

ONE WORD SUBSTITUTION

SSC CGL English Preparation

Introduction to One Word Substitution

One Word Substitution involves replacing a group of words or a phrase with a single word that conveys the same meaning. This topic tests your vocabulary and ability to find precise words for complex ideas.

Typical SSC CGL One Word Substitution Pattern:

Format: A phrase or group of words followed by four single-word options

Skills Tested: Vocabulary, word knowledge, precision in expression

Common Categories: Professions, habits, phobias, government, science, etc.

Phrase: A person who believes in the existence of God

(A) Atheist

(B) Theist

(C) Agnostic

(D) Rationalist

Approach to One Word Substitution:

- 1 Read the given phrase carefully
- 2 Understand the exact meaning of the phrase
- 3 Identify the category (profession, phobia, study, etc.)
- 4 Recall the specific word for that concept
- 5 Eliminate obviously wrong options
- 6 Choose the most precise and appropriate word

Important Categories

1. Professions/People

Astronomer - A person who studies stars and planets

Botanist - A person who studies plants

Cartographer - A person who makes maps

Dermatologist - A doctor who treats skin diseases

Epicure - A person who enjoys fine food and drink

2. Phobias (Fears)

Claustrophobia - Fear of confined spaces

Agoraphobia - Fear of open spaces

Acrophobia - Fear of heights

Hydrophobia - Fear of water

Xenophobia - Fear of foreigners

3. Government/Politics

Autocracy - Government by one person

Democracy - Government by the people

Plutocracy - Government by the wealthy

Theocracy - Government by religious leaders

Bureaucracy - Government by officials

Category	Word	Meaning
Study of	Etymology	Study of origin of words
Study of	Ornithology	Study of birds
Killing of	Homicide	Killing of a human
Killing of	Regicide	Killing of a king
Marriage	Monogamy	Marriage to one person
Marriage	Polygamy	Marriage to multiple persons

4. Science & Medicine

Biology

Biology - Study of living organisms

Botany - Study of plants

Zoology - Study of animals

Entomology - Study of insects

Medical Terms

Amnesia - Loss of memory

Insomnia - Inability to sleep

Paralysis - Loss of movement

Euthanasia - Mercy killing

Other Sciences

Geology - Study of earth

Meteorology - Study of weather

Seismology - Study of earthquakes

Archaeology - Study of ancient remains

5. Habits & Behaviors

Teetotaler - A person who never drinks alcohol

Vegetarian - A person who doesn't eat meat

Ambidextrous - Able to use both hands equally well

Omnivorous - Eating both plants and animals

Nocturnal - Active at night

Learning Strategies

Categorize Words

Group similar words together (phobias, studies, killings, etc.) for better retention.

Root Words

Learn Greek and Latin roots to understand word formations.

Regular Revision

Create flashcards and revise regularly to strengthen memory.

Practice Tests

Solve previous year questions to understand exam patterns.

Memory Techniques:

Mnemonic Devices

Create associations: "Arachnophobia" - spiders make you say "Arach!"

Word Roots

"Phobia" = fear

"Cide" = killing

"Logy" = study of

"Archy" = government

Visual Association

Create mental images for difficult words to remember them better.

Common Word Roots and Prefixes:

- **Phobia** - Fear (Claustrophobia, Acrophobia)
- **Cide** - Killing (Homicide, Suicide, Genocide)
- **Logy** - Study of (Biology, Psychology, Sociology)
- **Archy** - Government (Monarchy, Oligarchy, Anarchy)
- **Theism** - Belief in God (Atheism, Monotheism, Polytheism)
- **Gamy** - Marriage (Monogamy, Polygamy, Bigamy)

Important Distinctions:

Atheist vs Agnostic

Atheist: Believes God doesn't exist

Agnostic: Believes we can't know if God exists

Immigrant vs Emigrant

Immigrant: Coming into a country

Emigrant: Leaving a country

Stationary vs Stationery

Stationary: Not moving

Stationery: Writing materials

Practice Exercises

Exercise 1: Basic Level

1. A person who looks at the bright side of things

(A) Pessimist

(B) Optimist

(C) Realist

(D) Idealist

2. A place where birds are kept

(A) Aviary

(B) Aviary

(C) Apiary

(D) Sanctuary

3. A person who can neither read nor write

(A) Illiterate

(B) Illiterate

(C) Ignorant

(D) Uneducated

Exercise 2: Intermediate Level

1. A person who loves mankind

(A) Philanthropist

(B) Philanthropist

(C) Misanthrope

(D) Altruist

2. The practice of having multiple wives at the same time

(A) Polygamy

(B) Polygyny

(C) Bigamy

(D) Monogamy

3. A person who is made to bear the blame due to others

(A) Scapegoat

(B) Scapegoat

(C) Martyr

(D) Victim

Exercise 3: SSC CGL Pattern Questions

1. A person who is indifferent to pleasure or pain

(A) Ascetic

(B) Stoic

(C) Hedonist

(D) Philosopher

2. The study of ancient writing and scriptures

(A) Archaeology

(B) Palaeography

(C) Epigraphy

(D) Historiography

3. A government by the nobility

(A) Aristocracy

(B) Aristocracy

(C) Oligarchy

(D) Plutocracy

4. A person who knows many languages

(A) Linguist

(B) Polyglot

(C) Bilingual

(D) Grammarian

Exam Tips for One Word Substitution

Time Management

Spend 20-30 seconds per question. If unsure, mark and revisit later.

Elimination Method

Eliminate options you know are wrong to improve guessing accuracy.

Root Words

Use knowledge of word roots to decipher unfamiliar words.

Previous Papers

Study previous years' questions as many words repeat.

Common Mistakes to Avoid:

- Confusing similar-sounding words (Stationary/Stationery)
- Mixing up opposite meanings (Optimist/Pessimist)
- Not reading the entire phrase carefully
- Rushing without considering all options
- Forgetting common categories and patterns

Quick Revision - Must Know Words:

Bibliophile - Book lover

Omnipotent - All powerful

Omniscient - All knowing

Omnipresent - Present everywhere

Autobiography - Self-written life story

Biography - Life story written by someone else

Manuscript - Handwritten document

Posthumous - After death

Contemporary - Belonging to same period

Anthropology - Study of mankind

Sociology - Study of society

Psychology - Study of mind

Final Preparation Strategy:

- 1 Learn words category-wise
- 2 Create flashcards for difficult words
- 3 Practice with previous year papers
- 4 Revise regularly
- 5 Focus on common prefixes and roots
- 6 Take mock tests for time management

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