





English for Competitive Exams Module 6 – SSC & Bank Exams

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

English for Competitive Exams Module 6 - PASSAGE

That evening, after we had dropped off Kaveri in Belgaum, I drove Rani Bai back to the house where she lived. She worked in a town nearby. This was located in Mudhol, in a back alley of the town where many devadasis had settled. More than a hundred worked here in a small **warren** of streets **off** the main highway heading to Bangalore.

It was a dark lane, **lit** by a single, dim street light. Does sat next to open gutters, while half-naked children played in the side alleys. It was perhaps the depressing nature of her surroundings that led Rani – always the **optimist**, always the survivor – to **talk up** the positive side of her career.

DISCUSSION:

<u>Warren</u>

Definitely, this is not referring to the famous Warren Buffet. It is a noun meaning a series of interconnected rabbit burrows. According to the author, the streets were very

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close to each other and thus seemed like a warren.

E.g. The underground tunnels of London are warrens teeming with high-speed trains. **Off**

This word is often confused with the preposition 'of'. The two are not related. While 'of' is used to talk about possession, relation, reference or origin, 'off' has a several different meanings.

As an adverb, 'off' can mean away from a certain place or position. E.g. *I took off for the mountains the second I heard the news*.

As an adverb, it can also mean closed or non-functioning. E.g. *I switched off the television when I Love Lucy came on*.

Funnily, as an adverb, it can also mean to start or become functioning.E.g. *The alarms went off signaling an intruder in the house*.

It can be used as a preposition to mean removed from. E.g. Nirmala was pushed off the diving board and straight into the pool below.

But in the passage, 'off' has been used as a preposition meaning 'branching out from'. E.g. *Take the right off the National Highway and you will reach the Sanctuary*.

<u>Lit</u>

This is the past tense and the past participle for the verb 'light'. It does not follow the rule of adding 'ed' to make the past tense.

<u>Optimist</u>

What is the adjective form of the antonym of optimist ?









The antonym of optimist is pessimist. The adjective form of the word is 'pessimistic'. 'Pessimistic' means to have a negative attitude towards things.

Talk up

This is a phrasal verb which means to talk about something favorably. This also suits the context of the sentence.

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