

SMART PANEL NOTES: 100 IDIOMS & PHRASES

Target Exams: Indian Airforce (Group X & Y) | Maharashtra Forest Guard

Module Focus: Vocabulary & Phrase Replacement (PYQ Based Master List)

PANEL 1: Top 100 High-Frequency Idioms

Idiom / Phrase	Meaning
1. A bed of roses	A comfortable, pleasant situation
2. A black sheep	An unworthy or disgraced person in a family/group
3. A blessing in disguise	Something good that isn't recognized at first
4. A bone of contention	A subject of dispute or argument
5. A bull in a china shop	An extremely awkward or clumsy person
6. A child's play	Something that is very easy to do
7. A dark horse	An unforeseen competitor who wins
8. A drop in the ocean	A very small amount compared to what is needed
9. A fish out of water	An uncomfortable position/situation
10. A fool's paradise	False sense of happiness or success
11. A hard nut to crack	A difficult problem to solve
12. A piece of cake	A very easy task
13. A red letter day	An important or joyful day
14. A stone's throw	At a very short distance
15. A white elephant	An expensive but useless possession
16. A wild goose chase	A foolish and useless search/effort
17. Achilles' heel	A small but fatal weakness
18. Add fuel to the fire	To make a bad situation worse
19. All ears	Very eager to listen
20. Apple of one's eye	Someone very precious or dear

Idiom / Phrase	Meaning
21. Apple of discord	Cause of animosity or quarrel
22. At arm's length	To keep at a distance / avoid being too friendly
23. At the eleventh hour	At the very last moment
24. At sixes and sevens	In a state of confusion or disorder
25. Back up	To support or defend
26. Barking up the wrong tree	Looking in the wrong place / accusing the wrong person
27. Beat around the bush	Avoiding the main topic / not speaking directly
28. Bite the bullet	To face a difficult situation bravely
29. Bite the dust	To be defeated or die
30. Blow one's own trumpet	To boast about one's own achievements
31. Break the ice	To start a conversation in a silent or tense situation
32. Bring to light	To reveal or disclose
33. Burn the midnight oil	To work or study late into the night
34. Burning question	A widely debated or important issue
35. By leaps and bounds	Very rapidly
36. Call a spade a spade	To speak frankly and directly
37. Call it a day	To stop working on something
38. Carry the day	To win or be successful
39. Cast iron stomach	Ability to eat anything without getting sick
40. Cats and dogs	Raining heavily
41. Catch red-handed	To catch someone in the act of doing wrong
42. Close shave	A narrow escape
43. Cold comfort	Slight or no consolation
44. Come to light	To become known to the public
45. Cost an arm and a leg	To be very expensive
46. Cry over spilt milk	To complain about a loss from the past

Idiom / Phrase	Meaning
47. Cut corners	To do something badly or cheaply to save time/money
48. Cut a sorry figure	To create a poor impression
49. Dead letter	A law or rule that is no longer enforced
50. Dog's life	A miserable or unhappy life
51. End in smoke	To come to nothing / yield no result
52. Eye wash	A deception / nonsense
53. Face the music	To accept the unpleasant consequences of one's actions
54. Fair and square	Honest and straightforward
55. Feather in one's cap	An achievement to be proud of
56. Flesh and blood	Human nature / human body
57. French leave	Absence without permission
58. From hand to mouth	Providing only bare essentials / surviving on meager resources
59. Get cold feet	To become nervous or afraid
60. Get into hot water	To get into trouble
61. Gift of the gab	The ability to speak fluently and persuasively
62. Go to the dogs	To be ruined / to deteriorate
63. Good Samaritan	A helpful or compassionate person
64. Green horn	An inexperienced person
65. Hand in glove	In close association or partnership
66. Herculean task	A task requiring immense effort or strength
67. Hit the nail on the head	To do or say exactly the right thing
68. Hold water	To seem logical and true / to be valid
69. In a nutshell	Briefly / in a few words
70. In the good books	To be in favor with someone
71. Iron will	Strong determination

Idiom / Phrase	Meaning
72. Keep fingers crossed	To hope for a good outcome
73. Keep the wolf from the door	To avoid starvation / to have just enough money to live
74. Kick the bucket	To die
75. Kith and kin	Blood relations / family and relatives
76. Leave no stone unturned	To try every possible course of action
77. Let the cat out of the bag	To reveal a secret accidentally
78. Lion's share	The largest part or portion
79. Make a clean breast of	To confess completely
80. Make ends meet	To manage one's finances within one's income
81. Make up one's mind	To make a decision
82. Nip in the bud	To stop something at an early stage
83. Null and void	Invalid / having no legal force
84. Once in a blue moon	Very rarely
85. Out of the blue	Unexpectedly or without warning
86. Part and parcel	An essential or integral component
87. Play second fiddle	To take a subordinate role to someone else
88. Point blank	Very directly / without explanation
89. Put the cart before the horse	To do things in the wrong order
90. Rain cats and dogs	To rain very heavily
91. Read between the lines	To understand the hidden meaning
92. See eye to eye	To agree completely
93. Spill the beans	To reveal secret information
94. Take to heels	To run away
95. Through thick and thin	Under all circumstances, good or bad
96. Tooth and nail	With all one's resources or energy / fiercely
97. Turn a deaf ear	To ignore what someone says

Idiom / Phrase	Meaning
98. Under a cloud	Under suspicion
99. Under the weather	Feeling mildly ill
100. Up in arms	Very angry or rebellious