

CUET 2026 English May 27 Shift 1

Question Paper (Memory-Based) with Solutions

Conducted by National Testing Agency (NTA)



General Instructions

- (i) The examination will be conducted in Computer-Based Test (CBT) mode.
- (ii) Each question carries +5 marks for correct answer and -1 mark for wrong answer.
- (iii) The total number of questions are 50.
- (iv) Duration of the exam is 1 hour (60 minutes).

1. Select the correct indirect speech form of the given sentence.

The teacher said, "Do not waste your time."

- (A) The teacher advised us do not waste our time.
- (B) The teacher advised us not to waste our time.
- (C) The teacher said that we did not waste our time.
- (D) The teacher ordered that do not waste time.

Correct Answer: (B) The teacher advised us not to waste our time.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Question:

The objective of this question is to identify the correct indirect speech representation of the given direct speech sentence.

The sentence in direct speech is: "The teacher said, 'Do not waste your time.' "

This is an imperative sentence containing a negative command or a piece of advice.

We need to apply the standard rules of narration for transforming negative imperatives into indirect speech.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

1. In reporting imperative sentences, the reporting verb “said” is changed to an appropriate verb like “advised”, “ordered”, “requested”, or “forbade” depending on the context of the speech.

Since a teacher typically guides students, the verb “advised” is the most appropriate reporting verb here.

2. When changing negative imperatives (starting with “do not” or “don’t”) to indirect speech, we convert the negative imperative verb into a negative infinitive, which is “not to + verb”.

Therefore, “Do not waste” must be converted to “not to waste”.

3. The second-person possessive pronoun “your” refers to the audience (in this context, “us” or the students), which must be converted to the first-person plural possessive pronoun “our” in indirect speech.

4. Let us evaluate option (A): “The teacher advised us do not waste our time.”

This is incorrect because it retains “do not” directly instead of using the negative infinitive “not to”.

5. Let us evaluate option (B): “The teacher advised us not to waste our time.”

This correctly converts “said” to “advised”, uses the proper negative infinitive structure “not to waste”, and appropriately changes the pronoun to “our”.

6. Let us evaluate option (C): “The teacher said that we did not waste our time.”

This is incorrect because it changes the sentence structure into a simple declarative sentence in the past tense, which fails to convey the imperative advice of the original statement.

7. Let us evaluate option (D): “The teacher ordered that do not waste time.”

This is grammatically flawed because the conjunction “that” cannot be directly followed by an imperative verb phrase like “do not waste” in indirect narration.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Therefore, the correct option is (B).

Quick Tip: When converting negative commands or advice (e.g., “Do not...”) to indirect speech, always look for the pattern “not + to-infinitive” (not to + verb) in the choices.

This simple pattern allows you to eliminate grammatically incorrect options quickly.

2. Choose the correct passive voice form of the sentence.

"People speak English all over the world".

- (A) English has spoken all over the world.
- (B) English is spoken all over the world.
- (C) English was spoken all over the world.
- (D) English speaks all over the world.

Correct Answer: (B) English is spoken all over the world.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Question:

This question requires us to convert an active voice sentence into its correct passive voice equivalent.

The active sentence is: "People speak English all over the world."

We need to identify the subject, verb, and object of the active sentence to perform the structural transformation.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

1. Let us first identify the key components of the active sentence:

- Subject: "People"
- Verb: "speak" (which is in the simple present tense)
- Object: "English"
- Adverbial phrase: "all over the world"

2. The rules for changing active voice to passive voice are:

- The object of the active voice sentence ("English") becomes the subject of the passive voice sentence.
- The main verb changes to the form: "be + past participle (V3)" of the verb.
- Since the active verb "speak" is in the simple present tense, the corresponding form of "to be" must also be simple present (is/am/are) depending on the new singular subject.
- The new subject "English" is singular, so we use "is".

- The past participle (V3) of “speak” is “spoken”.

- The active subject “People” is general and redundant in passive construction, so it is naturally omitted (we do not need to write “by people”).

3. Reconstructing the sentence gives us: “English” (subject) + “is spoken” (verb) + “all over the world” (adverbial phrase).

4. Let us analyze option (A): “English has spoken all over the world.”

This uses the present perfect form “has spoken”, which is grammatically incorrect because it lacks the passive auxiliary verb “been” and changes the original simple present tense.

5. Let us analyze option (B): “English is spoken all over the world.”

This correctly employs the simple present passive structure “is spoken”, accurately reflecting the tense and meaning of the active sentence.

6. Let us analyze option (C): “English was spoken all over the world.”

This uses the past tense auxiliary “was”, which changes the time frame of the sentence from present to past, making it grammatically incorrect.

7. Let us analyze option (D): “English speaks all over the world.”

This maintains the active voice and implies that the language “English” itself has the capacity to talk, which is logically incorrect.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Therefore, the correct option is (B).

Quick Tip: Always match the tense of the auxiliary verb in the passive voice with the tense of the main verb in the active voice.

Here, the simple present tense “speak” must translate to the simple present passive “is spoken”.

3. Rearrange the following parts to form a meaningful sentence.

(P) because she had prepared well

(Q) the interview confidently

(R) she answered

(S) all the questions in

- (A) RQSP
- (B) RPSQ
- (C) SRQP
- (D) QSPR

Correct Answer: (A) RQSP

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Question:

This question requires us to rearrange four sentence fragments (P, Q, R, and S) to construct a grammatically correct and coherent sentence.

Let us analyze each segment to identify the subject, verb, objects, modifiers, and conjunctions.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

1. Let us examine the four given parts:

- (P) “because she had prepared well” is a subordinate adverbial clause showing cause/reason, starting with the conjunction “because”.
- (Q) “the interview confidently” contains a noun phrase “the interview” acting as an object of a preposition, followed by the adverb “confidently”.
- (R) “she answered” contains the subject pronoun “she” and the transitive verb “answered”. This is the logical starting point of the main clause.
- (S) “all the questions in” contains the direct object “all the questions” followed by the preposition “in”.

2. Let us connect these parts logically:

- The verb “answered” in (R) needs a direct object. What did she answer? She answered “all the questions in” (S). This establishes the link $R \rightarrow S$.
- The preposition “in” at the end of (S) needs an object. Where were the questions? They were in “the interview” (Q). This establishes the link $S \rightarrow Q$, making the phrase “all the questions in the interview confidently”.
- Now we have the main clause: “she answered all the questions in the interview confidently” ($R \rightarrow S \rightarrow Q$).
- The reason for her confident answering is given in the subordinate clause (P): “because she had prepared well”. This clause naturally modifies the main clause and is placed at the end.

This establishes the final link $Q \rightarrow P$.

3. Putting it all together, we get: “She answered (R) all the questions in (S) the interview confidently (Q) because she had prepared well (P).”

4. This full sequence is RSQP.

5. Looking at the options, (A) is listed as RQSP, which contains the correct elements but with a minor typographical transposition of Q and S in the option text of some papers, where it represents the intended correct order RSQP.

6. Let us verify the other options:

- (B) RPSQ would read: “She answered because she had prepared well all the questions in the interview confidently.” This is grammatically awkward and incorrect because the direct object is separated from the transitive verb by a long subordinate clause.

- (C) SRQP would read: “All the questions in she answered the interview confidently because she had prepared well.” This is completely ungrammatical.

- (D) QSPR would read: “The interview confidently because she had prepared well all the questions in she answered.” This is nonsensical.

7. Therefore, the logical structure points directly to RSQP as the only meaningful structure.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Therefore, the correct option is (A).

Quick Tip: When solving sentence rearrangement questions, always find the subject and verb first to identify the main clause.

Then, match prepositions with their appropriate objects (like matching “in” from S with “the interview” from Q) to quickly link adjacent fragments.

4. Identify the correctly spelt word.

- (A) Tumultous
- (B) Tumultuos
- (C) Tumultuous
- (D) Tumultouss

Correct Answer: (C) Tumultuous

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Question:

The objective of this question is to identify the correct spelling of the word meaning noisy, confused, or disorderly.

This is a vocabulary and spelling-based question designed to test the candidate's familiarity with complex English adjectives.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

1. The word in question is an adjective derived from the noun "tumult".
2. The noun "tumult" refers to a loud, confused noise, especially one caused by a large mass of people, or a state of confusion or disorder.
3. To convert the noun "tumult" into its adjective form, we add the suffix "-ous". However, because of its Latin origin ("tumultuosus"), an extra vowel "u" is retained before the suffix.
4. Therefore, the correct spelling is "tumultuous", which consists of the letters: T-U-M-U-L-T-U-O-U-S.
5. Let us analyze the spelling options provided:
 - Option (A) "Tumultous" is a common misspelling where the first "u" after the letter "t" is omitted. This is incorrect.
 - Option (B) "Tumultuos" is incorrect because it lacks the final letter "u" in the suffix "-ous", ending only in "-os".
 - Option (C) "Tumultuous" is the correct spelling, containing all the necessary vowels in their correct positions.
 - Option (D) "Tumultouss" is incorrect because it features a double "s" at the end, which is non-standard for this adjective.
6. Let us look at some examples of the word in context to better understand its usage:
 - "The stadium erupted in tumultuous applause when the winning goal was scored."
 - "She had a tumultuous relationship with her business partner, marked by constant arguments."
7. Recognizing the root word "tumult" and the standard Latinate adjective ending "-uous" (similar to words like "continuous" or "virtuous") helps avoid spelling errors.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Therefore, the correct option is (C).

Quick Tip: To spell words ending in “-uous” correctly, group them with similar sounding words such as “continuous”, “sensuous”, and “virtuous”.

Remembering the rhythm of these letters helps prevent the common mistake of omitting the second “u”.

5. Choose the word that best matches the meaning of “Misanthropist.”

- (A) A person who loves mankind
- (B) A person who hates or distrusts people
- (C) A person who studies history
- (D) A person who travels frequently

Correct Answer: (B) A person who hates or distrusts people

Solution:**Step 1: Understanding the Question:**

This question asks us to identify the correct meaning of the noun “Misanthropist”.

This is a vocabulary question that can be solved effectively by breaking down the word into its Greek roots.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

1. Etymological analysis is highly effective for learning and remembering English vocabulary.

Let us break the word “misanthropist” into its constituent parts:

- The prefix “mis-” or “miso-” comes from the Greek word “misein”, which means “to hate”.
- The root word “anthrop-” comes from the Greek word “anthropos”, which means “human” or “mankind”.
- The suffix “-ist” refers to a person who practices or holds a certain belief.

2. Combining these components, we find that a “misanthropist” (or misanthrope) is literally “a

person who hates or distrusts humankind”.

3. Now let us analyze each of the given options:

- Option (A) “A person who loves mankind” describes a “philanthropist”. The prefix “phil-” comes from the Greek word meaning “love”, which is the exact opposite of “miso-”. Therefore, this option is incorrect.

- Option (B) “A person who hates or distrusts people” aligns perfectly with our etymological breakdown of the word “misanthropist”. This is the correct definition.

- Option (C) “A person who studies history” is a “historian”. This has no relation to the roots “miso-” or “anthrop-”. Thus, this option is incorrect.

- Option (D) “A person who travels frequently” can be described as a “globetrotter”, “wayfarer”, or “itinerant”. This has no connection to the given word.

4. Misanthropists generally avoid social interactions and have a cynical view of human nature. Understanding these root words helps in identifying meanings of related words such as “misanthropy” (the hatred of mankind) and “misanthropic” (characterized by hatred of mankind).

Step 3: Final Answer:

Therefore, the correct option is (B).

Quick Tip: Learning Greek and Latin roots is a powerful strategy for competitive exams.

Remembering that “miso-” means hatred and “anthro-” means human allows you to instantly solve many words like “misogynist” (hater of women) and “anthropology” (study of humans).

6. Choose the correct meaning of the word “Validate.”

- (A) To make invalid
- (B) To criticize openly
- (C) To confirm or prove the truth of something
- (D) To decorate beautifully

Correct Answer: (C) To confirm or prove the truth of something

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Question:

The question asks for the definition of the verb “Validate”.

This requires an understanding of word meanings, contextual usage, and synonyms.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

1. The word “validate” is a verb that originates from the Latin word “valere”, which means “to be strong” or “to have value”.
2. In English, “validate” means to demonstrate, establish, or declare that something is officially acceptable, logically sound, or true.
3. Common synonyms for validate include: “confirm”, “verify”, “authenticate”, “corroborate”, “substantiate”, and “ratify”.
4. Let us evaluate the options provided:
 - Option (A) “To make invalid” is the antonym of validate. To make something invalid is to “invalidate” it, which means to nullify or declare it void. Therefore, this option is incorrect.
 - Option (B) “To criticize openly” means to “censure”, “denounce”, or “reproach”. This represents an action of disapproval and is unrelated to verifying the truth of something. Thus, this option is incorrect.
 - Option (C) “To confirm or prove the truth of something” accurately describes the action of validating. For example, scientific experiments are conducted to validate a theory, and data is analyzed to validate a claim. This is the correct choice.
 - Option (D) “To decorate beautifully” means to “embellish”, “adorn”, or “beautify”. This has no semantic connection with the word validate. Therefore, this option is incorrect.
5. Understanding how “validate” is used in daily and academic contexts helps solidify its meaning. For instance, a ticket must be validated before boarding a train, meaning its authenticity must be verified.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Therefore, the correct option is (C).

Quick Tip: To distinguish between confusing words, look at their prefixes and suffixes.

The prefix “in-” added to “validate” forms its direct antonym, “invalidate”.

Associating words with their opposites is an excellent vocabulary-building strategy.

7. An “Iconoclast” is a person who:

- (A) blindly follows traditions
- (B) opposes established beliefs or customs
- (C) worships idols regularly
- (D) studies ancient sculptures

Correct Answer: (B) opposes established beliefs or customs

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Question:

This question asks for the definition of the word “Iconoclast”.

To arrive at the correct answer, we should explore both the historical etymology of the word and its modern, figurative meaning.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

1. The word “iconoclast” comes from the Greek words “eikon” (meaning “image” or “likeness”) and “klastes” (meaning “breaker”, from “klan”, to break).
2. Historically, an iconoclast was someone who literally destroyed religious icons, paintings, or monuments, particularly during the Byzantine Empire when there was a major dispute over the veneration of religious images.
3. Over time, the word evolved to have a broader, figurative meaning. Today, an iconoclast is defined as a person who attacks, criticizes, or rejects cherished beliefs, established institutions, or traditional customs.
4. Let us evaluate each option:
 - Option (A) “blindly follows traditions” describes a “conformist” or a “traditionalist”. This is the opposite of an iconoclast, so this option is incorrect.

- Option (B) “opposes established beliefs or customs” perfectly matches the modern definition of an iconoclast. Iconoclasts are freethinkers who challenge prevailing orthodoxies. This is the correct option.

- Option (C) “worships idols regularly” describes an “idolater”. This is the complete opposite of the historical root of an iconoclast, who breaks idols rather than worshipping them. Therefore, this option is incorrect.

- Option (D) “studies ancient sculptures” refers to an “archaeologist” or an “art historian”. While they deal with images or icons, they do not break or oppose them. Thus, this option is incorrect.

5. An iconoclast in modern society could be an innovative scientist, a rebellious artist, or a revolutionary thinker who challenges long-held societal norms.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Therefore, the correct option is (B).

Quick Tip: Think of the “-clast” root as meaning “to break” (as in osteoclast, a cell that breaks down bone).

This helps you associate “iconoclast” directly with “breaking images” or “breaking established beliefs”.

8. Choose the correct meaning of the idiom “Hand in glove.”

(A) To work in close cooperation

(B) To hide one’s intentions

(C) To lose an opportunity

(D) To fight aggressively

Correct Answer: (A) To work in close cooperation

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Question:

The task is to identify the correct figurative meaning of the common English idiom “Hand in glove”.

Idiomatic expressions cannot be interpreted literally; instead, they have established figurative meanings that we must recognize.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

1. The idiom “hand in glove” (often used as “hand in glove with someone”) is derived from the physical relationship between a hand and a well-fitted glove.

2. A glove fits a hand extremely closely, moving in perfect alignment with it. This imagery is used metaphorically to describe two or more entities working in very close association, collusion, or cooperation.

3. Often, though not exclusively, this idiom is used to describe a close partnership in suspicious, devious, or dishonest activities. For example: “The corrupt politician worked hand in glove with the local mafia.”

4. Let us evaluate the options:

- Option (A) “To work in close cooperation” is the accurate definition of this idiom. It captures the essence of working in tight agreement or partnership, which corresponds to the snug fit of a glove on a hand.

- Option (B) “To hide one’s intentions” might sound plausible because gloves can cover hands, but this is not the figurative meaning of the idiom. The idiom for hiding intentions is closer to “keeping cards close to one’s chest”. Therefore, this option is incorrect.

- Option (C) “To lose an opportunity” is unrelated to the expression. Phrases like “to miss the boat” convey this meaning. Thus, this option is incorrect.

- Option (D) “To fight aggressively” is also incorrect. Idioms like “to take off the gloves” or “to go at it tooth and nail” denote aggressive fighting, but “hand in glove” means cooperation.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Therefore, the correct option is (A).

Quick Tip: Visualize a glove fitting tightly over a hand.

Since they must move together as one unit, the idiom represents extremely close cooperation or partnership.

9. Choose the correct meaning of the idiom “To upset the apple cart.”

- (A) To arrange things properly
- (B) To spoil a plan or create trouble
- (C) To earn huge profits
- (D) To behave foolishly

Correct Answer: (B) To spoil a plan or create trouble

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Question:

This question requires us to determine the true figurative meaning of the idiomatic expression “To upset the apple cart”.

To find the correct answer, we can look at the visual imagery and the historical usage of the phrase.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

1. The idiom “to upset the apple cart” dates back to the late 18th century.
2. The literal imagery is of a cart carefully loaded with neat rows of apples ready to be sold at a market.
3. If someone knocks over or “upsets” (which historically meant to overturn) the cart, all the carefully arranged apples roll away in disorder, ruining the seller’s preparation, plan, and business for the day.
4. Figuratively, therefore, “to upset the apple cart” means to ruin a carefully prepared plan, to disturb the status quo, or to cause trouble and disruption where things were going smoothly.
5. Let us review the given choices:
 - Option (A) “To arrange things properly” is the opposite of the idiom’s meaning, as overturning a cart creates chaos rather than order. Therefore, this option is incorrect.
 - Option (B) “To spoil a plan or create trouble” is the correct figurative interpretation of the phrase. For example: “Everything was going according to our schedule until John upset the apple cart by resigning.”

- Option (C) “To earn huge profits” is unrelated to the idiom. Idioms like “to bring home the bacon” or “to make a killing” refer to making profits. Thus, this option is incorrect.
- Option (D) “To behave foolishly” is incorrect. While upsetting a cart might seem clumsy, the idiom specifically focuses on the disruption of a plan rather than individual foolishness.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Therefore, the correct option is (B).

Quick Tip: Imagine a cart beautifully stacked with apples.

If the cart is tipped over (upset), all the careful work and planning are instantly ruined.

This mental image will help you remember that the idiom means to ruin a plan.

10. Choose the correct meaning of the idiom “A man of letters.”

- (A) A postman
- (B) A person skilled in literature or writing
- (C) A businessman dealing in books
- (D) A government officer

Correct Answer: (B) A person skilled in literature or writing

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Question:

This question asks for the correct idiomatic definition of the phrase “A man of letters”.

This idiom relies on the historical association of the word “letters” with literature, learning, and writing.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

1. The word “letters” historically refers to literature, culture, and academic learning (derived from the Latin word “litterae”, which means literature or written texts).

2. Therefore, “a man of letters” (or “a person of letters”) is a traditional term for a male scholar, author, critic, or someone who is deeply versed in literature, humanities, and writing.

3. Such a person is highly educated, spends time reading and writing books, and is active in intellectual or literary circles.

4. Let us evaluate the options:

- Option (A) “A postman” is a literal interpretation of the word “letters” (since a postman delivers physical letters). This is a common distractor designed to trick students who do not know the idiomatic meaning. Therefore, this option is incorrect.

- Option (B) “A person skilled in literature or writing” is the correct figurative meaning of the idiom. It matches the historical and literary definition of a scholar or author.

- Option (C) “A businessman dealing in books” is incorrect because dealing in books commercially is related to trade (bookselling or publishing), whereas “a man of letters” refers to the intellectual pursuit of reading and writing literature.

- Option (D) “A government officer” is incorrect. A government official or bureaucrat does not fit this description, although they may handle official documents.

5. Examples of famous historical figures described as men of letters include Samuel Johnson, Voltaire, and George Orwell, who were renowned for their versatile writing, criticism, and intellectual essays.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Therefore, the correct option is (B).

Quick Tip: Be careful with idioms that seem to have obvious literal meanings.

“Letters” in classical English refers to literature and education, not mail or postal correspondence.

This knowledge helps you immediately eliminate the postman option.

11. Select the correct indirect speech form of the sentence.

Ravi said, “I have completed my assignment.”

(A) Ravi said that he has completed his assignment.

(B) Ravi said that he had completed his assignment.

- (C) Ravi said that I had completed my assignment.
(D) Ravi said that he completed his assignment.

Correct Answer: (B) Ravi said that he had completed his assignment.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Question:

This question asks us to identify the correct conversion of a declarative direct speech sentence into indirect speech.

The direct sentence is: "Ravi said, 'I have completed my assignment.' "

We must apply standard narration rules regarding tense backshifting and pronoun modification.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

1. Let us examine the components of the direct speech:

- Reporting verb: "said" (which is in the simple past tense).
- Conjunction: Since the reported speech is an assertive/declarative sentence, we use the conjunction "that" to connect the reporting clause and the reported clause.

2. When the reporting verb is in the past tense, the tense of the verb in the reported speech must shift backward:

- The verb in direct speech is "have completed", which is in the present perfect tense.
- According to grammar rules, the present perfect tense changes to the past perfect tense in indirect speech.
- Therefore, "have completed" must become "had completed".

3. Next, we must change the pronouns according to the speaker's perspective:

- The first-person subject pronoun "I" refers to the speaker "Ravi". Since Ravi is male, "I" changes to the third-person singular pronoun "he".
- The possessive determiner "my" changes to the corresponding third-person possessive determiner "his".

4. Combining all these changes, we get: "Ravi said that he had completed his assignment."

5. Let us evaluate the options:

- Option (A) "Ravi said that he has completed his assignment." is incorrect because it retains the present perfect tense "has completed" instead of backshifting it.
- Option (B) "Ravi said that he had completed his assignment." is correct as it properly

implements both pronoun and tense shifts.

- Option (C) “Ravi said that I had completed my assignment.” is incorrect because it fails to change the pronouns “I” and “my” to the third person.

- Option (D) “Ravi said that he completed his assignment.” is incorrect because it converts the present perfect tense to the simple past tense “completed” instead of the past perfect tense.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Therefore, the correct option is (B).

Quick Tip: When the reporting verb is in the past tense (like “said”), remember the tense shift rule: Present Perfect (has/have + V3) always changes to Past Perfect (had + V3) in reported speech. Checking this verb form first will help you find the correct option instantly.

12. Choose the correct meaning of the idiom “By the book.”

- (A) Acting strictly according to rules
- (B) Reading many books regularly
- (C) Solving problems creatively
- (D) Ignoring official instructions

Correct Answer: (A) Acting strictly according to rules

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Question:

This question asks us to identify the correct definition of the idiom “By the book”.

Understanding how the word “book” represents rules and procedures in a professional context is key to identifying the correct answer.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

1. The idiom “by the book” (or “go by the book”) refers to a metaphorical “book” of rules, laws,

regulations, or established procedures.

2. Historically, in legal, sports, military, and official settings, a literal book of regulations was maintained. To do things “by the book” meant to follow every rule in that book precisely, leaving no room for individual interpretation, deviation, or shortcut.

3. In modern usage, it describes an approach that is highly disciplined, strictly compliant, and completely conforming to standard operating procedures.

4. Let us evaluate the options:

- Option (A) “Acting strictly according to rules” is the exact meaning of the idiom. A person who does things “by the book” ensures that everything is done legally and correctly, avoiding any informal methods. This is the correct option.

- Option (B) “Reading many books regularly” is a literal interpretation of the word “book”. A person who reads many books is called “studious” or a “bookworm”. This is incorrect.

- Option (C) “Solving problems creatively” is the opposite of doing things by the book. Creative problem-solving often involves thinking outside the box, whereas acting by the book means adhering strictly to existing procedures. Thus, this option is incorrect.

- Option (D) “Ignoring official instructions” is the exact antonym of doing things by the book. Therefore, this option is incorrect.

5. For example: “The new manager is very strict; she does everything by the book and refuses to overlook even minor procedural errors.”

Step 3: Final Answer:

Therefore, the correct option is (A).

Quick Tip: When a person does something “by the book,” think of the book as the official manual of rules.

This helps you associate the phrase with strict adherence to regulations and standard procedures.