

CDS ENGLISH PRACTICE QUESTION SERIES

#002 / 2026 / VEF

Topic Area: Spotting Errors in Grammar

Set A & Set B | 30 Questions | Higher-Order, Exam-Level Difficulty

Name of Exam	CDS (Combined Defence Services) Examination — English Paper
Question Area	Spotting Errors — complex sentence divided into three parts (a), (b), (c) + (d) No error
Total Questions	30 (Set A: Q1–15 Set B: Q16–30)
Time Suggested	30 minutes per set (18 seconds/question pace, CDS-equivalent)
Marking Scheme	+1 for correct response; –1/3 for wrong response (as per CDS pattern); 0 for unattempted
Difficulty Level	Higher-order — designed to probe advanced grammar concepts (inversion, subjunctive mood, concord with collective/uncountable nouns, comparison, non-finite usage)

Format of the Questions

Each question consists of a complex sentence, which is divided into three parts. One of the parts may contain an error. The candidate has to spot the error and mark the incorrect option/part. In case there is no error in the sentence, option (d), which stands for 'No error', needs to be selected.

An example of this type of question is given below:

Direction: Which part of the following sentence contains an error? In case there is no error, choose option (d).

Question: The convoy should reach the base camp by dusk (a) but it got delayed (b) due to a landslide on the mountain road. (c) *No error* (d)

Ans. (a) In the given sentence, option (a) is given as 'The convoy should reach the base camp by dusk' while the correct sentence is 'The convoy should have reached the base camp by dusk'. Here 'should reach' should be replaced by 'should have reached'. So, option (a) has an error.

A PROMISE OF TRUST

SET A: Questions 1 to 15

1. Each of the candidates appearing for the SSB interview (a) were required to undergo (b) a series of psychological tests over five days. (c) No error (d)
2. Neither the Commandant nor his subordinate officers (a) was present at (b) the passing-out parade held last week. (c) No error (d)
3. The selection board have finalised (a) the list of candidates recommended (b) for the final interview round. (c) No error (d)
4. Seldom we witness such extraordinary discipline (a) among young cadets undergoing training (b) at the National Defence Academy. (c) No error (d)
5. He is regarded as one of the most decorated officer (a) to have served in (b) the Indian Army since independence. (c) No error (d)
6. The instructor warned the trainees not to indulge into (a) any act of indiscipline (b) during the rigorous training schedule. (c) No error (d)
7. If he would have prepared more diligently, (a) he would certainly have cleared (b) the written examination on his first attempt. (c) No error (d)
8. The number of aspirants applying for the defence services (a) are rising every year (b) owing to the attractive career prospects. (c) No error (d)
9. She is one of those instructors who always motivates (a) her trainees to push (b) beyond their perceived limits. (c) No error (d)
10. Hardly the parade had commenced (a) when the sudden downpour forced (b) the officers to seek shelter. (c) No error (d)
11. The Commanding Officer, along with his adjutant, (a) were inspecting the newly constructed barracks (b) when the alarm was sounded. (c) No error (d)
12. Despite of facing numerous hardships during training, (a) the recruit never lost his resolve (b) to join the armed forces. (c) No error (d)
13. No sooner the results were announced (a) than the successful candidates began preparing (b) for their medical examination. (c) No error (d)
14. This is undoubtedly one of the toughest challenge (a) a cadet has to face (b) during the entire training period. (c) No error (d)
15. The Adjutant, as well as the junior officers, (a) are required to report (b) at the parade ground by six in the morning. (c) No error (d)

SET B: Questions 16 to 30

16. It is high time that the ministry takes (a) firm steps to modernise (b) the equipment used by the armed forces. (c) No error (d)
17. The General, together with his senior staff officers, (a) have arrived at (b) the venue to review the annual parade. (c) No error (d)
18. Being a foggy morning, (a) the scheduled route march was postponed (b) to a later hour of the day. (c) No error (d)
19. The candidate was too nervous to not answer (a) even the simplest questions (b) posed by the interview board. (c) No error (d)
20. The police is investigating the case (a) of the missing documents (b) from the recruitment office. (c) No error (d)
21. Not only he failed the physical test (a) but also struggled to clear (b) the written examination that followed. (c) No error (d)
22. The young cadet is so disciplined (a) that all his instructors are proud on him (b) for his exemplary conduct. (c) No error (d)
23. The furniture provided in the officers' mess (a) are of exceptionally fine quality (b) and has been well maintained. (c) No error (d)
24. Had the weather permitted, the pilots (a) would have conduct the scheduled sortie (b) without any further delay. (c) No error (d)
25. Everyone of the recruits in the platoon (a) have completed their obstacle course training (b) well ahead of the deadline. (c) No error (d)
26. The Brigadier, together with his aides, (a) were satisfied with the standard of training (b) imparted at the academy. (c) No error (d)
27. Rarely a young officer displays such maturity (a) while handling a crisis situation (b) on the battlefield. (c) No error (d)
28. The news regarding the change in examination pattern (a) were circulated among all the candidates (b) well before the scheduled date. (c) No error (d)
29. Among the two finalists, Rakesh is more taller (a) than his rival, though both have shown (b) remarkable consistency throughout the selection process. (c) No error (d)
30. The Chief of Army Staff distributed the trophy (a) to the most deserving among the two finalists (b) who had excelled in the drill competition. (c) No error (d)

APPENDIX — Answer Key & Explanations

Each entry below identifies the underlined part that contains the grammatical error, followed by an explanation of the rule involved.

Q. No.	Ans.	Explanation
1	(b)	In the given sentence, option (b) is given as 'were required to undergo' while the correct sentence uses 'was required to undergo'. This is because 'Each of' takes a singular verb. Here 'were required to undergo' should be replaced by 'was required to undergo'. So, option (b) has an error.
2	(b)	In the given sentence, option (b) is given as 'was present at' while the correct sentence uses 'were present at'. This is because with 'neither...nor', the verb agrees with the nearer subject ('officers', plural). Here 'was present at' should be replaced by 'were present at'. So, option (b) has an error.
3	(a)	In the given sentence, option (a) is given as 'The selection board have finalised' while the correct sentence uses 'The selection board has finalised'. This is because 'board' is a collective noun and takes a singular verb. Here 'The selection board have finalised' should be replaced by 'The selection board has finalised'. So, option (a) has an error.
4	(a)	In the given sentence, option (a) is given as 'Seldom we witness such extraordinary discipline' while the correct sentence uses 'Seldom do we witness such extraordinary discipline'. This is because a negative adverb ('Seldom') at the start of a sentence requires subject-auxiliary inversion. Here 'Seldom we witness such extraordinary discipline' should be replaced by 'Seldom do we witness such extraordinary discipline'. So, option (a) has an error.
5	(a)	In the given sentence, option (a) is given as 'one of the most decorated officer' while the correct sentence uses 'one of the most decorated officers'. This is because 'one of the + superlative' is followed by a plural noun. Here 'one of the most decorated officer' should be replaced by 'one of the most decorated officers'. So, option (a) has an error.
6	(a)	In the given sentence, option (a) is given as 'not to indulge into' while the correct sentence uses 'not to indulge in'. This is because the correct idiomatic preposition is 'indulge in', not 'indulge into'. Here 'not to indulge into' should be replaced by 'not to indulge in'. So, option (a) has an error.
7	(a)	In the given sentence, option (a) is given as 'If he would have prepared more diligently' while the correct sentence uses 'If he had prepared more diligently'. This is because the 'if' clause of a third conditional uses the past perfect, not 'would have'. Here 'If he would have prepared more diligently' should be replaced by 'If he had prepared more diligently'. So, option (a) has an error.
8	(b)	In the given sentence, option (b) is given as 'are rising every year' while the correct sentence uses 'is rising every year'. This is because 'the number of' takes a singular verb (unlike 'a number of', which takes a plural verb). Here 'are rising every year' should be replaced by 'is rising every year'. So, option (b) has an error.
9	(a)	In the given sentence, option (a) is given as 'who always motivates' while the correct sentence uses 'who always motivate'. This is because the relative pronoun 'who' refers back to the plural antecedent 'instructors', so the verb must be plural. Here 'who always motivates' should be replaced by 'who always motivate'. So, option (a) has an error.
10	(a)	In the given sentence, option (a) is given as 'Hardly the parade had commenced' while the correct sentence uses 'Hardly had the parade commenced'. This is because 'Hardly' at the start of a sentence requires inversion of subject and auxiliary. Here 'Hardly the parade had commenced' should be replaced by 'Hardly had the parade commenced'. So, option (a) has an error.

Q. No.	Ans.	Explanation
11	(b)	In the given sentence, option (b) is given as 'were inspecting the newly constructed barracks' while the correct sentence uses 'was inspecting the newly constructed barracks'. This is because a phrase introduced by 'along with' does not affect the number of the verb, which agrees with the singular subject 'Commanding Officer'. Here 'were inspecting the newly constructed barracks' should be replaced by 'was inspecting the newly constructed barracks'. So, option (b) has an error.
12	(a)	In the given sentence, option (a) is given as 'Despite of facing numerous hardships during training' while the correct sentence uses 'Despite facing numerous hardships during training'. This is because 'despite' is never followed by 'of'. Here 'Despite of facing numerous hardships during training' should be replaced by 'Despite facing numerous hardships during training'. So, option (a) has an error.
13	(a)	In the given sentence, option (a) is given as 'No sooner the results were announced' while the correct sentence uses 'No sooner were the results announced'. This is because 'no sooner' at the start of a sentence requires inversion, and is paired with 'than'. Here 'No sooner the results were announced' should be replaced by 'No sooner were the results announced'. So, option (a) has an error.
14	(a)	In the given sentence, option (a) is given as 'one of the toughest challenge' while the correct sentence uses 'one of the toughest challenges'. This is because 'one of the + superlative' is followed by a plural noun. Here 'one of the toughest challenge' should be replaced by 'one of the toughest challenges'. So, option (a) has an error.
15	(b)	In the given sentence, option (b) is given as 'are required to report' while the correct sentence uses 'is required to report'. This is because a phrase introduced by 'as well as' does not affect the number of the verb, which agrees with the singular subject 'Adjutant'. Here 'are required to report' should be replaced by 'is required to report'. So, option (b) has an error.
Q. No.	Ans.	Explanation
16	(a)	In the given sentence, option (a) is given as 'It is high time that the ministry takes' while the correct sentence uses 'It is high time that the ministry took'. This is because the expression 'it is high time that' is followed by the simple past tense. Here 'It is high time that the ministry takes' should be replaced by 'It is high time that the ministry took'. So, option (a) has an error.
17	(b)	In the given sentence, option (b) is given as 'have arrived at' while the correct sentence uses 'has arrived at'. This is because a phrase introduced by 'together with' does not affect the number of the verb, which agrees with the singular subject 'General'. Here 'have arrived at' should be replaced by 'has arrived at'. So, option (b) has an error.
18	(a)	In the given sentence, option (a) is given as 'Being a foggy morning' while the correct sentence uses 'It being a foggy morning'. This is because an absolute participial phrase describing the weather needs its own subject 'it'. Here 'Being a foggy morning' should be replaced by 'It being a foggy morning'. So, option (a) has an error.
19	(a)	In the given sentence, option (a) is given as 'too nervous to not answer' while the correct sentence uses 'too nervous to answer'. This is because the construction 'too...to' already carries a negative sense, so an additional 'not' is redundant. Here 'too nervous to not answer' should be replaced by 'too nervous to answer'. So, option (a) has an error.
20	(a)	In the given sentence, option (a) is given as 'The police is investigating the case' while the correct sentence uses 'The police are investigating the case'. This is because 'police' is always treated as a plural noun. Here 'The police is investigating the case' should be replaced by 'The police are investigating the case'. So, option (a) has an error.
21	(a)	In the given sentence, option (a) is given as 'Not only he failed the physical test' while the correct sentence uses 'Not only did he fail the physical test'. This is because 'not only' at the start of a clause requires inversion of subject and auxiliary. Here 'Not only he failed the

Q. No.	Ans.	Explanation
		physical test' should be replaced by 'Not only did he fail the physical test'. So, option (a) has an error.
22	(b)	In the given sentence, option (b) is given as 'are proud on him' while the correct sentence uses 'are proud of him'. This is because the correct idiomatic preposition is 'proud of', not 'proud on'. Here 'are proud on him' should be replaced by 'are proud of him'. So, option (b) has an error.
23	(b)	In the given sentence, option (b) is given as 'are of exceptionally fine quality' while the correct sentence uses 'is of exceptionally fine quality'. This is because 'furniture' is an uncountable noun and takes a singular verb. Here 'are of exceptionally fine quality' should be replaced by 'is of exceptionally fine quality'. So, option (b) has an error.
24	(b)	In the given sentence, option (b) is given as 'would have conduct the scheduled sortie' while the correct sentence uses 'would have conducted the scheduled sortie'. This is because the main clause of a third conditional takes 'would have' + past participle. Here 'would have conduct the scheduled sortie' should be replaced by 'would have conducted the scheduled sortie'. So, option (b) has an error.
25	(b)	In the given sentence, option (b) is given as 'have completed their obstacle course training' while the correct sentence uses 'has completed their obstacle course training'. This is because 'everyone' is an indefinite pronoun that takes a singular verb. Here 'have completed their obstacle course training' should be replaced by 'has completed their obstacle course training'. So, option (b) has an error.
26	(b)	In the given sentence, option (b) is given as 'were satisfied with the standard of training' while the correct sentence uses 'was satisfied with the standard of training'. This is because a phrase introduced by 'together with' does not affect the number of the verb, which agrees with the singular subject 'Brigadier'. Here 'were satisfied with the standard of training' should be replaced by 'was satisfied with the standard of training'. So, option (b) has an error.
27	(a)	In the given sentence, option (a) is given as 'Rarely a young officer displays such maturity' while the correct sentence uses 'Rarely does a young officer display such maturity'. This is because a negative adverb ('Rarely') at the start of a sentence requires subject-auxiliary inversion. Here 'Rarely a young officer displays such maturity' should be replaced by 'Rarely does a young officer display such maturity'. So, option (a) has an error.
28	(b)	In the given sentence, option (b) is given as 'were circulated among all the candidates' while the correct sentence uses 'was circulated among all the candidates'. This is because 'news' is an uncountable noun and takes a singular verb. Here 'were circulated among all the candidates' should be replaced by 'was circulated among all the candidates'. So, option (b) has an error.
29	(a)	In the given sentence, option (a) is given as 'Rakesh is more taller' while the correct sentence uses 'Rakesh is taller'. This is because the comparative degree is formed either by adding '-er' or by using 'more', never both together. Here 'Rakesh is more taller' should be replaced by 'Rakesh is taller'. So, option (a) has an error.
30	(b)	In the given sentence, option (b) is given as 'to the most deserving among the two finalists' while the correct sentence uses 'to the more deserving between the two finalists'. This is because 'between' is used for two, and 'among' for more than two. Here 'to the most deserving among the two finalists' should be replaced by 'to the more deserving between the two finalists'. So, option (b) has an error.