

SENTENCE IMPROVEMENT

DIRECTIONS: Look at the underlined part of each sentence. Below each sentence, three possible substitutions are given. Choose the one that improves the sentence. If no improvement is needed, select option (d).

1. I don't remember exactly when did I go to Shimla last year.
(a) when I did go (b) when I was going
(c) when I went (d) No improvement
2. Even he worked hard, he failed in the examination.
(a) Since (b) Although
(c) For (d) No improvement
3. He was asked to arbitrate with two merchants in a dispute.
(a) to arbitrate between (b) to arbitrate at
(c) to arbitrate (d) No improvement
4. He is definitely the cleverer among the two.
(a) in (b) of
(c) than (d) No improvement
5. He is resembling his father.
(a) has resembled (b) was resembling
(c) resembles (d) No improvement
6. Would you mind closing the window?
(a) to close (b) in closing
(c) for close (d) No improvement
7. I can be grateful if you could write to me about it.
(a) would be (b) should be
(c) must be (d) No improvement
8. A majority of the passengers could have been saved if the driver had applied the brakes in time.
(a) have been saved
(b) may have been saved
(c) could have saved
(d) No improvement
9. He is living in this house for the past ten years.
(a) was living (b) had been living
(c) has been living (d) No improvement
10. He is knowing the secret.
(a) knows (b) has been knowing
(c) was knowing (d) No improvement
11. The meeting has been put off to Friday next.
(a) put on (b) put out
(c) put for (d) No improvement
12. If you will come with me I shall be happy.
(a) come with me (b) had come with me
(c) came with me (d) No improvement
13. As the parties failed to reach any agreement, the meeting broke through.
(a) broke out (b) broke away
(c) broke up (d) No improvement
14. If I have reached there by this time tomorrow, I will write to you immediately.
(a) reached (b) reach
(c) am reaching (d) No improvement
15. My friend met me, unexpectedly, when I looked for a taxi, desperately.
(a) had looked (b) was looking
(c) had been looking (d) No improvement
16. Her learning makes up towards her want of beauty.
(a) for (b) to
(c) against (d) No improvement
17. If he got his enemy in his hand, he would have crushed him to death.
(a) has got (b) was getting
(c) had got (d) No improvement
18. Please ask your son to turn off the radio so that it is not quite so loud.
(a) in (b) back
(c) down (d) No improvement
19. He said that when I have worked for him for six months, I would get a pay rise.
(a) had worked (b) have had worked
(c) did work (d) No improvement
20. I am looking forward to joining your organization.
(a) join (b) join in
(c) having joined (d) No improvement
21. I am not sure why she is wanting to see him.
(a) she wants (b) is she wanting
(c) she want (d) No improvement
22. Everyone who finished writing can go home.
(a) had finished (b) have finished
(c) has finished (d) No improvement

[2015 – NDA/ NA I]

23. Although India is still by far a poor country, it can become rich if its natural and human resources are fully utilised.
(a) few and far between (b) by and large
(c) by and by (d) No improvement
24. The more they earn, more they spend.
(a) More they earn, more they spend
(b) More they earn, the more they spend
(c) The more they earn, the more they

[2014 – NDA/ NA II]

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- spend
(d) No improvement
25. But in all these cases conversion from one scale to another is easy because scales have well-formulated.
(a) can be well-formulated
(b) are well-formulated
(c) well-formulated
(d) No improvement
26. Five years ago on this date, I am sitting in a small Japanese car, driving across Poland towards Berlin.
(a) was sitting (b) sat
(c) have been sitting (d) No improvement
27. The old man felled some trees in the garden with hardly no effort at all.
(a) hard effort (b) hardly any effort
(c) a hardly any effort (d) No improvement
28. She says she's already paid me back, but I can't remember, so I'll have to take her word.
(a) to take her word true
(b) to take her at her word
(c) to take her word for it
(d) No improvement
29. The workers are hell bent at getting what is due to them.
(a) hell bent on getting
(b) hell bent for getting
(c) hell bent to getting
(d) No improvement
30. You are warned against committing the same mistake again.
(a) to commit (b) for committing
(c) against to commit (d) No improvement
31. While we would like that all Indian children to go to school, we need to ponder why they do not.
(a) that all the Indian children
(b) if all the children of India
(c) all Indian children
(d) No improvement
32. Due to these reasons we are all in favour of universal compulsory education.
(a) Out of these reasons
(b) For these reasons
(c) By these reasons
(d) No improvement
33. When it was feared that the serfs might go too far and gain their freedom from serfdom, the Protestant leaders joined the princes at crushing them.
(a) into crushing (b) in crushing
(c) without crushing (d) No improvement
34. In India, today many of our intellectuals still talk in terms of the French revolution and the Rights of Man, not appreciating that much has happened since then.
(a) much has been happening
(b) much had happened
(c) much might happen
(d) No improvement
35. Taxpayers are to be conscious of their privileges.
(a) have to (b) need
(c) ought to (d) No improvement
36. I would have waited for you at the station if I knew that you would come.
(a) had known (b) was knowing
(c) have known (d) No improvement
37. No one could explain how a calm and balanced person like him could penetrate such a mindless act on his friends.
(a) perpetuate (b) perpetrate
(c) precipitate (d) No improvement
- [2015 – NDA/ NA II]**
38. Had she been hungry, she would have devoured the whole lot of it.
(a) Unless she had been hungry
(b) However she had been hungry
(c) As if she had been hungry
(d) No improvement
39. Until you don't finish the work, you won't be given leave.
(a) Until you must finish
(b) Until finishing
(c) Until you finish
(d) No improvement
40. The names of the defaulters have been cut off the register.
(a) cut out (b) struck out
(c) struck off (d) No improvement
41. This is a matter I'd rather not talk about.
(a) of which I'd rather not talk about
(b) I rather not talk about
(c) than I'd rather not talk about
(d) No improvement
42. Only when you left I did sleep.
(a) I slept (b) did I slip
(c) had I slept (d) No improvement
43. I will be happy if you will buy me apples.
(a) buy (b) bought
(c) will be buying (d) No improvement
44. After I saved some money, I shall go abroad.
(a) shall save (b) should have save
(c) having saved (d) No improvement
45. Can you arrange the car to be ready this evening?
(a) arrange with the car
(b) arrange for the car
(c) arrange that the car
(d) No improvement
46. Hardly had he reached home when the telephone rang.
(a) he had reached (b) did he reach
(c) he reached (d) No improvement

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47. He is likely to win the elections by the sweeping majority.

- (a) with the sweeping majority
- (b) in sweeping majority
- (c) by a sweeping majority
- (d) No improvement

[2016 – NDA/ NA I]

48. When he heard the rhetorical speech of the leader, he was carried along by his enthusiasm.

- (a) carried aloft
- (b) carried down
- (c) carried away
- (d) No improvement

49. After the heavy rains last week, the water in the lake raised another two feet.

- (a) rose another two feet
- (b) arisen another two feet
- (c) would raise another two feet
- (d) No improvement

50. One can live and work in a town without being aware of the daily march of the sun across the sky without never seeing the moon and stars.

- (a) seldom
- (b) hardly
- (c) ever
- (d) No improvement

51. Applications of those who are graduates will be considered.

- (a) whose are graduates
- (b) whom are graduates
- (c) whom are only graduates
- (d) No improvement

52. It is raining heavily all through this week.

- (a) has rained
- (b) rains
- (c) rained
- (d) No improvement

53. The sparrow took no notice about the bread.

- (a) notice of
- (b) notice from
- (c) notice to
- (d) No improvement

54. As he spoke about his achievements, his high claims amused us.

- (a) big
- (b) tall
- (c) long
- (d) No improvement

55. We ought to stand for what is right.

- (a) stand at
- (b) stand on
- (c) stand up
- (d) No improvement

56. He enjoys to tell stories to children.

- (a) how to tell stories
- (b) telling stories
- (c) to narrate stories
- (d) No improvement

57. In a few minutes' time, when the clock strikes six, I would be waiting here for an hour.

- (a) shall be waiting on
- (b) shall have been waiting
- (c) shall wait
- (d) No improvement

[2016 – NDA/ NA II]

58. My old teacher gave many poor students money in spite of he was poor.

- (a) even though
- (b) as if
- (c) however
- (d) No improvement

59. You should to read the newspapers regularly if you want to be well informed.

- (a) ought
- (b) have to
- (c) should be
- (d) No improvement

60. If he had listening to me he would not have got lost.

- (a) listened me
- (b) listened to me
- (c) listen me
- (d) No improvement

61. He asked for a bank loan also he didn't have sufficient resources.

- (a) because
- (b) even if
- (c) requiring
- (d) No improvement

62. I went to the shop to buy some stationeries.

- (a) Stationery
- (b) stationary
- (c) stationarics
- (d) No improvement

63. I have been waiting here for the last two hours.

- (a) from
- (b) since
- (c) by
- (d) No improvement

64. The table needs to be painted.

- (a) paint
- (b) painting
- (c) having paint
- (d) No improvement

65. It began to rain heavily just when I prepare to go out.

- (a) prepared
- (b) was preparing
- (c) have prepared
- (d) No improvement

66. The couple seemed to love one another very much.

- (a) every other
- (b) each
- (c) each other
- (d) No improvement

67. It is high time that we did something.

- (a) had done
- (b) would do
- (c) have done
- (d) No improvement

68. If I were a millionaire, I would have helped the poor.

- (a) am capable of helping
- (b) could have helped
- (c) would help
- (d) No improvement

69. The training programme was extended for a month.

- (a) from
- (b) until
- (c) since
- (d) No improvement

70. The painting which they were looking at was done by my sister.

- (a) what
- (b) that
- (c) whom
- (d) No improvement

[2017 – NDA/ NA I]

71. I disliked him not so much for his meanness but for his dishonesty.

- (a) as for
- (b) but because
- (c) but due to
- (d) No improvement

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72. He preferred death rather than imprisonment.
(a) for (b) to
(c) than (d) No improvement
73. They kept the idea secretly.
(a) secretive (b) secret
(c) secretively (d) No improvement
74. He ought not to tell me your secret, but he did.
(a) telling (b) have told
(c) having told (d) No improvement
75. If I don't know the meaning of a word, I look it after in the dictionary.
(a) look it out (b) look it for
(c) look it up (d) No improvement
76. Mr. and Mrs. Rao stay in their home every evening.
(a) at home (b) inside home
(c) within their home (d) No improvement
77. When we saw him last, he ran to catch a bus.
(a) has run (b) had run
(c) was running (d) No improvement
78. She cut a sad figure in her first performance on the stage.
(a) made a sorry figure (b) cut a sorry face
(c) cut a sorry figure (d) No improvement
79. Last evening I went to the optician and bought spectacles.
(a) a spectacle (b) two spectacles
(c) a pair of spectacles (d) No improvement
80. I would like to avail a fifteen day's holiday this summer.
(a) to avail of (b) to avail myself of
(c) to avail myself (d) No improvement

Answers & Explanations

- (c) when I went – In indirect questions, the word order is normal (subject + verb): "when I went," not "did I go."
- (b) Although – "Although" correctly shows contrast; "Even he worked hard" is incorrect.
- (a) to arbitrate between – "Arbitrate between" two parties is correct usage.
- (b) of – "The cleverer of the two" is the correct comparative phrase.
- (c) resembles – "Resemble" is a stative verb and does not take continuous tenses.
- (d) No improvement – "Would you mind closing the window?" is correct polite request form.
- (a) would be – "I would be grateful" is the correct conditional expression.
- (d) No improvement – Sentence is correct as is ("could have been saved" for past unreal possibility).
- (c) has been living – Present perfect continuous is used for action continuing over time until now.
- (a) knows – "Know" is a stative verb, so simple present is correct, not continuous.
- (d) No improvement – "Put off for" means postponed until a later time (correct phrase).
- (a) come with me – In conditional "if" clauses, simple present is used for future meaning.
- (c) broke up – "Broke up" means the meeting ended or dispersed, which fits the context.
- (b) reach – After "if," use present simple for future time clauses: "If I reach there..."
- (b) was looking – Past continuous is used for an action in progress at a specific past time.
- (a) for – Correct phrase: "makes up for" means compensates for something.
- (c) had got – Third conditional requires past perfect after "if."
- (c) down – "Turn down" means to reduce the volume, appropriate here.
- (a) had worked – Reported speech needs past perfect to show completed action before another past event.
- (d) No improvement – "Looking forward to joining" is correct idiomatic usage.
- (a) she wants – Stative verbs like "want" use simple present, not continuous forms.
- (c) has finished – "Everyone" is singular, so singular verb "has" is required.
- (b) by and large.
- (c) The more they earn, the more they spend – Correct correlative comparative structure.
- (b) are well-formulated – Passive voice requires "are well-formulated."
- (a) was sitting – Past continuous fits the past narrative.
- (b) hardly any effort – Correct idiom to express very little effort.
- (c) to take her word for it – Correct idiomatic phrase.
- (a) hell bent on getting – Correct prepositional phrase with "hell bent."
- (d) No improvement – "Warned against committing" is correct.
- (c) all Indian children – The correct structure is: "would like + object + to-infinitive".
- (b) For these reasons – Correct phrase expressing cause or reason.
- (b) in crushing – Correct collocation: "joined in crushing them."

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34. (d) No improvement – Sentence is correct as is.
35. (c) ought to – "Ought to" is correct modal for advice or obligation.
36. (a) had known – Third conditional needs past perfect in "if" clause.
37. (b) perpetrate – "Perpetrate" means commit a wrongful act, suitable here.
38. (d) No improvement – The sentence is correct as it is, expressing a conditional perfect.
39. (c) Until you finish – "Until" does not take "don't" in negative; correct form is positive "finish".
40. (c) struck off – "Struck off" is the correct phrase meaning removed from a list.
41. (d) No improvement – The sentence is correct; "I'd rather not talk about" is correct idiomatic use.
42. (b) did I sleep – When a sentence begins with a negative adverbial or restrictive phrase like "Only when..." it requires inversion of the subject and auxiliary verb in the main clause.
43. (a) buy – After "if," use simple present, not future: "If you buy me apples..."
44. (c) Having saved – "Having saved" is a perfect participle phrase, expressing an action that will be completed before another future action.
45. (b) arrange for the car – Correct collocation: "arrange for the car to be ready."
46. (d) No Improvement – After "Hardly had he..." the next clause uses simple past without "when". Which is correct in the given sentence.
47. (c) by a sweeping majority – Correct prepositional phrase with article "a."
48. (c) carried away – "Carried away" means overwhelmed, suitable here.
49. (a) rose another two feet – Correct past tense verb for rise is "rose," not "raised" (which is transitive).
50. (c) ever – "...without ever seeing..." ("ever" is the appropriate positive form to follow "without").
51. (d) No improvement – Sentence is correct as it is.
52. (a) has rained – Present perfect continuous meaning "has been raining" would be better, but among options, (a) fits better than others.
53. (a) notice of – Correct collocation: "take notice of" something.
54. (b) tall – "Tall claims" is a correct idiom meaning exaggerated or high claims.
55. (d) No improvement – "Stand for" means support, which is correct.
56. (b) telling stories – Verb after "enjoys" should be gerund ("telling"), not infinitive ("to tell").
57. (b) shall have been waiting – Future perfect continuous tense fits "would have been waiting for an hour."
58. (a) even though – "Even though" correctly introduces a concessive clause, not "in spite of he was poor."
59. (b) have to – While it slightly changes the tone (from advice to necessity), it is the grammatically correct and complete option among the choices given.
60. (b) listened to me – Correct form is past tense with preposition "listened to me."
61. (a) because – "Because" correctly connects cause and effect.
62. (a) Stationery – "Stationery" is the correct uncountable noun for writing materials, not "stationeries."
63. (d) No improvement – "For the last two hours" is correct with present perfect continuous tense.
64. (d) Painted – Formal, correct passive construction: "needs to be painted."
65. (b) 'was preparing' will be appropriate in this context.
66. (c) each other – "Each other" is the correct reciprocal pronoun here.
67. (d) No improvement – "It is high time that we did something" is correct subjunctive mood usage.
68. (c) would help – Second conditional uses "would help" for hypothetical present/future, not past perfect form.
69. (d) No improvement – "Extended for a month" is correct; no change needed.
70. (b) that.
71. (a) as for – Correct phrase is "not so much... as for..." to compare reasons properly.
72. (b) to – "Prefer A to B" is the correct construction, not "rather than."
73. (b) secret – "Secret" used as adverb/adjective is correct; "secretly" means stealthily, not suitable here.
74. (b) 'Have told' is correct option.
75. (c) look it up – "Look up" is the correct phrasal verb meaning to search in a dictionary.
76. (a) at home – "Stay at home" is the correct idiom, not "in their home."
77. (c) was running – Past continuous fits better for action ongoing when seen.
78. (c) cut a sorry figure – Fixed phrase: "cut a sorry figure" means to appear pitiful.
79. (c) a pair of spectacles – Spectacles come in pairs; singular/plural forms here must be "a pair of spectacles."
80. (b) to avail myself of – Correct expression is "to avail myself of" meaning to make use of something.