

ENGLISH SECTION - COMPLETE GUIDE

Master SSC CGL Examination Notes

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1. GRAMMAR FUNDAMENTALS

Parts of Speech

Understanding the eight parts of speech is essential for grammar mastery. Each has specific functions in sentence construction.

Part of Speech	Function	Examples
Noun	Names a person, place, thing, or idea	teacher, city, book, freedom
Pronoun	Replaces a noun	he, she, it, they, we
Verb	Shows action or state of being	run, is, think, become
Adjective	Describes a noun	happy, blue, tall, interesting
Adverb	Describes a verb, adjective, or other adverb	quickly, very, well, yesterday
Preposition	Shows relationship between words	in, on, at, with, from
Conjunction	Connects words, phrases, or clauses	and, but, or, because, although
Interjection	Expresses strong emotion	wow, oh, ouch, hurray

Tenses - Complete Overview

Present Tense:

- **Simple Present:** I write letters every day.
- **Present Continuous:** I am writing a letter now.
- **Present Perfect:** I have written three letters today.
- **Present Perfect Continuous:** I have been writing since morning.

Past Tense:

- **Simple Past:** I wrote a letter yesterday.
- **Past Continuous:** I was writing when he called.
- **Past Perfect:** I had written the letter before he arrived.
- **Past Perfect Continuous:** I had been writing for two hours when he came.

Future Tense:

- **Simple Future:** I will write a letter tomorrow.
- **Future Continuous:** I will be writing at this time tomorrow.
- **Future Perfect:** I will have written the letter by tomorrow.
- **Future Perfect Continuous:** I will have been writing for two hours by 5 PM.

2. SENTENCE CORRECTION & ERROR SPOTTING

Common Error Types

SSC CGL typically tests these common grammatical errors. Understanding patterns helps in quick identification.

Subject-Verb Agreement Errors:

- The list of items **is** (not are) on the desk.
- Neither the teacher nor the students **are** (not is) present.
- Each of the students **has** (not have) a book.

Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement:

- Every student must bring **his or her** (not their) book.
- Someone left **their** (incorrect) / **his or her** (correct) bag.
- The team celebrated **its** (not their) victory.

Error Spotting Example:

Identify the error: "One of the students (A) / have not (B) / submitted their assignment (C) / No Error (D)"

Solution:

- Error is in part (B): "have not" should be "has not"
- "One of the students" is singular and requires singular verb "has"
- Also, "their" in part (C) should be "his or her" but this is a secondary error

Parallel Structure

All items in a list or comparison should follow the same grammatical pattern.

Parallel Structure Examples:

Incorrect: She likes cooking, jogging, and to read.

Correct: She likes cooking, jogging, and reading.

Incorrect: The company is looking for candidates who are honest, reliable, and work hard.

Correct: The company is looking for candidates who are honest, reliable, and hardworking.

3. VOCABULARY BUILDING

Root Words, Prefixes & Suffixes

Understanding word parts helps decode unfamiliar vocabulary.

Root Word	Meaning	Examples
Bene	Good	benefit, benevolent, benign
Mal	Bad	malicious, malfunction, malice
Phobia	Fear	claustrophobia, arachnophobia
Chron	Time	chronological, chronic, synchronize
Ambi	Both	ambidextrous, ambiguous, ambivalent

Common Prefixes:

- Un- (not: unhappy, unclear)
- Re- (again: rewrite, return)
- Pre- (before: preview, preheat)
- Mis- (wrong: misunderstand, misplace)
- Dis- (not, opposite: disagree, disappear)

Common Suffixes:

- -able (capable of: readable, manageable)
- -ful (full of: helpful, beautiful)
- -less (without: hopeless, fearless)
- -ment (action or process: development, movement)
- -ness (state of: happiness, darkness)

Idioms & Phrases

Idioms are expressions with figurative meanings different from literal interpretations.

Idiom/Phrase	Meaning	Usage
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Break the ice	To initiate conversation	He told a joke to break the ice.
Bite the bullet	To endure a painful experience	I had to bite the bullet and tell the truth.
Hit the nail on the head	To be exactly right	Your analysis hit the nail on the head.
Once in a blue moon	Very rarely	He visits us once in a blue moon.
Piece of cake	Very easy	The exam was a piece of cake for her.

4. READING COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

Approach to RC Passages

Effective RC strategy involves systematic reading and question analysis.

Step-by-Step Approach:

1. **Preview:** Read the first and last paragraphs quickly
2. **Question Scan:** Glance at questions before detailed reading
3. **Active Reading:** Read passage carefully, noting main ideas
4. **Answer Elimination:** Eliminate obviously wrong options
5. **Evidence Check:** Verify answers with passage text

RC Question Types:

1. **Main Idea/Primary Purpose:** What is the passage mainly about?
2. **Detail/Specific Information:** According to the passage, which statement is true?
3. **Inference:** What can be inferred from the passage?
4. **Vocabulary in Context:** What does 'X' mean as used in the passage?
5. **Author's Tone:** What is the author's attitude toward the subject?

Time Management for RC

Allocate time wisely: 2-3 minutes for skimming, 5-7 minutes for reading, 3-5 minutes for questions.

Pro Tip: Don't get stuck on one question. Mark difficult ones and return if time permits.

5. CLOZE TEST & PARA JUMBLES

Cloze Test Strategy

Cloze tests assess vocabulary, grammar, and contextual understanding.

Cloze Test Approach:

1. Read the entire passage first without filling blanks
2. Identify the overall theme and tone
3. Look for contextual clues around each blank
4. Consider grammatical requirements (tense, preposition, etc.)
5. Eliminate options that don't fit contextually or grammatically

Cloze Test Example:

"The invention of the printing press was a ____ (1) ____ moment in human history. It ____ (2) ____ the way knowledge was disseminated and ____ (3) ____ literacy rates across Europe."

Options for (1): trivial, pivotal, minor, insignificant

Options for (2): complicated, revolutionized, hindered, delayed

Options for (3): decreased, limited, boosted, restricted

Answers: (1) pivotal, (2) revolutionized, (3) boosted

Para Jumbles/Sentence Rearrangement

These questions test logical sequencing and coherence understanding.

Para Jumble Strategy:

1. Identify the opening sentence (usually introduces topic)
2. Look for chronological indicators (first, then, finally)
3. Find pronoun references (he, she, it, they must refer to previously mentioned nouns)
4. Identify transition words (however, therefore, moreover)
5. Look for cause-effect relationships

Para Jumble Example:

Rearrange the following sentences to form a coherent paragraph:

- A. Consequently, sales increased by 30% in the first quarter.
- B. The company decided to launch a new marketing campaign.
- C. This campaign targeted younger demographics through social media.
- D. Market research had shown a gap in this segment.

Correct Sequence: D → B → C → A

6. ACTIVE-PASSIVE VOICE & DIRECT-INDIRECT SPEECH

Voice Conversion Rules

Understanding voice transformation helps in sentence correction and error spotting.

Tense	Active Voice	Passive Voice
Simple Present	He writes a letter.	A letter is written by him.
Present Continuous	He is writing a letter.	A letter is being written by him.
Present Perfect	He has written a letter.	A letter has been written by him.
Simple Past	He wrote a letter.	A letter was written by him.
Past Continuous	He was writing a letter.	A letter was being written by him.
Past Perfect	He had written a letter.	A letter had been written by him.
Simple Future	He will write a letter.	A letter will be written by him.

Direct-Indirect Speech Rules

Key changes when converting direct to indirect speech.

Pronoun Changes:

- I → he/she
- We → they
- You → I/we/he/she/they (depending on context)
- My → his/her
- Our → their
- Your → my/our/his/her (depending on context)

Tense Changes:

- Simple Present → Simple Past
- Present Continuous → Past Continuous
- Present Perfect → Past Perfect
- Simple Past → Past Perfect

- Will → Would
- Can → Could
- May → Might

Time & Place Changes:

- Now → Then
- Today → That day
- Yesterday → The previous day
- Tomorrow → The next day
- Here → There
- This → That
- These → Those

7. ONE-WORD SUBSTITUTION & SYNONYMS/ANTONYMS

Important One-Word Substitutions

These replace phrases with single words, testing vocabulary depth.

Phrase	One-Word Substitution
A person who believes in God	Theist
A person who does not believe in God	Atheist
A person who is unable to pay his debts	Bankrupt/Insolvent
A person who looks at the bright side of things	Optimist
A person who looks at the dark side of things	Pessimist
A person who loves mankind	Philanthropist
A person who hates mankind	Misanthropist
A person who loves himself	Narcissist
A person who is indifferent to pleasure or pain	Stoic
A person who can use both hands equally well	Ambidextrous

Common Synonyms & Antonyms

Frequently tested word pairs in SSC CGL.

Word	Synonyms	Antonyms
Abundant	Plentiful, copious, ample	Scarce, sparse, meager
Benevolent	Kind, charitable, generous	Malevolent, cruel, unkind
Candid	Frank, straightforward, honest	Deceptive, evasive, secretive

Diligent	Hardworking, industrious, assiduous	Lazy, negligent, careless
Eloquent	Articulate, fluent, expressive	Inarticulate, tongue-tied, faltering

8. SSC CGL ENGLISH PREPARATION STRATEGY

Section-wise Weightage & Approach

Understanding the exam pattern helps in strategic preparation.

Topic	Approx. Questions	Difficulty	Preparation Tips
Error Spotting	5-7	Medium	Practice grammar rules, common errors
Fill in the Blanks	5-7	Easy-Medium	Vocabulary, contextual usage
Synonyms/Antonyms	3-5	Medium	Word lists, root words
Idioms/Phrases	2-3	Medium	Common idioms, contextual usage
One-word Substitution	2-3	Medium	Memorize important ones
Active-Passive	2-3	Easy	Practice conversion rules
Direct-Indirect	2-3	Easy-Medium	Practice conversion rules
Spelling Correction	2-3	Easy	Commonly misspelled words
Reading Comprehension	5-7	Medium-Hard	Practice with time limit
Cloze Test	5-7	Medium	Contextual understanding
Para Jumbles	3-5	Medium-Hard	Logical sequencing practice

30-Day Study Plan

Structured approach for comprehensive English preparation.

Week 1-2: Foundation Building

- Days 1-3: Grammar fundamentals (tenses, parts of speech)
- Days 4-6: Error spotting & sentence correction practice
- Days 7-10: Vocabulary building (roots, prefixes, suffixes)
- Days 11-14: Active-passive & direct-indirect speech

Week 3-4: Advanced Practice & Mock Tests

- Days 15-17: Reading comprehension strategies
- Days 18-20: Cloze test & para jumbles practice
- Days 21-24: One-word substitution & synonyms/antonyms
- Days 25-30: Full-length mock tests & weak area revision

Daily Routine: 15-20 new vocabulary words, 1-2 reading comprehension passages, grammar rule revision, previous year question practice.

English Section - SSC CGL Master Notes

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