes from French and denotes “a short literary composition on a particular theme or subject, usually in prose.” It presents the writer's ideas in an organised way, with an introduction, body paragraphs, and a conclusion. Essays may inform, explain, describe, narrate, or argue, depending on the purpose and audience.

Various Kinds of Essays

The four main types of essays are:

1. Narrative Essay

- Tells a story or recounts a personal experience.
- Has characters, setting, plot, and a clear sequence of events.
- Often written in first person (“I”).

2. Descriptive Essay

- Describes a person, place, object, or event in detail.
- Uses sensory details (sight, sound, smell, touch, taste) to create a vivid picture.

- Focuses on impression and mood rather than argument.

3. Expository Essay

- Explains or informs about a topic.
- Presents facts, definitions, causes and effects, or steps in a process.
- Tone is neutral and objective.

4. Argumentative / Persuasive essay

- Takes a clear position on an issue and tries to convince the reader.
- Uses reasons, examples, and sometimes data or expert opinions.
- May also consider and refute opposing views.

Guidelines for Writing a Good Essay

a) Before Writing (Planning)

Understand the topic and purpose

- Is it narrative, descriptive, expository, or argumentative?
- What exactly is the question asking?

Brainstorm ideas

- Jot down points, examples, and reasons related to the topic.

Select main points

- Choose 2–3 strong points that directly answer the question.

Make a simple outline

Introduction: The introduction is the first paragraph of an essay. It does two main jobs: The topic tells the reader what you are writing about. The thesis (main idea/position) tells the reader what you think or what your main point is about that topic.

Body: One paragraph for each main point. The body is the middle part of the essay, usually 2–3 (or more) paragraphs. Each body paragraph should focus on one main point that supports the thesis.

Conclusion: The conclusion is the last paragraph of the essay. It has two *main jobs*: Summary briefly repeat the main idea and the key points and Final thought give a final comment, suggestion, or prediction.

Structure of an Essay

Introduction

- Begin with a general sentence to introduce the topic.
- Give brief background if needed.
- End with a clear thesis statement (your main idea or position).
- Optionally, outline the main points you will discuss.

Body paragraphs

Each paragraph should have:

- Topic sentence (main point of that paragraph).
- Supporting sentences (explanation, examples, reasons).
- Concluding/linking sentence (optional).

Use linking words to connect paragraphs (firstly, moreover, however, therefore, finally).

Conclusion

- Restate the thesis in different words.
- Summarise the main points briefly.
- End with a final comment, suggestion, or broader implication.
- Do not introduce new ideas here.

c) While Writing (style and language)

Use clear and formal language (for most academic essays)

- Avoid slang, very casual expressions, and texting style.

Write complete sentences

- Check subject–verb agreement, tense consistency, and punctuation.

Maintain unity and coherence

- Each paragraph should focus on one main idea.
- Link ideas logically within and between paragraphs.

Support your points

- Use examples, facts, or short explanations.
- In argumentative essays, give reasons and, if possible, simple evidence.

d) After Writing (Revision) Check content

- Have you answered the question fully?

- Are all points relevant?

Check organisation

- Is there a clear introduction, body, and conclusion?
- Do paragraphs flow in a logical order?

Check language

- Correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
- Improve weak sentences or repetitive words.

Sample Essay

The Importance of Time Management for Students

Time management is one of the most important skills a student can develop. It means planning and using time wisely to complete studies, assignments, and other activities without unnecessary stress. Good time management helps students achieve better results and maintain a healthy balance in life.

First, managing time allows students to complete their work on schedule. When students plan their day, they can divide their time between classes, self-study, and rest. This prevents last-minute rushing and helps them submit assignments on time. Second, effective time management improves concentration and reduces stress. Students who study regularly in short, focused sessions understand topics better than those who try to learn everything in one night. Third, it creates space for other important activities such as sports, hobbies, and family time, which are essential for overall development.

In conclusion, time management is not just about studying harder; it is about studying smarter. Students who learn to plan their time are likely to perform better academically and lead a more balanced and confident life. Therefore, every student should develop the habit of making a simple daily or weekly timetable and following it consistently.

Self-Assessment Questions

Question 4: Write an essay on the following topics:

- * Environmental Pollution
- * Social Media: Boon or Bane for Students
- * Importance of Gender Equality

5.6 Report Writing

A report is a formal piece of writing that presents information about an event, investigation, survey, or situation in a clear and organised way. Its main purposes are to inform, record, and sometimes recommend actions. Reports are common in colleges (event reports, project reports), workplaces (progress reports, survey reports), and organisations (meeting reports).

Features of a Good Report

A good report should:

➤ ***Be clear and concise***

Use simple, direct sentences and avoid unnecessary details. The reader should understand the main points quickly.

➤ ***Be well-organised***

Information must be arranged logically in sections with headings and subheadings (introduction, body, conclusion, recommendations, etc.).

➤ ***Be factual and objective***

Focus on facts, data, and events rather than personal opinions or emotions, unless recommendations are required.

➤ ***Have a clear purpose***

The report must answer the question “Why is this report being written?” and stay focused on that purpose (to inform, analyse, recommend).

➤ ***Use formal, accurate language***

Correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation, with an appropriate formal tone for academic or professional contexts.

➤ ***Be easy to navigate***

Use headings, subheadings, page numbers, and, for longer reports, a contents page so the reader can find sections quickly.

Steps Involved in Writing a Good Report

* ***Identify the purpose and audience***

Decide what the report must do (inform, analyse, recommend) and who will read it (principal, manager, committee, classmates).

* ***Collect and organise information***

Observe the event, conduct research, or gather data; then group related details together (time order, topic order, etc.).

* ***Prepare an outline***

Plan the main sections: title, introduction, headings in the body, conclusion, and (if needed) recommendations and appendices.

* ***Write the first draft***

Use the outline to write full sentences and paragraphs in a clear, formal style, mostly in past tense for completed events.

* ***Revise and edit***

Check content (are all important points included?), language (grammar, spelling, punctuation), and layout (headings, numbering). Then improve clarity and remove repetition.

* ***Prepare the final version***

Add title page, page numbers, contents page (for long reports), and any references or annexures before submitting.

Format of an Ideal Report

Title

- Clear and specific.
- Example: Report on the College Blood Donation Camp.

Byline / Author details

- Name, class/designation, sometimes date.
- Example: Submitted by Arjun Kumar, III B.Sc., Student Volunteer.

Introduction (first paragraph)

- What was the event?
- Who organised it?
- Where and when did it happen?
- Why was it conducted (purpose)?

Body (one or two middle paragraphs)

- Chronological description of the main activities.
- Number and type of participants.
- Important incidents, highlights, or findings.
- Use linkers: first, next, later, finally.

Conclusion (last paragraph)

- Overall outcome or impact of the event.
- Any suggestions or recommendations for future action.

(Optional for longer reports)

- Recommendations: specific actions to be taken.
- References/Appendices: data sheets, questionnaires, photos, etc.

Tense and style:

- Mostly past tense: was conducted, were organised, participated, attended.
- Formal tone; avoid slang and personal comments.

Model Report (College Event)**Report on the College Cleanliness Drive**

Submitted by Mahalakshmi, Student Coordinator

A cleanliness drive was organised by the NSS Unit of St. Thomas College on 5 August 2026 in the surrounding residential area near the campus. The main objective of the programme was to create awareness among students and local residents about the importance of cleanliness and hygiene, and to support the “Swachh Bharat” initiative at the community level. The Principal, NSS Programme Officer, and about 80 student volunteers participated in the event.

The drive began at 9.00 a.m. with a brief orientation in the college auditorium, where the NSS Officer explained the plan of action and safety instructions. The volunteers then divided themselves into small groups and moved to different streets near the college. They cleaned public spaces, removed litter, and placed dustbins at selected points. Some students prepared and displayed posters and placards with messages on cleanliness and health. Others spoke to local residents, encouraging them to maintain clean surroundings and reduce the use of plastic bags. The event continued till 1.00 p.m., after which all participants assembled back in the college for a short feedback session.

Overall, the cleanliness drive was successful and well-received by the community. The programme helped the students understand their social responsibility and gave them practical experience in working together for a common cause. It is recommended that similar drives be conducted at least twice a year and that follow-up activities, such as awareness talks and poster campaigns, be arranged to ensure lasting impact.

5.7 Correspondence

Correspondence means written communication between people, usually through letters or emails. It is the exchange of information, ideas, requests, or feelings in written form between two or more parties. It mainly refers to letters written for different purposes: official (formal) and personal (informal). Formal correspondence is used for business, official, and academic matters, while informal correspondence is used for friendly, personal communication.

5.7.1 Formal and Informal Letters

Formal Letters

Formal letters are used for communication between persons, business concerns or offices for official matters. They have an element of finality and permanence, and are still the preferred mode of communication in several official situations such as applying for a job or inviting quotations. They are informational, persuasive, promotional and motivational.

As mentioned earlier, formal letter can be divided into two types: business letters and official letters. Both of these types, in contrast to informal forms of communication, follows a certain pattern in terms of format, structure, tone, content and language. Letters to and from suppliers, manufacturers, and distributors, inter-office or company communication, etc., are usually the subject of business letters. Official notifications, apologies, minutes of meetings, cover letters, letters of acceptance institutional communication etc., come under official letters.

A good formal letter will be clear, concise, and coherent. All sentences will be logically connected, and will give additional information on the topic. One sentence will lead to the next, and the whole body will be one coherent unit. While drafting a formal letter, ask yourself whether a particular detail is necessary in the context. The attempt to include a lot of information will only result in crowding the letter.

Parts of a Formal Letter

1. *Sender's Address (Return Address)*

- This is the address of the person writing the letter.
- It is written at the top left of the page.
- It helps the receiver know where to reply.

Example:

No. 15, Gandhi Street Anna Nagar
Chennai – 600040

2. The Date Line

- The date on which the letter is written. Written just below the sender's address.
- Use a clear format: 13 August 2026 (prefer full month name).

3. Receiver's Address (Inside Address)

- The address of the person or office receiving the letter.
- Written below the date, on the left side.
- Usually starts with designation, then organisation, then full address.

Example:

The Principal
ABC College
Puducherry – 605008

4. Salutation (Greeting)

- A polite greeting before the main text.
- This should be in accordance with the situation and the relationship with the addressee.

Common forms:

- Sir/Madam,
- Dear Sir, / Dear Madam,
- Dear Mr Rao, / Dear Ms Devi,

Choose based on how well you know the person and whether you are using their name.

5. Subject Line

- A short line that states the purpose of the letter.
- Written below the salutation, usually starting with Subject:
- Helps the receiver quickly understand what the letter is about.

Example:

Subject: Application for Issue of Bonafide Certificate

6. Body of the Letter

This is the main part, usually in 3 paragraphs:

- *Paragraph 1 – Introduction and purpose*
 - * Introduce yourself (if needed).
 - * State clearly why you are writing.
 - * Example: I am a second-year B.Com student of your college and I am writing to request a bonafide certificate.
- *Paragraph 2 – Details and explanation*
 - * Give necessary information: dates, reasons, references, supporting facts.
 - * Be polite and to the point.
 - * Example: mention scholarship, deadline, required details, etc.
- *Paragraph 3 – Conclusion and expected action*
 - * Polite closing: what you want the receiver to do.
 - * Express thanks or assurance.
 - * Example: I shall be grateful if the certificate is issued at the earliest.

7. Complimentary Close (Subscription)

- * A polite closing phrase before the signature.
- * Common forms:
 - * Yours faithfully, – when you use a general salutation like “Sir/Madam”.
 - * Yours sincerely, – when you use the person’s name (Dear Mr Rao).
 - * The first word starts with a capital letter; a comma may be used after the phrase.

8. Signature and Name

- * Signature: handwritten (in print form, just the space).
- * Name: full name in block letter
- * Designation/Class: if relevant (e.g., Student, II B.Sc. Physics).

Example:

Yours faithfully,

[Signature]

R. Priya

II B.Com, Roll No. 45

Request for Bonafide Certificate

1 2, Vivekananda Street
Reddiarpalayam
Puducherry – 605010

13 August 2026

The Principal
St. Thomas College
Puducherry – 605008

Dear Sir/Madam,

Subject: Request for issue of Bonafide Certificate

I am a first-year B.A. English student of your college (Roll No. 31). I require a bonafide certificate from the college to submit along with my application for a government scholarship for the academic year 2026–2027. The scholarship authorities have asked for proof of my present study in an approved institution.

I kindly request you to issue a bonafide certificate in my name, mentioning my course, year of study, and enrolment number. I will be grateful if the certificate is given at the earliest, as the last date for submitting the scholarship application is 25 August 2026.

Thanking you in anticipation,

Yours faithfully,

[Signature]

S. Kavya

I B.A. English, Roll No. 31

Example for a Business Letter

The Touristers Ltd.
135C, Tiara Buildings
HAL III Stage, Bengaluru 500 035
touristerspvtltd@gmail.com
+91-7234589761; +91-80-2331 2535

04 May 2026

AdHoc Advertisers
365 B, Consort Consortium
JP Nagar,
Puducherry 605 014

Dear Sir/Madam

Subject: Invitation for Financial Proposal

We are happy to inform you that our company is calling for Financial Proposals for the publication of a calendar and diary in connection with the 40th anniversary of the company.

You are requested to submit your proposal in detail with the proposed amount on or before 24th May 2026 by e-mail.

Thanking you

With warm regards

[Signature]

Karan

Manager

Informal Letters

An informal letter, also called a personal letter, is a friendly, casual letter written to people we know well, such as family members, friends, relatives, or close acquaintances. Its main purpose is to share personal

news, feelings, experiences, invitations, thanks, or wishes in a warm and natural tone. Unlike formal letters, informal letters are flexible in format and allow the writer to use everyday language, contractions (I'm, can't), and expressions of emotion.

We write informal letters to:

- Share news about our life, studies, work, or travels.
- Congratulate, thank, invite, or comfort someone.
- Maintain contact with friends and relatives living far away.
- Express personal feelings, opinions, and experiences.

Format of an Informal Letter

1. *Sender's Address*

- Written at the top left (or top right, depending on your school's convention).
- Includes house number, street, area, city, state, and pin code.

2. *The Date Line*

- Written below the address.
- Example: 13 August 2026

3. *Salutation / Greeting*

- Friendly and personal.
- Examples: Dear Rahul, / My dear Mother, / Hi Priya,

4. *Body of the Letter*

Usually in 3 parts:

*** *Opening paragraph***

- Ask about the recipient's health or well-being.
- Mention why you are writing.
- Example: I hope you are doing well. I am writing to tell you about my new college life.

*** *Middle paragraph(s)***

- Share main news, experiences, stories, or information.
- Can be 2–3 paragraphs depending on the content.
- Use a conversational, friendly tone.

*** *Concluding paragraph***

- Give good wishes, future plans, or an invitation.
- Ask the person to reply soon.
- Example: I hope we can meet during the holidays. Please write back soon.

5. *Complimentary Close*

- Informal and warm.
- Examples: Yours lovingly, / With love, / Your friend, / Love from,

6. *Signature / Name*

- First name or nickname is enough.
- No need for full name or designation.
- Note: There is no subject line in an informal letter.

Model Informal Letter – To a Friend

12, Vivekananda Street
Reddiarpalayam
Puducherry – 605010

13 August 2026

Dear Priya,

I hope you are doing well. It has been almost two months since we met after the school holidays, so I thought I would write to tell you about my new college life.

I have joined ABC College for my first year of B.A. English. The campus is very green and peaceful, and the teachers are quite friendly. I have made a few new friends in my class, and we often study together in the library after college. The workload is a bit heavier than in school, but I am enjoying the subjects, especially literature and communication skills.

Last week, we had a small cultural programme in our department, and I participated in a short skit. It was my first time on stage in college, and I was quite nervous, but everyone clapped a lot, which made me feel good. I wish you could have been there to see it.

How are your studies going? I would love to hear about your new friends and teachers. Please write back soon and tell me all your news. We should plan to meet during the next holidays.

With love,

Meera

Self-Assessment Questions

Question 5: You missed an important internal test due to illness. Write a formal letter to the Head of Department explaining the situation and requesting permission to write a supplementary test.

Question 6: You want to apply for a part-time job as a tuition teacher for school children. Write a formal letter to the Manager of a tuition centre, introducing yourself and highlighting your qualifications and availability.

Question 7: Your friend is feeling very stressed about exams and has stopped attending some classes. Write an informal letter or long message advising your friend on how to manage stress and attend classes regularly.

5.7.2 Resumes

A resume is a brief, formal document that summarises a person's education, skills, experience, and achievements for employment or internship purposes. It is usually one or two pages and is sent with job applications or during campus placements.

Purpose of a Resume

- Introduces the candidate to the employer.
- Highlights strengths and suitability for a particular job.
- Helps employers quickly decide whom to call for an interview.

A good resume does not guarantee a job, but it increases the chance of getting shortlisted.

Basic Parts of a Resume

1. Contact Information

- Full name
- Address (optional in some formats)
- Phone number
- Professional email ID
- Optional: LinkedIn profile or portfolio link

Example:

Radhika Krishna

Puducherry – 605008

Phone: 98765 43210

Email: radhika.krishna@gmail.com

2. Career Objective / Profile Summary

- 1–2 sentences stating your career goal and what you can offer.
- Should be specific and realistic for entry-level students.

Example:

To obtain an entry-level position as a customer service executive in a reputed organisation where I can use my communication skills and grow professionally.

3. Educational Qualifications

- List in reverse chronological order (most recent first).
- Mention course, institution, university/board, year, and marks/CGPA (if good).

Example:

- B.Com, Pondicherry University – 2026 – 78%
- HSC, Nirmala Bhavan Higher Secondary School – 2023 – 82%

4. Skills

- Technical skills (e.g., MS Office, Tally, C programming).
- Language skills (e.g., English, Tamil, Hindi).
- Soft skills (e.g., communication, teamwork, problem solving).

Example:

- Computer skills: MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint
- Languages: English, Tamil (fluent), Hindi (basic)
- Soft skills: Good communication, leadership, time management

5. Experience / Internships / Projects (if any)

- Part-time jobs, internships, volunteer work, major projects.
- Mention organisation, role, duration, and main responsibilities.

Example:

- Internship: Customer Support Intern, State Bank of India, Pondicherry – May-July 2025
 - * Assisted customers with account enquiries.
 - * Maintained daily records of customer visits.

6. Achievements and Co-curricular Activities

- Academic awards, scholarships.
- Participation in seminars, workshops, NSS/NCC, cultural events.

Example:

- Won First Prize in college-level debate competition, 2025.
- Member, College NSS Unit (2024-2026).

7. Hobbies/Interests (optional)

- Only if relevant or to show personality (reading, blogging, sports, music).

8. References

- Names and contact details of teachers or employers who can vouch for you.
- Often written as “Available on request” for short resumes.

Tips for a Good Student Resume

- Keep it short: usually 1 page for freshers.
- Use bullet points for clarity.
- Avoid fancy fonts and colours; keep the layout clean and consistent.
- Do not include personal details like age, religion, marital status, unless specifically asked.
- Make sure the email ID looks professional (no nicknames).
- Tailor the objective and skills to the job applied for (teacher, office assistant, sales executive, etc.).

RADHIKA KRISHNA

12, Vivekananda Street, Reddiarpalayam Puducherry – 605010

Phone: 98765 43210

Email: radhika.krishna@gmail.com

Career Objective

To obtain an entry-level position as a Customer Service Executive in a reputed organisation where I can use my communication skills, computer knowledge, and internship experience to contribute to the company's growth and develop my professional career.

Educational Qualifications

- B.Com (Final Year, 2024–2027), Pondicherry University Expected graduation: June 2027
- Higher Secondary (HSC), 2024, Nirmala Bhavan HSS, Puducherry Percentage: 82%

- Secondary School (SSLC), 2022, Nirmala Bhavan HSS, Puducherry
Percentage: 88%

Experience / Internship

Customer Support Intern

State Bank of India, Puducherry

May 2025 – July 2025

- Assisted customers with account-related queries and basic transactions.
- Guided customers in filling forms and using online banking services.
- Maintained daily records of customer visits and feedback.
- Learned to work under pressure and handle multiple tasks.

Skills

- **Computer Skills:** MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint, basic Tally
- **Languages:** English (fluent), Tamil (fluent), Hindi (basic)
- **Soft Skills:** Good communication, customer handling, teamwork, time management, problem solving

Projects

- **College Project:** “Customer Satisfaction in Retail Banking”
 - Conducted a small survey among bank customers.
 - Prepared a report on common issues and suggestions for improvement.

Achievements and Co-curricular Activities

- Member, College NSS Unit (2024–2026)
- Participated in inter-college debate competition (2025)
- Attended workshop on “Communication Skills for Career Growth” (2025)

Hobbies

- Reading
- Blogging on career and study tips
- Volunteering in community service activities

References

Available on request.

Cover Letter

A cover letter is a short formal letter sent with a resume when applying for a job. It explains:

- Which position you are applying for.
- Why you are interested in that job and organisation.
- How your skills and experience match the job requirements.

It complements the resume by giving more detail about key experiences and showing your motivation.

Basic Format of a Cover Letter

1. Header (your contact details)

- Name, address, phone, email, date.

2. Receiver's details

- Name/designation of hiring manager (if known), company name, address.

3. Salutation

- Dear Mr/Ms [Name], or Dear Hiring Manager,

4. Opening paragraph

- State the position you are applying for.
- Mention how you learned about the vacancy.
- Brief professional introduction.

5. Body paragraph(s)

- Explain why you are interested in the job/company.
- Highlight 2–3 key skills/experiences that match the job.
- Give brief examples (do not simply repeat the resume in paragraph form).

6. Closing paragraph

- Restate your interest.
- Request an interview.
- Thank the reader for their time.

7. Complimentary close and signature

- Yours sincerely, / Sincerely,
- Signature (if printed) and full name.

Radhika Krishna

12, Vivekananda Street

Reddiarpalayam

Puducherry – 605010

Phone: 98765 43210

Email: radhika.krishna@gmail.com

14 August 2026

The Human Resources Manager

ABC Enterprises Ltd.

#15, Industrial Estate

Chennai – 600032

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to apply for the position of Customer Service Executive advertised in your company website on 10 August 2026. I am a final-year B.Com student of Pondicherry University, and I expect to graduate in June 2027.

I am interested in this role because I enjoy interacting with people and solving their problems. During my internship at State Bank of India, Pondicherry, I handled customer queries, maintained records, and learned to work under pressure. My communication skills, patience, and computer knowledge (MS Office) will enable me to serve your customers effectively.

I am confident that my education and internship experience make me a suitable candidate for this position. I would be grateful for an opportunity to discuss my application further in an interview. Thank you for considering my application.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Radhika Krishna

5.7.3 Emails

An email (electronic mail) is a digital message sent over the internet. It is used for personal, academic, and professional communication. It has become one of the quickest ways to communicate in writing. In this unit, the focus is on formal/professional emails (to teachers, employers, organisations, etc.), which must be clear, polite, and well-structured.

Basic Format of an Email

A standard professional email has these parts:

- **To** – Recipient's email address.
- **Cc (optional)** – Others who should receive a copy.
- **Bcc (optional)** – Hidden copy; recipients cannot see these addresses.
- **Subject Line** – A short, clear line that states the purpose of the email.
- **Salutation / Greeting** – e.g., Dear Sir/Madam, / Dear Mr Rao, / Hello Dr Devi,
- **Opening sentence** – States why you are writing.
- **Body** – Main message in short, clear paragraphs.
- **Closing sentence** – Polite request or expected action.
- **Sign-off** – e.g., Regards, / Sincerely, / Thank you,
- **Signature** – Your name, class/designation, contact details (if needed).

Steps to Writing an Effective Email

1. Decide your purpose and audience

- Why are you writing? (request, enquiry, application, complaint, information)
- Who will read it? (teacher, manager, company)

2. Write a clear subject line

- Keep it short (5–8 words).
- Be specific: Request for Bonafide Certificate / Application for Internship

3. Use an appropriate greeting

- Formal: Dear Sir/Madam, / Dear Mr Rao,
- Less formal (if you know the person): Hello Dr Devi, / Hi Ms Priya,

4. State your purpose in the first sentence

- Example: I am writing to request a bonafide certificate for my scholarship application.

5. Write a short, focused body

- Use 2–3 short paragraphs.
- Give only necessary details (dates, reasons, references).
- Use simple sentences and clear language.

6. Include a clear call to action

- What do you want the reader to do?
- Example: Could you please issue the certificate by 25 August?
- Example: I would be grateful if you could share the details of the internship.

7. End with a polite closing sentence

- Example: Thank you for your time and consideration.
- Example: I look forward to your reply.

8. Choose a suitable sign-off and signature

- Sign-off: Regards, / Sincerely, / Thank you,
- Signature: Full name, class/designation, phone number (if needed).

9. Check recipient fields and proofread

- Make sure the email address is correct.
- Use Cc/Bcc appropriately.
- Check spelling, grammar, and tone before sending.

Model Email 1 – Request for Bonafide Certificate

To: principal@abccollege.edu.in

Subject: Request for Bonafide Certificate

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a first-year B.A. English student of your college (Roll No. 31). I require a bonafide certificate to submit along with my application for a government scholarship for the academic year 2026–2027.

I kindly request you to issue the certificate at the earliest, as the last date for submitting the scholarship application is 25 August 2026.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Regards,

S. Kavya

I B.A. English, Roll No. 31

Phone: 98765 43210

Model Email 2 – Application for Internship

To: hr@xyztech.com

Subject: Application for Summer Internship

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to apply for a summer internship in your company, as advertised on your website. I am currently pursuing my second year of B.Com at St. Thomas College, Puducherry.

I am particularly interested in gaining practical experience in accounting and finance. I have maintained good academic performance and have basic knowledge of Tally and MS Excel. I am eager to learn and contribute to your team during the internship period.

I have attached my resume and academic transcript for your reference. I would be grateful if you could consider my application and inform me about the further selection process.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Meera Krishna

Email Netiquette (Email Etiquette)

Netiquette means “network etiquette” – the code of good behaviour when communicating online. Email netiquette refers to the set of guidelines for writing respectful, clear, and professional emails in academic and workplace settings. Good email netiquette helps you make a positive impression, avoid misunderstandings, and communicate effectively with teachers, employers, and colleagues.

Key Rules of Email Netiquette**1. Use a professional email address**

- Prefer an address with your name (e.g., meera.krishna@gmail.com).
- Avoid nicknames or informal IDs for official emails.

2. Write a clear, specific subject line

- Keep it short (5–8 words).
- State the purpose: Request for Bonafide Certificate, Application for Internship – Anju.

3. Use an appropriate greeting

- Formal: Dear Sir/Madam, / Dear Mr Rao,
- Less formal (if you know the person): Hello Dr Devi, / Hi Ms Priya,

4. Match your tone to the audience

- Be polite, respectful, and professional in academic/official emails.
- Avoid slang, jokes, and over-familiar language with strangers or seniors.

5. Be brief and to the point

- Keep paragraphs short (3–5 sentences).
- State your purpose early and avoid unnecessary details.

6. Use correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation

- Proofread before sending.
- Avoid text abbreviations like u, r, pls in formal emails.

7. Avoid writing in ALL CAPS

- ALL CAPS looks like shouting and seems rude.
- Use normal sentence case.

8. Use attachments wisely

- Mention attachments in the body: Please find my resume attached.
- Do not send large or unnecessary files; compress if needed.

9. Use Cc and Bcc appropriately

- Cc: people who should see the message but are not the main recipient.
- Bcc: when you want to hide recipients' addresses (e.g., mass emails).

- Do not overuse “Reply All”; use it only when everyone needs your reply.

10. Respect privacy and confidentiality

- Do not forward private emails without permission.
- Do not share others’ email addresses carelessly.

11. Respond within a reasonable time

- Try to reply within 24–48 hours for important messages.
- If you need more time, send a short acknowledgment.

12. Include a professional signature

- End with a sign-off (Regards, / Sincerely,).
- Add your name, class/designation, and contact details if needed.

13. Think before you send

- Do not send emails when angry or emotional.
- Re-read to check tone, clarity, and correctness.

Common Email Mistakes to Avoid

- No subject line or vague subject (Hello, Important).
- Very long, unstructured messages.
- Informal language, slang, or too many emojis in formal emails.
- Forgetting to attach a file mentioned in the email.
- Using “Reply All” unnecessarily.
- Sending emails with spelling and grammar errors.
- Writing in all caps or using excessive exclamation marks (!!!).

Self-Assessment Questions

Question 8: You need to inform your project guide that you will not be able to meet on the scheduled day. Draft a short, polite email with a clear subject line, reason, and request for a new appointment.

5.8 Notices

A notice is a short, formal announcement issued by an institution, organisation, office, or authority to inform a specific group of people about an event, change, rule, or important information. It is usually displayed on a notice board or circulated in print/online, and it answers the basic questions: what, when, where, who, and sometimes why.

Key Features of a Good Notice

1. **Formal and brief:** Uses formal language; usually 40–60 words at school level, slightly longer at college level.
2. **Clear purpose:** States exactly what the notice is about (competition, meeting, holiday, change of schedule, lost and found, etc.).
3. **Targeted audience:** Addressed to a group (students, residents, employees, members), not to one individual.
4. **Essential details only:** Focuses on what, when, where, who, and how to respond; avoids unnecessary explanations.
5. **Standard format:** Name of organisation, word “NOTICE”, date, heading/subject, body, and signature with name and designation.

Basic Format of a Notice

1. Name of the institution/organisation

- At the top, in capital letters.
- Example: ABC COLLEGE, PUDUCHERRY.

2. The word “NOTICE”

- Centered or in capitals to catch attention.

3. Date

- On the left or right below “NOTICE”.
- Example: 05 August 2026.

4. Heading/Subject/Title

- Short, eye-catching line showing what the notice is about.
- Example: INTER-CLASS QUIZ COMPETITION.

5. Body of the Notice

- 3–4 short sentences giving essential details:
 - * What is happening?
 - * Who is concerned?
 - * When (date and time)?
 - * Where (venue)?
 - * How to respond (registration, contact)?

6. Signature, Name, and Designation

- At the bottom, left or right.
- Example: Ms. Radhika, Staff Coordinator.

Example 1 – Notice for College Event

**NATIONAL COLLEGE,
PUDUCHERRY NOTICE**

Date: 14 August 2026

SEMINAR ON CYBER SAFETY

All first-year students are informed that a seminar on “Cyber Safety for Students” will be held on 20 August 2026 at 10.00 a.m. in the college auditorium. The seminar will be conducted by experts from the Cyber Crime Cell. Attendance is compulsory for all first-year students. For further details, contact the department office.

Sd/-

Dr. R. Kumar

Head, Department of English

Example 2 – Notice for Inter-Class Competition

**HOLY CHRIST SCHOOL,
PUDUCHERRY NOTICE**

Date: 10 July 2026

INTER-CLASS POEM AND CARTOON COMPETITION

An inter-class competition for poems and cartoons for the school magazine will be held on 25 July 2026 at 1.00 p.m. in the school hall. Students who wish to participate should submit their entries to the undersigned by 20 July 2026. Attractive prizes will be awarded to the best entries.

Sd/-

Anupam

Editor, School Magazine

Example 3 – Notice to Residents (Community Notice)

**GREEN PARK RESIDENTS’
ASSOCIATION NOTICE**

Date: 30 April 2026

TEMPORARY INTERRUPTION OF WATER SUPPLY

This is to inform all residents that the water supply to Green Park area will be temporarily interrupted on 6 May 2026 from 10.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. due to maintenance work and repair of a broken pipeline. Residents are requested to store sufficient water in advance to avoid inconvenience.

Sd/-

Shane Shaw

General Secretary

Example 4 – Notice (Lost and Found)

ABC HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL NOTICE

Date: 11 March 2026

LOST WALLET IN PLAYGROUND

A small brown wallet containing important ID cards and a Rs. 200 note was lost in the main playground yesterday during recess. If any student finds the wallet, they are requested to hand it over to the school office. The student who returns the wallet will be suitably rewarded.

Sd/-

R. Meera

School Captain

5.9 Agenda

An agenda is a list of items to be discussed or acted upon in a meeting, arranged in a logical order and usually shared before the meeting. It tells participants why they are meeting, what will be discussed, and in what sequence, so the meeting stays focused and time is used effectively.

Why a Meeting Agenda Is Important?**1. Keeps discussions on track**

An agenda acts like a roadmap for the meeting. It lists the topics to be discussed in order, so participants know what comes first, what comes next, and what the goals are. Without an agenda, discussions can easily move away from the main purpose, and important items may be forgotten or rushed. The agenda helps avoid side-tracking and makes sure the meeting time is used to complete the necessary business.

2. Helps allocate time effectively

A good agenda not only lists topics but also shows how much time will be spent on each item. This prevents the meeting from dragging on and ensures that important issues receive enough time, while less important ones do not consume too much. When the organiser sets realistic time limits for each agenda item, the group can manage time together and finish the meeting on schedule.

3. Encourages preparation, participation, and accountability

When participants receive the agenda before the meeting, they can prepare their points, collect data, and think about questions or suggestions in advance. This makes their contributions more meaningful. It also clarifies who is responsible for leading each item or giving a report, so people know their roles and cannot say “I didn’t know.” In this way, an agenda supports active participation and holds everyone accountable for the success of the meeting.

Features of a Good Agenda**1. Basic meeting details**

- Name of organisation/committee
- Type of meeting (Staff Meeting, PTA Meeting, Committee Meeting)
- Date, time, and venue of the meeting

2. Clear, numbered items

- Each topic written as a separate item (Item 1, Item 2, etc.).
- Items arranged in logical order: opening, old business, new business, closing.

3. Standing items (often repeated in regular meetings)

- Welcome by chairperson
- Apologies for absence
- Confirmation of previous minutes
- Matters arising from previous meeting

4. Specific discussion items

- Clearly worded topics (e.g., “Discussion of internal test schedule”, “Planning for annual day function”).
- Sometimes with time estimates or person responsible.

5. Closing items

- Any other business (AOB)
- Announcements
- Date and time of next meeting

An agenda should be brief, clear, and easy to follow.

Model Agenda – Staff Meeting

St. Thomas College, Puducherry

Agenda for Staff Meeting

Date: 20 August 2026

Time: 3.00 p.m. – 4.30 p.m.

Venue: Conference Hall

1. Welcome and opening remarks by the Principal
2. Apologies for absence
3. Confirmation of minutes of the previous staff meeting held on 15 July 2026
4. Matters arising from the previous meeting
 - Review of internal test schedule
 - Follow-up on student discipline measures
5. Discussion of timetable and workload for the odd semester

6. Planning for College Cultural Fest 2026

- Formation of committees
- Allocation of responsibilities

7. Any other business

8. Announcements

9. Date and time of next staff meeting

5.10 Minutes of a Meeting

Minutes are the official written record of what happened in a meeting. They note who attended, what was discussed, what decisions were taken, and what actions are to be done, by whom, and by when. Minutes are used as a reference for future meetings and to ensure that everyone knows their responsibilities.

Key Features of Good Minutes

Good minutes should be:

- **Clear and concise** – short sentences, no unnecessary details.
- **Factual and neutral** – record what was said and decided, not personal opinions.
- **Well-organised** – follow the agenda order; use headings and numbering.
- **Action-oriented** – clearly show decisions and action items with names and deadlines.
- **Written in past tense** – the meeting has already happened.

Basic Format of Minutes

1. Title

- Name of the meeting.
- Example: Minutes of the Department Staff Meeting

2. Date, Time, and Venue

- When and where the meeting was held.
- Example: Date: 10 August 2026, Time: 10.30 a.m. – 11.30 a.m., Venue: Staff Room, Department of English

3. Chairperson / Presiding Officer

- Name and designation of the person who chaired the meeting.

4. Minute-taker (optional in short versions)

- Name of the person who recorded the minutes.

5. Attendees

- List of members present.
- You may also mention key absentees (with reasons, if known).

6. Confirmation of Previous Minutes (if applicable)

- Note that the minutes of the last meeting were read and approved.

7. Agenda Items / Proceedings

- Numbered points following the agenda.
- For each item:
 - * Brief summary of discussion.
 - * Decisions taken.
 - * Action items (who will do what, by when).

8. Other Matters / Any Other Business (AOB)

- Any additional points raised during the meeting.

9. Time of Closure and Next Meeting (optional)

- When the meeting ended.
- Proposed date/time of the next meeting.

10. Signature (in formal minutes)

- Chairperson's signature and/or minute-taker's name.

Model Minutes – Department Staff Meeting**Minutes of the Class Committee Meeting – II B.Com****Date:** 12 August 2026**Time:** 2.00 p.m. – 3.00 p.m.**Venue:** Room No. 12, St. Thomas College, Puducherry**Chairperson:** Dr. S. Kumar, Class Coordinator**Minute-taker:** Ms. Radhika, Faculty Member

Attendees (Faculty):

1. Dr. S. Kumar (Class Coordinator)
2. Ms. Radhika
3. Mr. T Rajesh

Attendees (Student Representatives):

1. R. Priya (Class Representative)
2. M. Karthik
3. S. Deepa
4. V. Anand

Absent:

None

1. Confirmation of Previous Minutes

The minutes of the previous class committee meeting held on 5 August 2026 were read and approved.

2. Academic Progress and Internal Tests

The coordinator informed that the first internal test for all subjects will be conducted in the last week of August 2026. Students requested one week's notice before each test so that they can prepare properly. It was decided that the test schedule will be displayed on the notice board by 18 August 2026, with at least one week's gap between two major tests.

3. Attendance and Punctuality

Faculty members noted that attendance in some theory classes is below 70%. Student representatives explained that a few students come late due to bus timings. It was decided that:

- Teachers will counsel students with low attendance.
- A "late-comers register" will be maintained.
- Students with continuous late coming will be called for a meeting with parents.

4. Library and Study Facilities

Students requested more reference books for Financial Accounting and Business Communication in the library. The coordinator agreed to send a list of required books to the librarian within one week. Students also asked for extended library hours during exam preparation. The coordinator will discuss this with the Principal and inform the class.

5. Co-curricular Activities

The class proposed to organise a small group discussion competition on current affairs in September 2026. Ms. Radhika will guide the students in preparing the rules and schedule. The event will be conducted during club hours.

6. Any Other Business

Students requested installation of a water cooler near the second-floor classrooms. The coordinator assured them that this matter will be raised in the next staff meeting.

7. Closure

The meeting ended at 3.00 p.m. The next class committee meeting is proposed in the first week of September 2026.

Prepared by:

Ms. Radhika

Faculty Member

Approved by:

Dr. S. Kumar

Class Coordinator

Self-Assessment Questions

Question 9: The Student Council is planning a “Farewell Party for Final Year Students” Draft a notice inviting volunteers to join the organising committee. Include last date to apply and contact details.

Question 10: Your class is going to conduct a meeting to plan the Annual Day programme. Prepare an agenda with at least 6 items (welcome, confirmation of minutes, budget, programme items, responsibilities, any other business).

Question 11: Imagine a short meeting was held to decide on a class picnic. Decisions taken:

- Place: Ooty
- Date: First week of December
- Budget: ₹1,500 per student
- Committee: 5 students to handle travel, food, and accommodation

Write the minutes of this meeting in proper format.

5.11 Let us Sum up

In this unit, we studied the key areas of **writing skills** needed for academic and professional communication. We began with **functional grammar**, focusing on how grammar is used in real-life situations to make meaning. We looked at sentence structure, subject-verb agreement, tenses, articles, prepositions, punctuation, and common Indian-English errors, and practised correcting sentences to improve accuracy.

We then moved to **paragraph and essay writing**, learning how to organise ideas with a clear topic sentence, supporting details, and a concluding sentence. We understood the basic essay structure: introduction with topic and thesis, body paragraphs with main points, and conclusion with summary and final thought.

The unit also covered important forms of **functional writing**. We learned how to write **reports** on events and activities, using a clear format with title, introduction, body, and conclusion. We studied **correspondence**, especially **formal and informal letters**, and examined the parts of a formal letter with model examples such as leave applications, certificate requests, and business letters. We also saw how to draft an **invitation for a financial proposal**.

We explored organisational documents like **agendas** and **minutes**, understanding their purpose, format, and importance in conducting effective meetings. We studied **notices** as short, formal announcements, and practised writing notices for events, competitions, and community information.

Finally, we focused on career-oriented writing: **resumes and cover letters**. We learned the essential parts of a resume, tips for writing a clear and professional one-page resume, and how to prepare a matching cover letter to apply for jobs.

Together, these skills help us communicate clearly, correctly, and appropriately in college, examinations, and future workplaces.

5.12 Keywords

Functional writing: Writing with a clear practical purpose (inform, request, invite, record) following standard formats.

Functional grammar: Using grammar to communicate clearly in real-life situations, not just knowing rules.

Common errors: Frequent mistakes in grammar, usage, or Indian-English expressions that reduce clarity.

Essay: A longer piece of writing with an introduction, body paragraphs, and a conclusion.

Report writing: A formal document presenting information about an event, survey, or situation.

Correspondence: Written communication between people through letters or emails.

Formal letter: A letter written for official or business purposes using formal language and format.

Informal letter: A personal letter written to friends or relatives in a friendly tone.

Business letter: A formal letter used for business or official matters (complaints, enquiries, orders).

Email: Electronic mail used for quick written communication in academic and professional settings.

Notice: A short, formal announcement displayed for a group of people.

Agenda: A list of items to be discussed in a meeting, arranged in order.

Minutes: The official written record of what was discussed and decided in a meeting.

Meeting: A gathering of people to discuss and decide on specific matters.

Resume: A brief document summarising a person's education, skills, and experience for job applications.

Cover letter: A short formal letter sent with a resume to apply for a job and explain suitability.

Career objective: A short statement in a resume showing the candidate's goal and what they can offer.

5.13 Answers to Self-Assessment Questions

Question 1:

1. She does her homework every day.
2. Each of the students has a pen.
3. The teacher and the principal are in the office.
4. My friend doesn't know the answer.
5. He wrote the report yesterday. / He has written the report.
6. I go to the library every Sunday.
7. She finished her work and went home.
8. The police are coming soon.
9. The news is very surprising.
10. He is one of the boys who were absent.
11. He returned to his hometown last week.
12. We are discussing the new project.
13. He suggested that I take rest. / He suggested that I should take rest.
14. She said, "Do not be late." / She told me not to be late.
15. He explained the rules to me.
16. I have a headache now.
17. He did not understand the question.
18. She is good at mathematics.
19. Please reply to me as soon as possible.
20. I requested him for help. / I requested him to help me.
21. He does not like coffee.
22. She went to school and met her friends.
23. I am studying on Sunday.
24. She is good at English.
25. Please discuss the matter.

Question 2:

Yesterday, my friend Anu and I **went** to the market. We **were planning** to buy some new clothes. When we reached there, we **saw** a lot of crowd. Anu told me that she **wanted** to buy a dress for her sister's wedding.

She tried many dresses but she could not **find** the right size. Finally, she **bought** a blue saree and **paid in cash**. On the way back, we **stopped** at a small restaurant and ordered tea. We **enjoyed** our tea and **returned** home by evening.

5.14 Check Your Progress

1. You are the class representative. Draft a notice informing students about an upcoming inter-class debate competition.
2. Your college organised a “Tree Plantation Day”. Write a short report (200 words) on the event.
3. Write a formal letter to the Manager of a bank requesting information about educational loans.
4. Write an informal letter to your cousin describing your preparation for university exams.
5. Draft an email to your professor requesting permission to submit an assignment late, with a valid reason.
6. Prepare an agenda for a Parent–Teacher Association (PTA) meeting in your school.
7. Write the minutes of a short meeting (given in class) where the decision was to conduct a cultural fest in December.
8. Prepare a one-page resume for a final-year student applying for the post of “Office Assistant”.
9. Write a cover letter to apply for the post of “Primary Teacher” in a private school.

5.15 References

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