

**SSC CGL 2017**

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## English for Competitive Exams Module 4

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 4, **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 4 - PASSAGE

Symmetry and order are **the heart of** French landscape design. French country gardens are more informal, with a mix of softer plantings and bolder colours, but generally follow the same basic design principles. Planting beds may be more **loosely** planted and less structured, but they'll still be **set in** by an edging or a border of some sort. Rather than an **overwhelming** riot of colour and plantings, there's always a sense of order, even in the most natural of settings. Gravel paths and stone terraces are **hallmarks** of French garden design.

### DISCUSSION:

#### The Heart Of

'The heart of something' means the most integral part of something. The phrase can also be used with the preposition 'at' without changing the meaning.

It should not be confused with 'in the heart of' which means centrally.

E.g. *The University was located in the heart of the city.*



### Losely

Identify the error in this word.

You guessed it. The word should be 'loosely'. 'Loosely' is an adverb which means 'not strictly'. This is the opposite of 'rigidly'. It is derived from the adjective 'loose'.

Sometimes, 'loose' is confused with 'lose' which means to misplace or to fail. It is a verb.  
E.g. *All girls lose their hearts to the young actor.*

Notice how adverbs are usually formed by adding '-ly' to the end of an adjective. There are exceptions, of course!

E.g. *forever, well, hard*

### Set in

'Set in' is a phrasal verb. Phrasal verbs are verbs followed by (and sometimes preceded by) a preposition or an adverb or some combination of the two. They change the meaning of the original verb and are used to bring a more informal (but still grammatically correct) feel to the sentence.

'Set in' means to be 'surrounded by'.

### Overwhelming

'Overwhelming' means 'overpowering', 'irresistible' or 'amazing'. In this case, it refers to colours and plantings. A good synonym for the word would be 'stupendous'.

Clearly, the word is an adjective. 'Overwhelming' can also be the present participle of the verb 'overwhelm' which means to have a strong emotional effect on.

E.g. *The surprise overwhelmed me with pleasure.*

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## Hallmarks

‘Hallmarks’ has been used as a noun here. It means a distinctive feature. The same word can be used as a verb. The meaning of the word is ‘mark as distinctive’ in the case when it is used as a verb.

E.g. *This mindset hallmarks the work culture of Indians.*

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