ROOT OF THE DAY

frag / fract / fring — *Latin frangere (to break), past participle fractus · "break"*

infraction — Latin infractio, from infringere: in- (into, against) + fractus (broken) = a breaking of a rule
infringe — Latin infringere: in- + frangere (break) = to break in upon a right or a law
fracture — Latin fractura (a breaking), from fractus = a break, in a bone or in a group
fragmentary — fragmentum (a piece broken off), from frangere, + -ary = made of broken pieces
refraction — Late Latin refractio, from refringere: re- (back) + frangere = the 'breaking' of a ray of light as it bends
fragile — Latin fragilis, from frangere = easily broken

POWER WORDS

infraction *n.*
"Under the new hostel code, a first infraction of the curfew earns only a warning, but a third leads to suspension."
Meaning: a breach of a law, rule or agreement, usually a minor one
Syn: violation, breach, transgression · **Ant:** compliance, observance, conformity
HOOK: in- (against) + fractus (broken) = a rule that has been broken

infringe *v.*
"Any restriction that infringes the freedom of speech must be justified under one of the grounds listed in Article 19(2)."
Meaning: to break a law or agreement; to violate or encroach on a right
Syn: violate, breach, contravene · **Ant:** respect, observe, uphold
HOOK: in- + frangere (break) = to break into someone's right; a copyright or patent is 'infringed'

fragmentary *adj.*
"Historians reconstruct the Mauryan administration partly from fragmentary sources, such as the surviving extracts of Megasthenes' Indica."
Meaning: consisting of small, disconnected or incomplete parts
Syn: incomplete, partial, piecemeal · **Ant:** complete, whole, comprehensive
HOOK: fragmentum (a broken piece) + -ary = made of broken pieces

fracture *v./n.*
"A bitter quarrel over seat-sharing threatened to fracture the opposition alliance weeks before polling."
Meaning: (v.) to break or split, especially a group or a bone; (n.) a crack or break
Syn: split, splinter, crack · **Ant:** unite, mend, consolidate
HOOK: fractura (a breaking): doctors treat a fractured bone; analysts speak of a fractured mandate

schism *n.*
"The Great Schism of 1054 divided Christianity into the Eastern Orthodox and the Roman Catholic churches."
Meaning: a split between strongly opposed groups within an organisation, party or religious body
Syn: split, rift, division · **Ant:** unity, union, accord
HOOK: Greek skhisma (a cleft), from skhizein (to split), as in schizophrenia; say SIZ-um or SKIZ-um

sunder *v.*
"The Partition of 1947 sundered families who had lived side by side for generations."
Meaning: to split apart; to separate by force
Syn: sever, divide, part · **Ant:** join, unite, reunite
HOOK: Old English sundrian (to separate); the same word survives in 'asunder' and 'sundry'

cleave *v.*
"The quota question threatened to cleave the committee in two, though every member still claimed to cleave to the principle of equality."
Meaning: (1) to split apart, especially along a natural line; (2) to stick closely or remain loyal to
Syn: split, divide; cling, adhere · **Ant:** join, unite; abandon, desert
HOOK: two Old English verbs, cleofan (to split) and clifian (to stick), now share one spelling: a contronym

impinge *v.*
"A law that impinges on personal liberty must satisfy the test of proportionality laid down in K.S. Puttaswamy."
Meaning: to have an effect, usually an unwelcome one, on something; to encroach on
Syn: encroach, intrude, affect · **Ant:** spare, leave untouched, respect
HOOK: in- (against) + pangere (to fasten, drive in) = to drive against; always 'impinge ON' or 'UPON'

delinquent *adj./n.*
"The bank classified the account as delinquent after the borrower missed three consecutive instalments."
Meaning: (adj.) failing in a duty, especially overdue in payment; (n.) a person, usually young, who commits minor offences
Syn: defaulting, negligent; offender · **Ant:** dutiful, punctual; law-abiding person
HOOK: de- (away) + linquere (to leave) = delinquere, to leave a duty undone

delict *n.*
"In civil-law systems, negligent damage to a neighbour's property is a delict; a common lawyer would call the same wrong a tort."
Meaning: a civil wrong for which the law gives a remedy; the civil-law term for a tort
Syn: tort, civil wrong, wrongdoing · **Ant:** lawful act, duty performed
HOOK: Latin delictum (a fault), from delinquere (to fail, to offend), the same verb as delinquent

inviolate *adj.*
"The secrecy of the ballot must remain inviolate even when the result of an election is challenged in court."
Meaning: free from injury or violation; kept whole and unbroken
Syn: intact, untouched, unbroken · **Ant:** violated, breached, damaged
HOOK: in- (not) + violatus (violated), from violare = never broken

CONFUSABLE PAIRS — DON'T MIX THESE UP

infringe *vs* **impinge**
infringe: to break a law or violate a right (takes a direct object)
impinge: to have an effect on or encroach on (needs 'on' or 'upon')
TIP: Copying a film infringes the copyright; loud music impinges on the neighbours' rest.

breach *vs* **breech**
breach: a breaking of a law, contract or wall; a gap made by breaking
breech: the back part of a gun barrel; a baby born feet or buttocks first
TIP: A breach of contract is a break in a promise; a breech is the rear end of a gun or a breech birth.

fraction *vs* **faction**
fraction: a small part or proportion of a whole (Late Latin fractio, a breaking)
faction: a small, often dissenting group within a larger party (Latin factio, a party)
TIP: Only a fraction of the members joined the rebel faction: the first counts, the second quarrels.

cleave (split) *vs* **cleave (cling)**
cleave (split): to split something apart
cleave (cling): to stick closely or stay loyal to
TIP: An axe cleaves a log; a loyal friend cleaves to you. Read the preposition: 'cleave to' always means cling.

IDIOMS & ONE-WORD SUBSTITUTION

Idioms in context

- **to break ranks** — to stop supporting one's group and act or speak against it
  "Three ruling-party MPs broke ranks and voted with the opposition on the amendment."

One-word substitution

- a member who breaks away from a church or party and helps to spli
  schismatic

NAME: _____ ROLL NO: _____ BATCH: _____

SCAN AT DESK TO COLLECT
CG-VOCAB-20261119

- **more honoured in the breach than the observance** — (of a rule or custom) more often broken than kept; Hamlet first used it of a custom better broken
  "The direction to upload FIRs online within twenty-four hours is, in some districts, more honoured in the breach than the observance."
- **the straw that broke the camel's back** — a small final burden that makes an already difficult situation collapse
  "After months of delayed salaries, the sudden cut in allowances was the straw that broke the camel's back for the striking staff."
- **to make a clean break** — to end a relationship, habit or arrangement completely and at once, leaving no ties behind
  "After the merger collapsed, the two firms chose to make a clean break rather than keep sharing offices and staff."

- a pupil who stays away from school without permission → **truant**
- a worker who goes on working, or takes a striker's place, during a strike → **blackleg (strike-breaker)**
- a small group that has broken away from a larger party or organisation → **splinter group**
- a sailor or soldier who openly rebels against lawful authority, breaking the chain of command → **mutineer**

WORDS IN THE WILD — FROM TODAY'S NEWSPAPER

- **fragment** — (v.) to break into small, separate parts that no longer work as one whole
  "Without such shared rules, clean-energy markets would fragment, costs would rise and quality would be hard to verify." — *CLAT Gurukul daily brief (World Standards Day 2026: BIS and SDG 7), 14 Oct 2026*
- **purposive** — having or serving a purpose; in law, a purposive construction reads a statute so as to carry out the purpose the legislature intended
  "The Court stated that the literal rule comes first, and the mischief rule or purposive construction is used only when plain words are ambiguous or absurd." — *CLAT Gurukul daily brief (Supreme Court on a Hindu widow's limited estate, Section 14 Hindu Succession Act), 12 Oct 2026*
- **codification** — the arranging of laws or rules into a systematic written code
  "The exchange is a useful window into how states use the UN's legal committee — a forum meant for treaty-making and codification — to set out their positions on terrorism, sovereignty and self-defence." — *CLAT Gurukul daily brief (India rejects OIC remarks at the UNGA Sixth Committee), 8 Oct 2026*
- **conditionality** — the attaching of conditions to a loan or grant, which must be met before each part of the money is released
  "Programmes are released in instalments, each tied to a periodic review of whether the agreed conditions ("conditionality") have been met." — *CLAT Gurukul daily brief (IMF and Pakistan reach a staff-level agreement on about $1.2 billion), 10 Oct 2026*

LEGAL & LATIN TERMS EVERY ASPIRANT MUST KNOW

- **ex contractu** — arising out of a contract; used of obligations and actions for breach of contract
- **ex delicto** — arising out of a wrong; used of obligations and actions founded on a tort or delict
- **mea culpa** — 'through my fault'; a formal admission that one has done wrong
- **damnum emergens** — the loss actually suffered as a result of a breach or wrong
- **lucrum cessans** — the gain or profit lost because of a breach or wrong; claimed alongside damnum emergens
- **exceptio non adimpleti contractus** — the defence that a party need not perform its side of a contract while the other party has failed to perform its own
- **contra legem** — against the law; an interpretation that contradicts the plain words of a statute
- **in fraudem legis** — in fraud of the law; an act that keeps to the letter of a law while defeating its purpose
- **scienter** — 'knowingly'; proof that the defendant knew a fact, e.g. that an animal was dangerous or that a statement was false
- **ne bis in idem** — 'not twice for the same'; no person shall be prosecuted and punished more than once for the same offence (Article 20(2) of the Constitution)

RECALL CHECK — WORDS FROM EARLIER

renounce (learnt 7 days ago) — meaning: _____

tenable (learnt 21 days ago) — meaning: _____

sovereignty (learnt 45 days ago) — meaning: _____

PRACTICE DRILL

1. Parking in a no-parking zone is a minor ____ that attracts a fine, not a prison term.
A) schism · B) infraction · C) cleave · D) sunder

2. Copying and selling a film without a licence is said to ____ the producer's copyright.
A) impinge · B) sunder · C) cleave · D) infringe

3. The prosecution's case rested on ____ evidence: a torn bus ticket, half a CCTV frame and a witness who saw only the back of a man.
A) fragmentary · B) inviolate · C) delinquent · D) comprehensive

4. The quarrel over doctrine produced a ____, and the breakaway group set up its own seminary.
A) truant · B) delict · C) schism · D) infraction

5. In the old marriage vow 'to cleave to one another', the word 'cleave' means:
A) to split apart · B) to break a rule · C) to cling closely · D) to break into fragments

6. Which sentence uses 'impinge' correctly?
A) Late-night construction noise impinges on the residents' right to rest. · B) The thief impinged the lock and walked into the house. · C) The company was fined for impinging the patent of a rival. · D) The river impinges into two channels just before the delta.

7. A pedestrian sues a negligent driver who has injured her. Since the two had no agreement, her claim arises ____.
A) ex contractu · B) contra legem · C) mea culpa · D) ex delicto

8. Choose the word closest in meaning to 'sunder'.
A) unite · B) sever · C) uphold · D) ratify

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

ETYMOLOGY TRAIL

From the Latin frangere, to break, a rule that has been broken became an **infraction***, and to break in upon a right is to* **infringe** *it; a broken bone or alliance shows a* **fracture***, evidence made of broken pieces is* **fragmentary***, light 'broken' as it bends gives refraction, and whatever breaks easily is fragile. Greek gave English the* **schism** *that splits a church, Old English gave* **sunder** *and the double-edged* **cleave***, and Latin pangere gave* **impinge***, the word for what encroaches on a right without quite breaking it. A borrower who leaves a duty undone is* **delinquent***, the civil wrong he commits is a* **delict***, and the right that survives all of them stays* **inviolate***. In standards were said to stop clean-energy markets from breaking apart (fragment), the Supreme Court restated when purposive construction applies, the UN's legal committee was described as a forum for codification, and the IMF tied each instalment to conditionality.*

SCAN AT DESK TO COLLECT
CG-VOCAB-20261119