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English for Competitive Exams Module 2

Whether you are trying to learn English for competitive exams or simply trying to improve your language skills, this module is the ideal way to master the language. Learn different concepts in one place for Banking & SSC Exams. Learn something new about grammar, vocabulary and verbal skills every day. Before you attempt English for Competitive Exams Module 2, **try previous modules** as well.

Read the short passage below. Pay special attention to the highlighted words and phrases. Then read the discussion below.

English for Competitive Exams Module 2 - PASSAGE

Becker's "**rotten**-kid" theorem, first **laid out** in a 1974 paper, works on the following premise. Suppose there is a parent who cares **about** the welfare of their children and will give them wealth and other gifts. Suppose further that one of the kids is rotten and he would like to harm his fellow siblings. Becker argued that if the parent redirected money to the hurt sibling when the rotten kid acted on his impulses, the rotten kid would have an incentive not to harm his siblings as it would cost him in the form of lost transfers from his parent. This induces the rotten child to act **benevolently.** In his 1976 article, Becker extended this argument to general **altruistic** behaviour.

DISCUSSION:

Rotten

'Rotten' is an adjective which means to be in a state of decay.

E.g. *The flies came into the kitchen because of the rotten apple.*













It must be noted that the word 'rotten' is not the past participle of the verb 'rot'. The past participle is 'rotted'. 'Rotted' is also the simple past tense form of 'rot'.

E.g. *The apples had rotted*.

However, in this context it is being used to mean a bad or selfish child.

Laid Out

'Lay out' is a phrasal verb which is used in the following senses:

- 1. To arrange according to a plan. E.g. *The traitors laid out the conspiracy step by step.*
- 2. To clothe and prepare (a corpse) for burial.
- 3. To rebuke harshly. E.g. My mother laid me out for being undisciplined.
- 4. To knock to the ground or unconscious. E.g. *The boxer laid out his opponent easily*.
- 5. To expend; spend. E.g. She laid out a fortune on the wedding.
- 6. To display. E.g. The exhibition was laid out in style.
- 7. To detail. E.g. I laid out my goals and plans after college before here.

In the context, the theorem was detailed (elaborated) in the 1974 paper.

About

The preposition 'about' in this case is used to mean 'regarding'.

E.g. We were talking about the budget.

In some other uses, we use 'about' to mean 'all over' or 'around'.

E.g. *The water spread about the house.* (all over)

E.g. The roads were cordoned off about the pilgrimage site after the stampede. (around)

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About can also be used as Adverbs.

E.g. The kids ran about unruly. Here, 'about' is describing the verb 'run'.

As an adverb, it can also mean, 'nearly' or 'almost'.

E.g. I was about to get up anyway, when the alarm went off.

About can also be used as an adjective in the phrase 'up and about'.

E.g. Sheetal is always up and about before the morning prayers.

Benevolently

'Benevolently' is an adverb describing the way the child acts. It means to express goodwill or having kindly feelings.

The word comes from Latin roots. 'Bene' means 'well' and 'Volens' the present participle form of 'Velle', means 'to wish'.

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