

ArivArk General English Video Series

One-word Substitution, Prefix and Suffix: Practice Questions

Group 2/2A Prelims: General English, Vocabulary

Real questions: TNPSC previous year questions (Group 2 2024, Group 2/2A Prelims 2025 and Group 4 2025 as marked in the PYQ bank, with the Group 2/2A Prelims 2025 official answers; 2025 official tentative key). Prefix and suffix examples partly from the Government of Tamil Nadu e-content "Prefix and Suffix". Meanings, word lists and practice questions: ArivArk Academy, checked against a standard dictionary.

The basics

One-word substitution = one word used in place of a group of words. *A person who loves books = bibliophile.*

The question gives a description ("a person who ...", "a place where ...", "the study of ...") and you pick the one word for it. Learn the words in **groups** (people, places, government) and learn the **roots** (-logy, -cide, -phile, -phobia, -cracy): one root opens many words.

Prefix = a part added at the START of a word (un + aware = unaware). **Suffix** = a part added at the END (happy + ness = happiness).

The one-line rule: a prefix usually changes the **meaning**; a suffix usually changes the **word class** (noun, verb, adjective).

How often does this come? Recent TNPSC papers asked **13 questions** on these topics (all printed in this PDF): 5 ask for one word for a description, and 8 ask for a prefix, a suffix or a word formed with one. **Study plan:** learn one group from the tables a day, the PYQ words first, and make your own example with each prefix and suffix.

Group 1: people

Word	Meaning
bibliophile	a person who loves or collects books
optimist	a person who always expects good things to happen
pessimist	a person who always expects bad things to happen

Word	Meaning
philanthropist	a person who helps others, especially by giving money (loves mankind)
misanthrope	a person who dislikes and avoids other people (hates mankind)
polyglot	a person who knows several languages
atheist	a person who does not believe in God
glutton PYQ	a person who eats too much
gourmet PYQ	a person who knows a lot about good food and enjoys it
novice	a person who is new to a job or an activity
veteran	a person with long experience in a field
teetotaler	a person who never drinks alcohol
plagiarist	a person who copies another person's work and calls it their own
somnambulist	a person who walks in their sleep (somnia = sleep)
hermaphrodite PYQ	a creature with both male and female organs

Describing words from real papers

Word	Meaning
incognito PYQ	with your real identity hidden
ubiquitous PYQ	present everywhere
ostentatious PYQ	showy; meant to impress people
gregarious PYQ	liking to be with other people
groggy PYQ	weak and unsteady, as after illness or too little sleep
loquacious PYQ	talking a lot
bourgeoisie PYQ	the middle class, interested mainly in money and social position

Roots: one root, many words

Root	Meaning	Words
-logy	the study of	zoology (animals), pathology (diseases), psychology (the mind), ornithology (birds), entomology (insects), anthropology (human beings and their societies), etymology (the origin of words)
-cide	killing, killer	homicide (a human being), suicide (oneself), patricide (one's father), matricide (one's mother), regicide (a king), genocide (a whole people), pesticide (pests)

Root	Meaning	Words
-phile	lover of	bibliophile (books), Anglophile (England and English things)
-phobia	fear of	hydrophobia (water), claustrophobia (closed spaces), acrophobia (heights), xenophobia (foreigners)
-cracy	rule, government	democracy (by the people), autocracy (one person with total power), bureaucracy (officials), theocracy (religious leaders), plutocracy (the rich), aristocracy (nobles)
-archy	rule	monarchy (a king or queen), oligarchy (a small group), anarchy (no government at all)
somn	sleep	insomnia (not able to sleep), somnambulist (a sleepwalker)
a-	without, not	amnesia (loss of memory), atheist (without belief in God)
loqu	speak	loquacious (talking a lot), eloquent (speaking well)

Group 2: places

Word	Meaning
orphanage	a home for children without parents
granary	a building where grain is stored
aviary	a large cage or building for birds
apiary	a place where bees are kept
arsenal	a place where weapons are made or stored
mint	a place where coins are made
hangar	a large building where aircraft are kept
observatory	a building for watching the stars and planets
aquarium	a tank or building where fish and water animals are kept
monastery	a place where monks live
dormitory	a large room or building where many people sleep

Group 3: government (-cracy, -archy)

Word	Meaning
democracy	government by the people, through elected representatives

Word	Meaning
autocracy	rule by one person who has total power
monarchy	rule by a king or queen
bureaucracy	a system where officials, not elected people, take most decisions
theocracy	government by religious leaders
plutocracy	government by the rich
anarchy	a state with no government or order

Prefixes: added at the start, they change the meaning

Prefix	Meaning	Examples
un-	not	aware → unaware, happy → unhappy, lucky → unlucky
in-, im-, il-, ir-	not	imitable → inimitable (PYQ), consistent → inconsistent (PYQ), possible → impossible, legal → illegal, regular → irregular (im- before b, m, p; il- before l; ir- before r)
dis-	not, the opposite of	agree → disagree, embark → disembark (PYQ), honest → dishonest
non-	not	violent → non-violent, sense → nonsense
re-	again	organise → reorganise, write → rewrite, build → rebuild
pre-	before	view → preview, historic → prehistoric
mis-	wrongly, badly	use → misuse, understand → misunderstand (PYQ), aligned → misaligned (PYQ)
super-	above, beyond	natural → supernatural (PYQ), human → superhuman
ultra-	beyond, extremely	violet → ultraviolet (PYQ), modern → ultramodern
sub-	under, below	way → subway, marine → submarine
inter-	between	national → international, state → interstate
co-	together	operate → cooperate, author → co-author

Prefix	Meaning	Examples
bi-	two	cycle → bicycle, lingual → bilingual
over-	too much	load → overload, eat → overeat

Suffixes: added at the end, they change the word class

Suffix	It makes	Examples
-ness	a noun (from an adjective)	happy → happiness, kind → kindness (PYQ), dark → darkness
-ment	a noun (from a verb)	appoint → appointment, govern → government, agree → agreement
-ity, -ety, -iety	a noun	able → ability, vary → variety (PYQ), anxious → anxiety
-tion, -sion	a noun (from a verb)	educate → education, decide → decision
-er, -or	a noun: the person who does it	write → writer (PYQ), teach → teacher, act → actor
-hood, -ship, -dom	a noun (a state)	child → childhood, friend → friendship, free → freedom
-ful	an adjective: full of	doubt → doubtful, care → careful (PYQ), hope → hopeful
-less	an adjective: without	hope → hopeless, care → careless, home → homeless
-ous, -ive, -able	an adjective	danger → dangerous, act → active, read → readable
-ify	a verb	pure → purify, class → classify, simple → simplify
-ise / -ize	a verb	popular → popularise (popularize), modern → modernise
-en	a verb	wide → widen, short → shorten, bright → brighten
-ly	an adverb	quick → quickly, careful → carefully

Spelling changes when a suffix is added: y after a consonant becomes i (happy → happiness, vary → variety); a final e usually drops before a vowel (pure → purify, write → writer); a final e stays before a consonant (care → careful).

-ise or -ize? Both are correct (popularise, popularize); British English uses -ise more, American English -ize. Use one style in an answer.

Common mistakes

Do not mix up	The difference
philanthropist vs misanthrope	phil = love: a philanthropist loves mankind and helps others. mis = hate: a misanthrope dislikes people.
aviary vs apiary	avi = bird: aviary is for birds. api = bee: apiary is for bees.
amnesia vs insomnia	amnesia = loss of memory; insomnia = not able to sleep (somnia = sleep).
-logy vs -graphy	-logy = the study of (biology); -graphy = writing, a record (biography = the story of a person's life).
gregarious vs groggy	gregarious = liking company; groggy = weak and unsteady. A Group 4 2025 question swapped these two meanings.
incognito vs ostentatious	incognito = hiding who you are; ostentatious = showing off. They are almost opposites.
in- is not always "not"	inflammable = easily set on fire (the same as flammable); invaluable = very valuable, priceless.

TNPSC PYQs: all 13 questions with answers

1. [TNPSC PYQ Group 2/2A Prelims 2025] Choose one word to substitute "Creature having both male and female organ".

- (A) Omnigenous (B) Queer
(C) Uxorious (D) Hermaphrodite

Answer: (D) Hermaphrodite. From Hermes (a male god) and Aphrodite (a female god). Uxorious = too fond of one's wife. (Official key.)

2. [TNPSC PYQ Group 2/2A Prelims 2025] A famous celebrity wants to experience a normal day without being recognized, visited a local bookstore. Which of the following best describes their state?

- (A) Ubiquitous (B) Ostentatious
(C) Incognito (D) Gregarious

Answer: (C) Incognito. Incognito = with your identity hidden. Ubiquitous = everywhere; ostentatious = showy; gregarious = fond of company. (Official key.)

3. [TNPSC PYQ Group 2/2A Prelims 2025] Identify the correct spelling of the word which denotes the following sentence. A class of people in society who are interested mainly in having more money and a higher social position.

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| (A) Bourggiese | (B) Borgieoise |
| (C) Bourgeoisie | (D) Bourgeoisie |

Answer: (C) Bourgeoisie. Bourgeoisie (b-o-u-r-g-e-o-i-s-i-e) = the middle class, seen as caring about money and position.

4. [TNPSC PYQ Group 4 2025] Match the one-word substitute in Column A with a suitable explanation in Column B.

(a) Amnesia (b) Insomnia (c) Loquacious (d) Pathology

1. A study of disease 2. A continuous talker 3. Loss of sleep 4. Loss of memory

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| (A) 3 4 1 2 | (B) 4 3 2 1 |
| (C) 1 4 3 2 | (D) 1 2 4 3 |

Answer: (B) 4 3 2 1. amnesia = loss of memory (4), insomnia = loss of sleep (3), loquacious = a continuous talker (2), pathology = a study of disease (1).

5. [TNPSC PYQ Group 4 2025] Which of the following synonyms are incorrectly paired?

(1) Gregarious: a person who walks unsteadily (2) Glutton: a person who eats too much (3)

Groggy: a person who likes to be with others (4) Gourmet: a person who enjoys food

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| (A) (1) and (2) | (B) (1) and (3) |
| (C) (3) and (4) | (D) (1) and (4) |

Answer: (B) (1) and (3). The meanings of (1) and (3) are swapped: gregarious = liking to be with others; groggy = weak and unsteady.

6. [TNPSC PYQ Group 2 2024] Add a prefix to the word 'Natural' to complete the sentence.

His job is to investigate ____ natural phenomena.

- | | |
|-----------|---------|
| (A) in | (B) non |
| (C) super | (D) pro |

Answer: (C) super. super = above, beyond: supernatural = beyond the laws of nature.

7. [TNPSC PYQ Group 2 2024] Select the correct prefix word for 'Violet' from the options given:

- | | |
|-----------|--------|
| (A) ultra | (B) em |
| (C) super | (D) in |

Answer: (A) ultra. ultra = beyond: ultraviolet light lies beyond violet in the spectrum. (This is the question from the end of the video.)

8. [TNPSC PYQ Group 2 2024] Pick a suitable prefix for the given word from the given options: Understand

- | | |
|---------|---------|
| (A) re | (B) ir |
| (C) mis | (D) sub |

Answer: (C) mis. mis = wrongly: misunderstand = understand wrongly.

9. [TNPSC PYQ Group 2/2A Prelims 2025] Choose the correct answer by word creation.

What is the negative case of consistent? What is the negative case of embark?

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| (A) inconsistent, inembark | (B) inconsistent, disembark |
| (C) inconsistent, unembark | (D) disconsistent, nonembark |

Answer: (B) inconsistent, disembark. in + consistent = inconsistent; dis + embark = disembark (get off a ship or plane). Unembark, inembark and nonembark are not words. (Official key.)

10. [TNPSC PYQ Group 4 2025] Match the following:

(a) Careful (b) Teach (c) Writer (d) Kindness

1. Verb formed from a noun 2. Noun formed from a verb 3. Noun formed from an adjective
4. Adjective formed from a verb

(A) 1 2 4 3

(B) 3 1 2 4

(C) 4 1 2 3

(D) 2 1 3 4

Answer: (C) 4 1 2 3. careful = care + ful, an adjective from a verb (4); writer = write + er, a noun from a verb (2); kindness = kind + ness, a noun from an adjective (3). **Note:** that leaves teach with (1) only by elimination; a dictionary does not treat teach as a verb formed from a noun. (C) is the only code that fits the other three, and it is the answer marked in the PYQ bank.

11. [TNPSC PYQ 2025] Choose the correct affix: The squares are ____aligned.

Answer: mis (misaligned). mis = wrongly; misaligned = not in a straight line. (Official key.)

12. [TNPSC PYQ 2025] Add the correct suffix: The markets offer a (vary)_____.

Answer: -iety (variety). vary is a verb; its noun is variety (y changes to i). (Official key.)

13. [TNPSC PYQ 2025] Choose the prefix that gives the opposite of (imitable).

Answer: in (inimitable). inimitable = so good that no one can copy it. (Official key.)

Practice MCQs

1. One word for "a person who knows several languages".

(A) polyglot

(B) bibliophile

(C) philanthropist

(D) novice

2. One word for "the study of birds".

(A) entomology

(B) ornithology

(C) anthropology

(D) etymology

3. One word for "the killing of one's own father".

(A) matricide

(B) homicide

(C) patricide

(D) genocide

4. One word for "the fear of closed spaces".

- (A) acrophobia (B) hydrophobia (C) xenophobia (D) claustrophobia

5. One word for "government by the rich".

- (A) plutocracy (B) bureaucracy (C) theocracy (D) autocracy

6. One word for "a place where bees are kept".

- (A) aviary (B) apiary (C) granary (D) arsenal

7. One word for "a place where weapons are stored".

- (A) mint (B) hangar (C) arsenal (D) aquarium

8. One word for "a person who does not believe in God".

- (A) optimist (B) theist (C) misanthrope (D) atheist

9. One word for "a person who loves mankind and helps others".

- (A) misanthrope (B) philanthropist (C) pessimist (D) glutton

10. One word for "present everywhere".

- (A) ostentatious (B) ubiquitous (C) gregarious (D) incognito

11. One word for "a person who walks in their sleep".

- (A) insomniac (B) pessimist (C) somnambulist (D) novice

12. One word for "a system where officials take most decisions".

- (A) democracy (B) monarchy (C) anarchy (D) bureaucracy

13. Choose the prefix that makes the opposite of LEGAL.

- (A) un (B) in (C) il (D) dis

14. The essay was full of mistakes, so the teacher asked us to ____ write it.

- (A) re (B) mis (C) pre (D) un

15. Choose the noun form of KIND.

- (A) kindly (B) kindness (C) kindful (D) unkind

16. Choose the adjective form of DANGER.

- (A) dangerly (B) endanger (C) dangerous (D) dangerness

17. Choose the verb form of WIDE.

- (A) widen (B) width (C) widely (D) wideness

18. We value our (friend)_____.

- (A) -ship (B) -hood (C) -ness (D) -dom

19. Which word is formed with a suffix that makes a VERB?

- (A) beautiful (B) purify (C) happiness (D) hopeless

20. Which pair is correctly matched?

- (A) aviary: bees (B) apiary: birds (C) granary: grain (D) mint: weapons

Answer key: 1 A, 2 B, 3 C, 4 D, 5 A, 6 B, 7 C, 8 D, 9 B, 10 B, 11 C, 12 D, 13 C, 14 A, 15 B, 16 C, 17 A, 18 A, 19 B, 20 C

Why? Short explanations

No.	Why	No.	Why
1 (A)	poly = many, glot = tongue: a polyglot knows several languages.	11 (C)	somn = sleep, ambul = walk; an insomniac cannot sleep.
2 (B)	Entomology is insects, anthropology human societies, etymology word origins.	12 (D)	bureau = office: rule by officials.
3 (C)	pater = father; matricide is the killing of one's mother.	13 (C)	Before I, in- becomes il-: illegal.
4 (D)	Acrophobia is heights, hydrophobia water, xenophobia foreigners.	14 (A)	re = again: rewrite.
5 (A)	Bureaucracy is officials, theocracy religious leaders, autocracy one person.	15 (B)	-ness makes a noun from an adjective.
6 (B)	api = bee; an aviary is for birds.	16 (C)	-ous makes an adjective; endanger is a verb.
7 (C)	A mint makes coins; a hangar keeps aircraft.	17 (A)	-en makes a verb; width is a noun, widely an adverb.
8 (D)	a = without, theos = God; a theist believes in God.	18 (A)	friend + ship = friendship.

No.	Why	No.	Why
9 (B)	phil = love, anthropos = man; a misanthrope hates people.	19 (B)	-ify makes a verb: pure becomes purify.
10 (B)	Ubiquitous: mobile phones are ubiquitous today.	20 (C)	Aviary is birds, apiary bees, mint coins.

More practice: search **SUBSTITUTION** on arivark.com for this PDF, and follow t.me/arivarkacademy for daily questions.

