ROOT OF THE DAY

nounce / nunci — *Latin nuntiare — to announce, report; nuntius — a messenger · "announce; carry a message"*

announce — ad- (to) + nuntiare (report) = to report a thing to the public; to make it known
pronounce — pro- (forth) + nuntiare (announce) = to declare forth in public; a court pronounces its judgment
annunciation — ad- (to) + nuntiare (announce) + -tion = the act of announcing; a formal proclamation of news
renunciation — re- (back) + nuntiare (announce) = to send back word that one gives a thing up; the formal giving up of a right
denunciation — de- (against, formally) + nuntiare = a formal notice given against someone; also a State's notice of withdrawal from a treaty

POWER WORDS

renounce *v.*
"Under the Citizenship Act, 1955, an adult Indian citizen may renounce citizenship by making a declaration in the prescribed manner."
Meaning: to formally give up a right, claim, title or belief
Syn: give up, forgo, abandon · **Ant:** claim, assert, retain
HOOK: re- (back) + nuntiare (announce) = to announce that one is handing a thing back

denounce *v.*
"Opposition parties denounced the arrest of the journalist as an attack on the freedom of the press."
Meaning: to condemn publicly; (of a treaty) to give formal notice of withdrawal from it
Syn: condemn, attack, criticise · **Ant:** praise, commend, defend
HOOK: de- (against) + nuntiare (announce) = to announce against someone in public

enunciate *v.*
"In Vishaka, the Supreme Court enunciated guidelines on sexual harassment at the workplace that held the field until Parliament legislated in 2013."
Meaning: to state a principle or theory clearly and formally; to pronounce words distinctly
Syn: state, formulate, articulate · **Ant:** obscure, muddle, mumble
HOOK: e- (out) + nuntiare (announce) = to speak a principle out clearly

disavow *v.*
"The party disavowed the remarks of its spokesperson and said they did not reflect its official position."
Meaning: to deny any responsibility for, or connection with, something
Syn: disown, repudiate, disclaim · **Ant:** acknowledge, own, admit
HOOK: dis- (not) + avow (declare openly) = to un-declare what is said to be yours

decry *v.*
"Environmental groups decried the decision to allow mining inside the buffer zone of the tiger reserve."
Meaning: to criticise something publicly as bad or wrong
Syn: condemn, deplore, denigrate · **Ant:** praise, extol, applaud
HOOK: de- (down) + cry = to cry a thing down in public

excoriate *v.*
"The bench excoriated the police for holding the petitioner for eleven days without producing him before a magistrate."
Meaning: to criticise someone or something very severely
Syn: lambaste, berate, upbraid · **Ant:** praise, laud, commend
HOOK: ex- (off) + corium (skin) = to strip the skin off; criticism that flays

harbinger *n.*
"Economists read the sharp fall in rural wages as a harbinger of slowing consumer demand."
Meaning: a person or thing that signals the approach of something else
Syn: forerunner, herald, omen · **Ant:** aftermath, sequel, consequence
HOOK: Old French herbergere = the officer who rode ahead to find lodging (harbour) for an army

portend *v.*
"Repeated breaches of the embankment portend serious flooding when the monsoon arrives."
Meaning: to be a sign or warning that something, usually bad, is going to happen
Syn: foreshadow, presage, augur · **Ant:** conceal, mask, disguise
HOOK: por- (forward) + tendere (stretch) = to stretch out ahead; a portent points to what is coming

relinquish *v.*
"Under Order II Rule 2 of the CPC, a plaintiff who intentionally relinquishes part of his claim cannot later sue for the portion he gave up."
Meaning: to give up a right, claim or possession voluntarily
Syn: surrender, abandon, yield · **Ant:** retain, keep, hold
HOOK: re- (back) + linquere (leave) = to leave a thing behind

bequeath *v.*
"By her will, the widow bequeathed her house to a trust that runs a school for girls."
Meaning: to leave property to someone by a will; to hand something down to those who come later
Syn: leave, will, endow · **Ant:** withhold, disinherit, retain
HOOK: Old English becwethan, be- + cwethan (say) = to say in a will who gets what

alienate *v.*
"Under the Transfer of Property Act, a condition that absolutely forbids the buyer to alienate the property is void."
Meaning: (law) to transfer the ownership of property to another; (generally) to make someone hostile or estranged
Syn: transfer, convey, estrange · **Ant:** retain, keep, reconcile
HOOK: Latin alienus (belonging to another) = to make a thing someone else's

pillory *v.*
"Instead of fixing the faulty software, the board chose to pillory a junior clerk for the data leak."
Meaning: to attack or ridicule someone publicly
Syn: ridicule, lampoon, denigrate · **Ant:** praise, honour, defend
HOOK: the pillory was a wooden frame that locked an offender's head and hands for public mockery

CONFUSABLE PAIRS — DON'T MIX THESE UP

renounce *vs* **denounce**
renounce: to formally give up a right or claim
denounce: to condemn publicly
TIP: Re- = back: you renounce what is yours by handing it back. De- = against: you denounce what someone else did.

decry *vs* **descry**
decry: to criticise publicly
descry: to catch sight of something far away
TIP: Critics decry a policy; a sailor descries land on the horizon.

pillory *vs* **pillage**
pillory: to ridicule or attack publicly
pillage: to plunder or loot, especially in war
TIP: The press pillories a minister; an invading army pillages a town.

presumptive *vs* **presumptuous**
presumptive: based on a presumption; probable (an heir presumptive)
presumptuous: arrogantly taking too much for granted
TIP: Presumptive evidence points to a likely fact; a presumptuous junior thanks the judge for a ruling not yet given.

barbarity *vs* **barbarism**
barbarity: extreme cruelty
barbarism: an uncivilised condition; also a word or usage that breaks the rules of the language
TIP: Torture is a barbarity; 'irregardless' is a barbarism.

IDIOMS & ONE-WORD SUBSTITUTION

One-word substitution

• a diplomatic representative of the Pope in a foreign country → **nunc**

NAME: _____ ROLL NO: _____ BATCH: _____

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Idioms in context

- **to blow the whistle on** — to expose wrongdoing inside an organisation to the authorities or the public
  "An engineer blew the whistle on the contractor who had used substandard cement in the flyover."
- **to throw in the towel** — to give up a contest or an effort; to admit defeat
  "After three failed appeals, the company threw in the towel and paid the compensation."
- **to nail one's colours to the mast** — to declare one's position openly and refuse to change it
  "The minister nailed his colours to the mast by promising to resign if the bill was diluted."
- **to eat one's words** — to admit that something one said earlier was wrong
  "Critics who called the project a failure had to eat their words when the metro line opened on time."

- a board or device that shows which bell, alarm or signal has been set off → **annunciator**
- a formal statement denying responsibility or giving up a claim → **disclaimer**
- a public announcement in church of an intended marriage → **banns**
- an official who made royal proclamations and carried messages → **herald**

WORDS IN THE WILD — FROM TODAY'S NEWSPAPER

- **barbarity** — extreme cruelty or brutality
  "The ICRC calls them, with their Protocols, the treaties containing "the most important rules limiting the barbarity of war"." — *CLAT Gurukul daily brief (Ukraine power outages and the energy ceasefire), 15 Oct 2026*
- **presumption** — an inference that the law draws until the contrary is proved
  "A common trap is to treat any object useful to the military as a lawful target; the second limb and the presumption in Article 52(3) cut against that." — *CLAT Gurukul daily brief (Ukraine power outages and the energy ceasefire), 15 Oct 2026*
- **brokered** — arranged or negotiated by a third party acting as a go-between
  "The fighting largely quietened under a UN-brokered truce in 2022, which, CBC reported, held until the hostilities resumed this year." — *CLAT Gurukul daily brief (Saudi-Houthi escalation), 15 Oct 2026*
- **entitlement** — a right, especially a legal right, to have or do something
  "Iran ties reopening to its conditions; the United States treats passage as a legal entitlement." — *CLAT Gurukul daily brief (Iran's reply on the Hormuz talks), 15 Oct 2026*

LEGAL & LATIN TERMS EVERY ASPIRANT MUST KNOW

- **animus revocandi** — the intention to revoke, especially to revoke a will
- **animus testandi** — the intention to make a will
- **quilibet potest renuntiare juri pro se introducto** — anyone may give up a right that exists only for his own benefit
- **invito beneficium non datur** — a benefit is not conferred on a person against his will
- **nemo est heres viventis** — no one is the heir of a living person
- **jus accrescendi** — the right of survivorship; the share of a deceased co-owner passes to the survivors
- **ab intestato** — from a person who died without a will; succession by operation of law
- **ex nudo pacto non oritur actio** — no action arises from a bare promise made without consideration
- **nemo potest mutare consilium suum in alterius injuriam** — no one may change his mind to the injury of another
- **assignatus utitur jure auctoris** — an assignee takes the rights of the person who assigned to him
- **nemo plus juris ad alium transferre potest quam ipse habet** — no one can transfer to another a greater right than he himself has
- **nullum tempus occurrit regi** — time does not run against the Crown; limitation does not bar the State

RECALL CHECK — WORDS FROM EARLIER

facile (learnt 7 days ago) — meaning: _____

adjudicate (learnt 21 days ago) — meaning: _____

demur (learnt 45 days ago) — meaning: _____

PRACTICE DRILL

1. An adult who wishes to give up Indian citizenship must formally ___ it by a declaration.
A) renounce · B) denounce · C) pronounce · D) announce

2. The bench ___ the police for holding the petitioner for eleven days without producing him before a magistrate.
A) enunciated · B) bequeathed · C) excoriated · D) relinquished

3. The sudden fall in rural wages was read as a ___ of slowing consumer demand.
A) barbarity · B) harbinger · C) entitlement · D) pillory

4. A plaintiff who intentionally ___ part of his claim cannot later file a fresh suit for that part.
A) enunciates · B) portends · C) decries · D) relinquishes

5. By her will, the widow ___ her house to a trust that runs a school for girls.
A) disavowed · B) pilloried · C) renounced · D) bequeathed

6. Residents ___ the decision to cut two hundred old trees to build a parking lot.
A) decried · B) descried · C) portended · D) bequeathed

7. When the spokesperson's remarks caused an uproar, the party quickly ___ them as not its official view.
A) enunciated · B) disavowed · C) relinquished · D) alienated

8. Unless the contrary is proved, the law raises a ___ that a person not heard of for seven years by those who would naturally have heard of him is dead.
A) barbarity · B) entitlement · C) presumption · D) disclaimer

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

ETYMOLOGY TRAIL

From the Latin nuntiare, to carry a message, we announce news, a court pronounces judgment, and a State's denunciation of a treaty gives notice that it is leaving. Turn the message back and you **renounce** *a right; turn it against someone and you* **denounce** *him; speak it out clearly and you* **enunciate** *a principle, or* **disavow** *words you never meant. A plaintiff may* **relinquish** *part of his claim, a widow may* **bequeath** *her house, an owner may* **alienate** *land, while critics* **decry, excoriate** *or* **pillory** *tho power, and a* **harbinger** *can* **portend** *worse to come. In the news, treaties limit the barbarity of war, the law raises a presumption that protects civilian objects, a U brokered truce once held in Yemen, and Washington treats passage through Hormuz as an entitlement.*

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