ROOT OF THE DAY

vinc / vict — *Latin vincere (past participle victus) — to conquer · "conquer; overcome; prevail"*

convict — con- (thoroughly) + vincere (conquer) = to overcome an accused completely by proof; to prove guilty
evict — e- (out) + vincere (conquer) = Latin evincere, to recover property by legal process; to put a person out of land or a house by law
invincible — in- (not) + vincibilis (able to be conquered) = that cannot be defeated
convince — con- (thoroughly) + vincere (conquer) = to overcome someone's doubt by argument until he believes
vanquish — Old French vainquir, from Latin vincere = to defeat thoroughly in battle or contest
victory — victoria, from victus (conquered) = the act of defeating an opponent

POWER WORDS

convict *v.*
"A court may convict an accused on the evidence of a single witness if that testimony is wholly reliable."
Meaning: to declare a person guilty of an offence after a trial
Syn: find guilty, condemn · **Ant:** acquit, exonerate, clear
HOOK: con- + vict (conquer) = the prosecution conquers the presumption of innocence

evict *v.*
"Under the rent control law, a landlord may evict a tenant only on one of the grounds listed in the statute."
Meaning: to remove a person from a house or land by legal process
Syn: expel, oust, dispossess · **Ant:** house, admit, reinstate
HOOK: e- (out) + vict (conquer) = to win the property back and put the occupant out

invincible *adj.*
"The ruling coalition looked invincible until a string of by-election defeats exposed its weak base."
Meaning: too strong to be defeated or overcome
Syn: unbeatable, unconquerable, indomitable · **Ant:** vulnerable, beatable, weak
HOOK: in- (not) + vinc (conquer) + -ible (able) = not able to be conquered

vanquish *v.*
"The incumbent was vanquished by a first-time candidate who campaigned on local water shortages."
Meaning: to defeat an opponent thoroughly
Syn: rout, overcome, crush · **Ant:** lose to, surrender, yield
HOOK: Old French vainquir, from vincere = to conquer completely

capitulate *v.*
"After a three-week strike, the management capitulated and restored the withdrawn allowances."
Meaning: to surrender or give in, especially on agreed terms, after resisting
Syn: surrender, yield, give in · **Ant:** resist, hold out, defy
HOOK: Medieval Latin capitulare (draw up under headings, from caput, head) = to set out the terms of a surrender

subjugate *v.*
"Colonial forest laws were used to subjugate tribal communities and deny them access to their own land."
Meaning: to bring someone under complete control, especially by conquest
Syn: subdue, conquer, oppress · **Ant:** liberate, free, emancipate
HOOK: sub- (under) + jugum (yoke) = the Romans made a defeated army pass under a yoke of spears

indomitable *adj.*
"The petitioner's indomitable spirit kept her case alive through twenty years of appeals."
Meaning: impossible to defeat, frighten or discourage
Syn: unyielding, resolute, invincible · **Ant:** feeble, timid, faint-hearted
HOOK: in- (not) + domitare (to tame) = that cannot be tamed

quell *v.*
"The district administration imposed prohibitory orders to quell the violence that broke out after the verdict."
Meaning: to put an end to a rebellion, disorder or a feeling, usually by force
Syn: suppress, crush, subdue · **Ant:** incite, provoke, stir up
HOOK: Old English cwellan (to kill) = to kill off a disturbance

unassailable *adj.*
"With a lead of forty seats, the alliance's majority in the House appeared unassailable."
Meaning: so strong or secure that it cannot be attacked, challenged or defeated
Syn: impregnable, unquestionable, secure · **Ant:** vulnerable, doubtful, shaky
HOOK: un- + assail (Latin ad- + salire, to leap at) = a position no one can leap at

impregnable *adj.*
"The defence argued that the prosecution's chain of circumstantial evidence was far from impregnable."
Meaning: (of a fort or an argument) too strong to be captured or broken
Syn: unconquerable, invulnerable, unassailable · **Ant:** exposed, weak, defenceless
HOOK: Old French imprenable, in- (not) + prendre (to take) = that cannot be taken; the g came in later

Pyrrhic *adj.*
"The government won the case, but it was a Pyrrhic victory: the costs and the delay discredited the policy itself."
Meaning: (of a victory) won at such a great cost that it is hardly worth winning
Syn: costly, hollow, ruinous · **Ant:** decisive, clear-cut, cheap
HOOK: King Pyrrhus of Epirus beat Rome at Heraclea and Asculum but lost so many men that one more such victory would ruin him

insurmountable *adj.*
"The committee found no insurmountable legal obstacle to holding the two elections on the same day."
Meaning: too great to be overcome
Syn: insuperable, overwhelming, unconquerable · **Ant:** surmountable, manageable, easy
HOOK: in- (not) + surmount (Old French sur, over + monter, climb) = that cannot be climbed over

CONFUSABLE PAIRS — DON'T MIX THESE UP

convince *vs* **persuade**
convince: to make someone believe that something is true
persuade: to make someone decide to do something
TIP: You convince a judge OF a fact or THAT it is true; you persuade a client TO settle.

quell *vs* **quail**
quell: to suppress a riot, a rebellion or a fear
quail: to shrink back in fear
TIP: The police quell the mob; a timid witness quails before the cross-examiner.

evict *vs* **expel**
evict: to remove a person from land or a house by legal process
expel: to force a member or student out of an organisation, or to drive something out
TIP: Tenants are evicted from premises; members are expelled from a party or a school.

vanquish *vs* **vanish**
vanquish: to defeat completely
vanish: to disappear suddenly
TIP: The army vanquishes the enemy; the evidence vanishes from the locker.

convict (v.) *vs* **convict (n.)**
convict (v.): to find a person guilty (stress on the second syllable: con-VICT)
convict (n.): a person serving a prison sentence (stress on the first syllable: CON-vict)
TIP: The court will con-VICT him, and he will then be a CON-vict.

IDIOMS & ONE-WORD SUBSTITUTION

NAME: _____ **ROLL NO:** _____ **BATCH:** _____

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Idioms in context

- **to win hands down** — to win easily, with very little effort
  "With the opposition split three ways, the sitting member won the seat hands down."
- **to fight a losing battle** — to keep trying to achieve something that is very unlikely to succeed
  "Without more judges, the High Court is fighting a losing battle against its rising pendency."
- **to raise the white flag** — to admit defeat or surrender
  "After the third adjournment was refused, the company raised the white flag and settled with the workers."
- **to lay down arms** — to stop fighting and surrender weapons; to end a conflict
  "The accord required the insurgent groups to lay down arms within ninety days."

One-word substitution

- a person found guilty of a crime and serving a sentence in prison → **convict**
- the act of removing a tenant from property by legal process → **eviction**
- a victory won at so great a cost that it is almost a defeat → **Pyrrhic victory**
- the formal surrender of an army or a state on agreed terms → **capitulation**
- the state of being under the complete control of a conqueror → **subjugation**

WORDS IN THE WILD — FROM TODAY'S NEWSPAPER

- **coercive** — using force or threats to make someone do something
  "But stopping a person from leaving the country is a coercive measure usually associated with criminal investigation." — *CLAT Gurukul daily brief (Madras HC: a bank's letter cannot stop a guarantor's travel), 8 Oct 2026*
- **complacency** — a feeling of uncritical satisfaction with oneself or one's achievements, which leads to carelessness
  "The Minister himself cautioned against complacency." — *CLAT Gurukul daily brief (JOSH Teams launched for youth-led TB elimination), 9 Oct 2026*
- **conciliatory** — intended to calm anger or end a disagreement; peace-making
  "The statement shows a consistent Indian position, framed in a conciliatory register." — *CLAT Gurukul daily brief (India at Pre-COP31: flexibility, pragmatism, mutual respect), 9 Oct 2026*
- **untraceable** — that cannot be found or identified
  "The NBA's answer — route the share to the State board in proportion to cultivation area — is a model of how a rule handles an untraceable beneficiary." — *CLAT Gurukul daily brief (NBA disburses ₹2.02 crore of access and benefit-sharing funds), 10 Oct 2026*

LEGAL & LATIN TERMS EVERY ASPIRANT MUST KNOW

- **vae victis** — woe to the conquered; the defeated are at the mercy of the victor
- **debellatio** — the end of a war by the complete defeat and dissolution of the enemy state
- **uti possidetis juris** — as you possess under law; new states inherit the administrative boundaries they had at independence
- **ex injuria jus non oritur** — a right does not arise from a wrong; an unlawful act cannot create a lawful title
- **ex factis jus oritur** — the law arises from the facts; established facts can shape legal rights
- **jus post bellum** — the law governing the end of a war and the transition to peace
- **inter arma enim silent leges** — in times of war the laws fall silent; a maxim that courts now reject
- **autrefois convict** — (Law French) formerly convicted; the plea that the accused has already been convicted of the same offence
- **ei incumbit probatio qui dicit, non qui negat** — the burden of proof lies on the one who asserts, not on the one who denies
- **ultima ratio** — the last resort; criminal punishment or force should be used only when milder means fail
- **ubi societas ibi jus** — where there is a society, there is law
- **pro tanto** — to that extent; only so far as it goes

RECALL CHECK — WORDS FROM EARLIER

prorogue (learnt 7 days ago) — meaning: _____

adjudicate (learnt 21 days ago) — meaning: _____

assiduous (learnt 45 days ago) — meaning: _____

PRACTICE DRILL

1. The trial court refused to ____ the accused, holding that the sole eyewitness was not reliable.
A) vanquish · B) evict · C) convict · D) quell

2. Only on a ground listed in the rent law can a landlord ____ a tenant from the premises.
A) evict · B) convince · C) subjugate · D) capitulate

3. The party won the case, but the costs and delay made it a ____ victory.
A) indomitable · B) impregnable · C) invincible · D) Pyrrhic

4. After three weeks of protest, the management ____ and restored the withdrawn allowances.
A) quelled · B) capitulated · C) evicted · D) subjugated

5. Prohibitory orders were issued to ____ the violence that followed the verdict.
A) quell · B) quail · C) convince · D) vanquish

6. Colonial forest laws were used to ____ tribal communities and deny them their land.
A) convince · B) capitulate · C) quail · D) subjugate

7. With a forty-seat lead, the alliance's majority looked ____.
A) coercive · B) unassailable · C) conciliatory · D) untraceable

8. Her ____ spirit kept the case alive through twenty years of appeals.
A) Pyrrhic · B) complacent · C) indomitable · D) coercive

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

ETYMOLOGY TRAIL

From the Latin vincere, to conquer, the prosecution that overcomes the presumption of innocence will **convict**, *the owner who wins back his property in court will* **evict**, *the army that cannot be beaten is* **invincible**, *and the argument that overcomes doubt will convince; through Old French the same verb gave us* **vanquish**. *The defeated may* **capitulate** *on agreed terms, or the victor may* **subjugate** *them by marching them under the yoke; the brave remain* **indomitable**, *the State moves to* **quell** *a riot, a strong case is* **unassailable** *and a strong fort* **impregnable**, *while some obstacles prove* **insurmountable** *and some wins turn out* **Pyrrhic**. *In the news, the Mad Court called a travel ban a coercive measure, the Health Minister warned against complacency over TB, India spoke in a conciliatory register before COP31, and found a rule for an untraceable beneficiary.*

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