ROOT OF THE DAY

pend / pens / pond — *Latin pendere (to hang; to weigh) and pensare (to weigh) · "hang, weigh"*

depend — de- (down) + pend (hang) = hang down from; rely on something else
suspend — sub- (under) + pend (hang) = hang up; stop temporarily
append — ap- (to) + pend (hang) = hang on to; attach at the end
impend — in- (over) + pend (hang) = hang over; be about to happen
pendulum — Latin pendulus = hanging; a weight hung to swing freely
expend — ex- (out) + pend (weigh) = weigh out money; spend
propensity — pro- (forward) + pens (hang) = a hanging forward; a natural inclination
stipend — stips (small payment) + pend (weigh) = a fixed payment weighed out
compendium — com- (together) + pend (weigh) = weighed together; a concise collection of knowledge
dispense — dis- (out) + pens (weigh) = weigh out; to distribute or do without

POWER WORDS

truncate *v.*
"The Bench refused to truncate the hearing, saying every party must be heard in full."
Meaning: to shorten by cutting off a part
Syn: curtail, abridge, cut short · **Ant:** extend, prolong, lengthen
HOOK: Latin truncus = trunk; cut a tree down to its trunk

pecuniary *adj.*
"The insurer argued that the claim lay outside the policy because it involved no pecuniary loss."
Meaning: relating to money
Syn: financial, monetary, fiscal · **Ant:** non-monetary, spiritual, moral
HOOK: Latin pecunia = money, from pecus = cattle; cattle were the first currency

litigious *adj.*
"A litigious neighbour, he filed a fresh suit over every boundary dispute."
Meaning: fond of going to law; prone to lawsuits
Syn: contentious, quarrelsome, disputatious · **Ant:** peaceable, conciliatory, amicable
HOOK: Latin lis, litis = lawsuit; a litigant is one who goes to court

incumbent *n.*
"The incumbent was disqualified after the court found that the election had been won by corrupt practice."
Meaning: the person currently holding an office
Syn: officeholder, occupant, current holder · **Ant:** challenger, aspirant, candidate
HOOK: Latin incumbere = to lie upon; the duty rests on the one who holds the post

implacable *adj.*
"The petitioner remained implacable in his demand for a full inquiry, rejecting every offer of settlement."
Meaning: unable to be calmed or satisfied
Syn: relentless, unforgiving, inexorable · **Ant:** lenient, forgiving, placable
HOOK: Latin in- (not) + placare (to soothe); one who cannot be soothed

waive *v.*
"The respondent chose to waive his right to cross-examine the witness."
Meaning: to voluntarily give up a right or claim
Syn: relinquish, forgo, renounce · **Ant:** insist on, assert, claim
HOOK: Old Norse veifa = to wave aside; you wave a right away

countervail *v.*
"The court held that the public interest in transparency would countervail the claim of confidentiality."
Meaning: to offset or act against with equal force
Syn: counterbalance, offset, negate · **Ant:** reinforce, support, aggravate
HOOK: Latin contra (against) + valere (be strong); a force of equal strength pushing back

tangential *adj.*
"The counsel's argument on tax policy was tangential to the question of jurisdiction before the court."
Meaning: only slightly connected to the main point
Syn: peripheral, incidental, irrelevant · **Ant:** central, pertinent, germane
HOOK: Latin tangere = to touch; a tangent merely touches the circle and moves away

disparage *v.*
"It is improper for counsel to disparage a witness merely because the testimony is inconvenient."
Meaning: to speak of someone as having little worth
Syn: belittle, denigrate, decry · **Ant:** praise, extol, commend
HOOK: Old French desparagier = to marry below one's rank; to treat as of lower rank

scrupulous *adj.*
"The Registrar was scrupulous in checking every page of the record before certifying it."
Meaning: extremely careful and honest about details
Syn: meticulous, conscientious, punctilious · **Ant:** careless, negligent, unprincipled
HOOK: Latin scrupulus = a small sharp stone; a pebble in the shoe that will not let conscience rest

ostracise *v.*
"The village panchayat's order to ostracise the family was struck down as unconstitutional."
Meaning: to exclude someone from a group or society
Syn: shun, banish, blacklist · **Ant:** welcome, embrace, include
HOOK: Greek ostrakon = a potsherd; Athenians scratched a name on a shard to vote a citizen into exile

CONFUSABLE PAIRS — DON'T MIX THESE UP

dependent *vs* **dependant**
dependent: relying on something else (adjective)
dependant: a person who relies on another for support (noun)
TIP: dependANT with -ANT is a person, like an assistant; dependENT is the describing word.

prosecute *vs* **persecute**
prosecute: to bring legal proceedings against someone
persecute: to harass or ill-treat, especially for belief or race
TIP: PROsecute = PROceed in court; PERsecute = PERil to the victim.

ordinance *vs* **ordnance**
ordinance: a law or decree, especially one issued by the executive
ordnance: military weapons and ammunition
TIP: ordiNANCE is a law-making Notice; ordNANCE sounds like a cannon shell, ammunition.

device *vs* **devise**
device: a tool or contrivance (noun)
devise: to plan or invent; in law, to leave land by will (verb)
TIP: deviCE is a thing (noun, like ice); deviSE is an action (verb, like advise).

loath *vs* **loathe**
loath: unwilling, reluctant (adjective)
loathe: to hate intensely (verb)
TIP: loaTHE has the extra E, like a verb ending in -e (breathe); loath is short and reluctant.

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NAME: _____ ROLL NO: _____ BATCH: _____

IDIOMS & ONE-WORD SUBSTITUTION

Idioms in context

- **to hang in the balance** — to be in a state where the outcome is uncertain
  "With the quorum missing, the fate of the Bill hung in the balance."
- **to read the writing on the wall** — to see signs that something bad is certain to happen
  "The firm should have read the writing on the wall when three regulators issued notices in a month."
- **to bite the bullet** — to face a painful situation with courage
  "The government bit the bullet and cut the subsidy despite the protests."
- **to cut both ways** — to have both good and bad effects
  "The court's ruling cuts both ways: it protects tenants but discourages new rental housing."

One-word substitution

- a fixed sum paid regularly to a person after retirement → **pension**
- one who knows everything → **omniscient**
- a lover of books → **bibliophile**
- one who is present everywhere at once → **omnipresent**
- the act of killing one's own brother or sister → **fratricide**

WORDS IN THE WILD — FROM TODAY'S NEWSPAPER

- **hamper** — to hinder or obstruct the movement or progress of
  "Article 44: bordering States "shall not hamper transit passage", and "there shall be no suspension of transit passage." — *CLAT Gurukul News at a Glance, 15 Oct 2026*
- **mandatory** — required by law or rule; compulsory
  "The Court treated Articles 338(9) and 338A(9) as mandatory for all major policy matters affecting SCs and STs, not just those that harm them, and held that consultation after enactment is no substitute." — *CLAT Gurukul News at a Glance, 15 Oct 2026*
- **sustain** — to keep going; to maintain over time
  "According to the coalition statement quoted by The National, the Houthis use "civilian objects and vital resources to sustain its war effort"." — *CLAT Gurukul News at a Glance, 15 Oct 2026*
- **mediators** — neutral persons who help opposing sides reach agreement
  "Two tracks are running in parallel: diplomacy through mediators and pressure at sea." — *CLAT Gurukul News at a Glance, 15 Oct 2026*

LEGAL & LATIN TERMS EVERY ASPIRANT MUST KNOW

- **locus standi** — right to appear in court — the standing of a person to bring a case
- **mens rea** — guilty mind — the mental element of a crime
- **actus reus** — guilty act — the physical element of a crime
- **habeas corpus** — you may have the body — a writ to produce a detained person before a court
- **certiorari** — to be informed — a writ by which a higher court calls up the record of a lower body to quash its order
- **stare decisis** — to stand by decided matters — the doctrine that courts follow precedent
- **functus officio** — having discharged one's office — a court cannot revisit a final judgment
- **in camera** — in chambers — a hearing held in private, not in open court
- **amicus curiae** — friend of the court — a non-party who assists the court with information or argument
- **sine qua non** — without which not — an indispensable condition
- **quid pro quo** — something for something — an exchange of one benefit for another
- **pendente lite** — while the suit is pending — what is done during the litigation
- **ex parte** — from one side only — an order passed hearing only one party
- **audi alteram partem** — hear the other side — the rule of natural justice that none be condemned unheard

PRACTICE DRILL

1. The Bench refused to ___ the arguments to ten minutes a side, insisting that every party be heard in full.
A) append · B) ostracise · C) truncate · D) disparage

2. A ___ neighbour, he filed a fresh suit over every boundary dispute.
A) litigious · B) scrupulous · C) tangential · D) pecuniary

3. The insurer said the claim fell outside the policy because it involved no ___ loss.
A) tangential · B) incumbent · C) litigious · D) pecuniary

4. Counsel's remarks on tax policy were ___ to the question of jurisdiction.
A) pecuniary · B) tangential · C) scrupulous · D) implacable

5. The petitioner stayed ___ in demanding a full inquiry and rejected every settlement offer.
A) implacable · B) incumbent · C) pecuniary · D) tangential

6. The respondent chose to ___ his right to cross-examine the witness.
A) countervail · B) truncate · C) waive · D) disparage

7. Which word means 'a natural inclination', from pro- (forward) + pens (hang)?
A) compendium · B) propensity · C) stipend · D) expenditure

8. It is improper for counsel to ___ a witness merely because the testimony is inconvenient.
A) countervail · B) truncate · C) waive · D) disparage

9. Which word means 'to exclude someone from society', from Greek ostrakon (a shard used in voting)?
A) ostracise · B) disparage · C) truncate · D) hamper

10. The court held that the public interest in transparency would ___ the claim of confidentiality.
A) truncate · B) countervail · C) disparage · D) ostracise

Answer key: 1-C · 2-A · 3-D · 4-B · 5-A · 6-C · 7-B · 8-D · 9-A · 10-B

ETYMOLOGY TRAIL

The Latin pendere, to hang or weigh, gives suspend, append, impend and propensity, as well as the stipend weighed out to a clerk and the compendium that weighs many facts together. A **litigious incumbent** *may try to* **waive** *his rights or evade the law, but a* **scrupulous** *court will not let a* **tangential** *plea* **countervail** *the plain rule, nor let anyone* **disparage** *a witness or* **ostracise** *a rival. If it suffers no* **pecuniary** *loss, even an* **implacable** *petitioner must accept that the hearing cannot be truncated in his favour.*

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