WBPSC Clerkship English Vocabulary, Idioms & Phrases Handout

High-Frequency Idioms, One-Word Substitutions, Synonyms, Antonyms & Phrasal Verbs for WBPSC Clerkship & Miscellaneous 2026

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📌 Section 1: High-Yield Idioms & Phrases (Frequently Tested in WBPSC)

Master these idioms commonly tested in WBPSC Clerkship, Miscellaneous Services, and WBCS Preliminary exams.

Idiom / Phrase	English Meaning	Bengali Meaning & Usage Example
A bolt from the blue	A sudden and completely unexpected event or shock.	*বিনা মেঘে বজ্রপাত* The news of his sudden resignation came as a bolt from the blue.
Burn the midnight oil	To stay up late working or studying hard.	*রাত জেগে কঠোর পরিশ্রম করা* Aspirants are burning the midnight oil for the upcoming Clerkship exam.
Call it a day	To stop working on something for the rest of the day.	*দিনের মতো কাজ সমাপ্ত করা* After completing 10 mock tests, the candidate decided to call it a day.
At the eleventh hour	At the very last possible moment.	*একেবারে শেষ মুহূর্তে* He submitted his online application at the eleventh hour.
Barking up the wrong tree	Accusing or pursuing the wrong person or direction.	*ভুল জায়গায় চেষ্টা করা বা ভুল ব্যক্তিকে সন্দেহ করা* If you think Rohan leaked the paper, you are barking up the wrong tree.
Break the ice	To initiate a conversation in a tense or quiet social setting.	*নীরবতা ভাঙা / আড়ষ্টতা দূর করা* The interviewer cracked a witty joke to break the ice with the nervous candidate.
Bury the hatchet	To end a quarrel or conflict and make peace.	*বিবাদ ভুলে বন্ধুত্ব স্থাপন করা* Both political groups finally agreed to bury the hatchet before the polls.
Cost an arm and a leg	To be extremely expensive.	*অত্যন্ত ব্যয়বহুল হওয়া* Offline coaching in major cities costs an arm and a leg nowadays.

Idiom / Phrase	English Meaning	Bengali Meaning & Usage Example
Cry over spilt milk	To complain or regret about something that has already happened and cannot be undone.	*অতীতের ভুলের জন্য বৃথা অনুশোচনা করা* There is no point in crying over spilt milk; focus on the next recruitment stage.
Every cloud has a silver lining	Every difficult or unpleasant situation has a positive aspect.	*প্রত্যেক বিপদের মধ্যেই কোনো না কোনো আশার আলো থাকে* Though he failed the preliminary round, he discovered his true aptitude.
In black and white	In written or printed official form.	*লিখিত আকারে* The commission issued the revised syllabus guidelines in black and white.
Once in a blue moon	Happening very rarely or seldom.	*ডুমুরের ফুল / কদাচিৎ ঘটে এমন* He visits his ancestral village in Birbhum once in a blue moon.
Spill the beans	To reveal a secret prematurely or indiscreetly.	*গোপন কথা প্রকাশ করে ফেলা* The official accidentally spilled the beans regarding the exam schedule.
Take with a grain of salt	To view something with skepticism and not completely believe it.	*কিছুটা সন্দেহের চোখে দেখা* Take social media exam cut-off rumors with a grain of salt.
Through thick and thin	Under all conditions, both good and bad.	*সুখে-দুঃখে সব পরিস্থিতিতে* His mentor supported him through thick and thin during his preparation.

📌 Section 2: Essential One-Word Substitutions (50 High-Frequency Terms)

One-Word Substitution carries 3 to 5 direct marks in the WBPSC General English paper. Review these verified terms:

Phrase / Definition	One-Word Term	Bengali Equivalent
One who looks at the bright side of things	**Optimist**	*আশাবাদী*
One who looks at the dark side of things	**Pessimist**	*হতাশাবাদী*
A lover and collector of books	**Bibliophile**	*পুস্তকপ্রেমী*
One who hates mankind	**Misanthrope**	*মানববিদ্বেষী*
One who loves mankind and works for welfare	**Philanthropist**	*মানবপ্রেমী / পরোপকারী*
One who eats everything (both plants and meat)	**Omnivorous**	*সর্বভুক*
Present everywhere at the same time	**Omnipresent**	*সর্বব্যাপী*
All-powerful; having unlimited power	**Omnipotent**	*সর্বশক্তিমান*
Knowing everything; having infinite knowledge	**Omniscient**	*সর্বজ্ঞ*
A remedy or cure for all diseases	**Panacea**	*সর্বব্যাধিহর মহৌষধ*
A handwriting that cannot be easily read	**Illegible**	*দুষ্পাঠ্য*
Fit and suitable to be eaten	**Edible**	*ভক্ষণযোগ্য*
Fit and safe to be drunk	**Potable**	*পানযোগ্য*
A person who is incapable of making mistakes	**Infallible**	*অভ্রান্ত*
A speech made without any prior preparation	**Extempore / Impromptu**	*উপস্থিত বক্তৃতা*
A person who leaves his own country to settle in another	**Emigrant**	*দেশত্যাগী প্রবাসী*
A person who comes to a foreign country to settle	**Immigrant**	*অভিবাসী*
One who walks in sleep	**Somnambulist**	*ঘুমের মধ্যে হাঁটা ব্যক্তি*
A post held without any salary or remuneration	**Honorary**	*অবৈতনিক*
Murder of a king	**Regicide**	*রাজহত্যা*

💡 **ExamCare Revision Tip for English:** In WBPSC Clerkship, prepositions after phrasal verbs (e.g., *abide by, cope with, look forward to + gerund*) are guaranteed scoring areas. Never write "cope up with" — the correct idiom is simply **"cope with"**!

📌 Section 3: Essential Phrasal Verbs & Prepositional Combinations

Phrasal Verb	Exact Meaning	Exam Example
Abide by	To comply with rules or decisions.	All candidates must *abide by* the examination code of conduct.
Break out	To start suddenly (disease, war, fire).	Dengue *broke out* in several districts during the monsoon.
Call off	To cancel a planned event or meeting.	Due to severe cyclones, the state board *called off* the inspection.
Give up	To stop doing or trying something; surrender.	An authentic civil service aspirant never *gives up* perseverance.
Look into	To investigate or examine facts.	The vigilance committee was ordered to *look into* the allegations.
Put out	To extinguish a fire or light.	Firefighters took four hours to *put out* the blaze in Burrabazar.

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