

EAV01 — Vocabulary & Usage

Chapter EAV01 · AFCAT English Level

AFCAT Level

✦ **What This Chapter Covers:** AFCAT Vocabulary & Usage includes **Synonyms & Antonyms (3 Q each), One Word Substitution, and Idioms & Phrases** in AFCAT 1/2025 and 2/2025. This chapter gives you the highest-frequency words from AFCAT papers with root-word memory tricks, the most tested one-word substitutions, and idiom pairs most likely to reappear.

1. Synonyms & Antonyms — AFCAT High-Frequency List

Word	Meaning	Synonym (AFCAT chooses these)	Antonym
Indomitable	Impossible to defeat or subdue	unconquerable, invincible, steadfast	submissive, feeble, yielding
Valiant	Brave and courageous	gallant, intrepid, heroic, dauntless	cowardly, timid, craven
Exonerate	To free officially from blame	acquit, absolve, vindicate, clear	condemn, incriminate, convict
Audacious	Daring, bold, fearless	intrepid, dauntless, brazen	timid, meek, cautious
Perilous	Full of danger or risk	hazardous, treacherous, risky, precarious	safe, secure, benign
Resilient	Quickly recovering from difficulties	tough, adaptable, buoyant, sturdy	fragile, brittle, vulnerable

Word	Meaning	Synonym (AFCAT chooses these)	Antonym
Tenacious	Holding firmly; not giving up	persistent, resolute, dogged, unyielding	irresolute, vacillating, weak
Aloof	Not friendly; remote/distant	detached, standoffish, reserved	friendly, warm, approachable
Prolific	Producing large quantities	productive, fertile, abundant, copious	unproductive, barren, sparse
Clandestine	Done secretly	covert, furtive, surreptitious, undercover	overt, open, transparent, public
Meticulous	Very careful and precise	scrupulous, painstaking, thorough, exact	careless, sloppy, negligent
Obstinate	Stubbornly refusing to change	stubborn, intransigent, dogged, pig-headed	flexible, amenable, compliant

2. One Word Substitutions – AFCAT Favourites

Phrase	One Word	Phrase	One Word
Fear of heights	Acrophobia	Fear of fire	Pyrophobia
Fear of confined spaces	Claustrophobia	Fear of water	Hydrophobia
One who can use both hands equally well	Ambidextrous	One who walks in sleep	Somnambulist
A person who hates mankind	Misanthrope	A person who hates women	Misogynist
Life history of a person written by another	Biography	Life history written by oneself	Autobiography
A government by one person	Autocracy	A government by the people	Democracy
One who knows many languages	Polyglot	Speaking two languages	Bilingual
Words written on a tombstone	Epitaph	A speech delivered at a funeral	Eulogy

Phrase	One Word	Phrase	One Word
A doctor specialising in children's diseases	Paediatrician	A doctor specialising in skin diseases	Dermatologist
One who collects stamps	Philatelist	One who collects coins	Numismatist

3. Idioms & Phrases – AFCAT Pattern

AFCAT High-Yield Idioms

- ▶ **Bite the bullet** – endure pain/difficulty stoically
- ▶ **Hold the fort** – manage things in someone's absence
- ▶ **Under fire** – being criticised or attacked
- ▶ **Take the bull by the horns** – deal boldly with a difficult problem
- ▶ **A bolt from the blue** – a complete surprise
- ▶ **Burn the midnight oil** – work/study very late

More AFCAT Idioms

- ▶ **Hit the nail on the head** – say something exactly right
- ▶ **Burn one's bridges** – destroy a relationship permanently
- ▶ **Read between the lines** – find a hidden meaning
- ▶ **Once in a blue moon** – very rarely
- ▶ **A red herring** – a misleading distraction
- ▶ **Spill the beans** – reveal a secret

4. Word Roots – Memory Shortcuts

Key Roots

- ▶ **belli** = war → bellicose, belligerent, rebel
- ▶ **somn** = sleep → somnambulist, insomnia, somnolent
- ▶ **mis/miso** = hate → misanthrope, misogynist
- ▶ **phobia** = fear → acrophobia, claustrophobia
- ▶ **poly** = many → polyglot, polygamy, polygon

More Key Roots

- ▶ **phil** = love → philatelist, philosophy, philanthropist
- ▶ **auto** = self → autobiography, autocracy, autonomous
- ▶ **bi** = two → bilingual, bicycle, biannual
- ▶ **cland** = secret → clandestine
- ▶ **ten/tin** = hold → tenacious, retain, contain

Q1. Antonym of “Clandestine”: (AFCAT 1 2025)

- (a) Covert
- (b) Furtive
- (c) Overt
- (d) Surreptitious

Answer: (c) Overt

Clandestine = done secretly, in a hidden manner. Antonym = overt (open, not hidden, done publicly). Options (a), (b), (d) are all synonyms of clandestine. AFCAT’s vocabulary questions often list three synonyms and one antonym — pick the odd one out.

Q2. One word substitution: “A person who is skilled at using both hands equally well” is called: (AFCAT 2 2025)

- (a) Ambiguous
- (b) Amphibious
- (c) Ambidextrous
- (d) Ambivalent

Answer: (c) Ambidextrous

Ambi = both sides + dexter = right/skill = skilled on both sides. Ambiguous = having two meanings. Amphibious = living on land and water (also used for military amphibious operations). Ambivalent = having mixed feelings. Root trick: “ambi” = both + “dexter” = skilled/right-hand = ambidextrous.

Q3. “Bite the bullet” means: (AFCAT 1 2025)

- (a) To fire a weapon in combat
- (b) To eat quickly before a mission
- (c) To endure a painful or difficult situation stoically
- (d) To show exceptional courage in battle

Answer: (c) To endure a painful or difficult situation stoically

Origin: Before anaesthesia, soldiers bit on a bullet during surgery to cope with pain. Now means: to face a difficult or unpleasant situation with courage, without

complaining. AFCAT favourites this military-origin idiom as it directly relates to the ethos of a defence officer.

Q4. Synonym of "Tenacious": (AFCAT 2 2025)

- (a) Irresolute
- (b) Dogged
- (c) Vacillating
- (d) Fragile

Answer: (b) Dogged

Tenacious = holding firmly to a purpose; not giving up. Synonyms: dogged, persistent, resolute, unyielding, steadfast. Antonyms: irresolute (option a), vacillating (option c, means undecided), fragile (option d). Root: "ten" = hold (retain, contain) → tenacious = one who holds on.

Q5. One word substitution: "A speech delivered in praise of a deceased person" is called: (AFCAT 1 2025)

- (a) Epitaph
- (b) Elegy
- (c) Eulogy
- (d) Obituary

Answer: (c) Eulogy

Eulogy = a speech or piece of writing in praise of a person, especially one who has recently died. Epitaph = words written on a tombstone (different medium – written, not spoken). Elegy = a mournful poem. Obituary = a written notice of a death in a newspaper. AFCAT tests these near-synonyms together.

Quick Reference – EAV01

AFCAT Word List

- Indomitable = unconquerable

One-Word Quick

- Acrophobia = fear of heights

AFCAT Traps

- Exonerate synonyms = acquit/absolve (NOT

(feeble)

- Valiant = brave (cowardly)
- Tenacious = persistent (irresolute)
- Clandestine = secret (overt)
- Meticulous = careful (careless)

- Ambidextrous = both hands equally
- Eulogy = praise speech at funeral
- Epitaph = words on tombstone
- Misanthrope = hates mankind

condemn)

- Clandestine antonym = overt (NOT covert)
- Eulogy (speech) ≠ Epitaph (written on tomb)
- Elegy = sad poem; Eulogy = praise speech
- Ambidextrous ≠ Ambiguous ≠ Ambivalent

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