



## Opposites

JANUARY 14, 2015

Complete the second sentence in each pair of sentences given below using an adjective opposite in meaning to the one in the first sentence.

1. The elephant is a large animal. The mouse is a ..... animal.
2. It is hot in summer. It is ..... in winter.
3. Today it is very cloudy. Tomorrow will be a ..... day.
4. These clothes are wet. Those clothes are .....
5. Alice is a tall girl. Her sister is .....
6. We won't reach in time if we go by a slow train. We must catch a ..... train.
7. My belt was old. I bought a ..... one.
8. Some colors are bright. Others are .....
9. It is warm outside. It is ..... inside.
10. I don't like to eat raw mangoes. I like to eat ..... ones.

11. This knife is blunt. Have you got a ..... one?
12. Don't be rude. Be .....

## Answers

1. The elephant is a large animal. The mouse is a **small** animal.
2. It is hot in summer. It is **cold** in winter.
3. Today it is very cloudy. Tomorrow will be a **sunny** day.
4. These clothes are wet. Those clothes are **dry**.
5. Alice is a tall girl. Her sister is **short**.
6. We won't reach in time if we go by a slow train. We must catch a **fast** train.
7. My belt was old. I bought a **new** one.
8. Some colors are bright. Others are **dull**.
9. It is warm outside. It is **cool** inside.
10. I don't like to eat raw mangoes. I like to eat **ripe** ones.
11. This knife is blunt. Have you got a **sharp** one?
12. Don't be rude. Be **polite**.

## Gerunds or infinitives exercise

JANUARY 17, 2015

image: <http://www.englishgrammar.org/images/pdf.gif>



### Fill in the blanks with gerunds or participles.

1. You are ..... too much these days.

- a) Smoking
- b) Smoked

2. There was a ..... cigarette end in the ashtray.

- a) Smoking
- b) Smoked

3. Having ..... for ten hours, I felt great.

- a) Sleeping
- b) Slept

4. Not ..... what to do, I went home.

- a) Known
- b) Knowing

5. She went ..... out of the room.

- a) Run
- b) Running

6. .... stamps is a hobby of mine.

- a) Collecting
- b) Collected

7. I hate ..... suitcases.

- a) Packing
  - b) Packed
8. She was angry at Susie ..... to lie to her.
- a) Trying
  - b) Tried
9. The roof was ..... off in the storm.
- a) Blowing
  - b) Blown
10. The doctor suggested ..... a long holiday.
- a) Taking
  - b) Taken

## Answers

- 1. You are **smoking** too much these days.
- 2. There was a **smoking** cigarette end in the ashtray.
- 3. **Having** slept for ten hours, I felt great.
- 4. Not **knowing** what to do, I went home.
- 5. She went **running** out of the room.
- 6. **Collecting** stamps is a hobby of mine.

Read more at <http://www.englishgrammar.org/gerunds-infinitives-exercise-2/#pIsVUbkWYv7k3C8R.99>

## Common mistakes with adverbs

JANUARY 26, 2015

image: <http://www.englishgrammar.org/images/pdf.gif>



### **Correct the following sentences.**

1. He came here before two months.
2. He comes often to our house.
3. Though John worked very hardly, he failed.
4. He comes to see me seldom.
5. I have wanted to meet him always.
6. I have never seen such a man; he is too noble.
7. Alice is so tall as Peter.

### **Answers**

1. He came here two months ago. (Ago is used to date back from the time of speaking. Before is used to date back from a point of time in the past.)
2. He often comes to our house. (Adverbs like always, before, never and often are placed before the verb. When the verb consists of an auxiliary and a principal verb, the adverb is placed between the two; if there are two auxiliaries, the adverb is placed after the first auxiliary.)
3. Though John worked very hard, he failed.
4. He seldom comes to see me. (Seldom is an adverb of frequency. It is placed before the verb.)

5. I have always wanted to meet him.
6. I have never seen such a man; he is very noble. (Too has a negative meaning. It means 'more than is good or desirable or necessary for a specific purpose'. It is not used in the general sense of very or much.)
7. Alice is as tall as Peter. (We prefer as in affirmative sentences and so in negative sentences.)

Read more at <http://www.englishgrammar.org/common-mistakes-adverbs/#3POWDLKdFSy3he1W.99>

## Common expressions without articles

JANUARY 25, 2015

image: <http://www.englishgrammar.org/images/pdf.gif>



In some common fixed expressions of place, time and movement countable nouns are normally treated as uncountables, without articles. Here are the most common expressions of this kind:

*To school / at school / in school / from school*

*To university / at university / from university (GB)*

*To university / in university / from university (US)*

*To / at / in / into / from church*

*To / in / into / out of bed / prison*

*To / at sea*

*To / in / from town*

*At / from home*

*Leave home / school / university / college*

*Start school / university / college*

*Enter school / university / college*

*To / in / into / out of hospital*

*To / at / from work*

*By car / by bus / by bicycle / by plane / by train / by boat*

*On foot*

*By radio / phone / letter / mail*

In some cases, place nouns are used with articles. There is usually a difference of meaning. For example, when we say at the university, we are referring to the building, not to the activities going on there.

### **Compare:**

John has to go to hospital. He has got heart problems. (as a patient.)

I went to the hospital to see James. (Here we are referring to the bricks and mortar structure.)

### **Notes**

In American English, the words *hospital* and *I* are always used with articles.

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Read more at <http://www.englishgrammar.org/common-expressions-articles/#sKepVkZUlcAYAOXo.99>

## **Unless and without; as and like**

JANUARY 27, 2015

image: <http://www.englishgrammar.org/images/pdf.gif>



### **Without and Unless**

Without is a preposition. It cannot be used as a conjunction.

- As he was not ready, we left without him. (without – preposition)

Unless is a conjunction. It has a similar meaning to if not.

- Come tomorrow unless I phone.



### **Correct the following sentences.**

1. We cannot play without he gives us permission.
2. He will not come without you invite him.
3. Without you tell me the truth I cannot help you.

### **Answers**

1. We cannot play unless he gives us permission.
2. He will not come unless you invite him.
3. Unless you tell me the truth I cannot help you.

## **Like and As**

Like is used as either a verb or preposition.

I like seafood. (like – verb)

She likes roses. (like – verb)

She looks like her mother. (like – preposition)

He talked like a priest. (like – preposition)

Like cannot be used a conjunction. The conjunction for this meaning is 'as'

She writes as I do. (NOT She writes like I do.)

### **Exercise**

Correct the following sentences.

1. She walks like her sister does.
2. He looks like he is a professional.
3. She works like a waitress.

### **Answers**

1. She walks as her sister does.
2. He looks like a professional.
3. She works as a waitress.

## Common mistakes with nouns

JANUARY 27, 2015

image: <http://www.englishgrammar.org/images/pdf.gif>



In this article, we will explain some common mistakes in the use of nouns.

Incorrect: I would like to buy some **furnitures**.

Correct: I would like to buy some **furniture**.

Incorrect: Have you got any **informations**?

Correct: Have you got any **information**?

Incorrect: Have you packed your **luggages**?

Correct: Have you packed your **luggage**?

Incorrect: Is there any **breads**?

Correct: Is there any **bread**? OR Are there any **loaves**?

**Explanation:** Nouns like **scenery, furniture, news, information, luggage and bread** are always used in the singular. They do not have a plural form.

Incorrect: He told these **news** to me.

Correct: He told me **this news**.

**Explanation:** The noun **news** is only used in the singular. So, we cannot use these before **news**. When a verb (e.g. told) takes two objects, we prefer to put the indirect object (e.g. me) before the direct object (e.g. this news). Note that the indirect object is usually a person as in the above example.

Incorrect: The government should pay attention to the problems of the **poors**.

Correct: The government should pay attention to the problems of **the poor**.

Incorrect: He provided the **blinds** with food.

Correct: He provided **the blind** with food.

Explanation: Expressions like **the poor, the dead, the blind, the unemployed** are always plural. You don't have to say the poors or the blinds

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Read more at <http://www.englishgrammar.org/common-mistakes-nouns-2/#IhG1UgIe1rpKRerL.99>

## Confusing pairs exercise

JANUARY 31, 2015

image: <http://www.englishgrammar.org/images/pdf.gif>



Words like **their** and **there**, **its** and **it's** are often confused. This exercise tests your understanding of similar word pairs.

### Complete the given sentences.

1. .... knowledge is a dangerous thing.  
(A little / little)
2. .... children are innocent.  
(A little / little)
3. .... children are interested in reading. (A few / few)
4. He has .... buildings of his own.  
(Much / many)
5. The .... half of the film is more interesting than the former. (later / latter)
6. My .... brother works abroad. (elder / older)
7. Trains run .... five minutes. (every / each)
8. .... bag is this? (Whose / who's)
9. The dog has had .... breakfast. (its / it's)

10. .... is something wrong with this computer. (There / their)

## Answers

1. **A little** knowledge is a dangerous thing.
2. **Little** children are innocent.
3. **Few** children are interested in reading.
4. He has **many** buildings of his own.
5. The **latter** half of the film is more interesting than the former.
6. My **elder** brother works abroad.
7. Trains run **every** five minutes.
8. **Whose** bag is this?
9. The dog has had **its** breakfast.
10. **There** is something wrong with this computer.

Read more at <http://www.englishgrammar.org/confusing-pairs-exercise/#6XYv1ERtyrad1QRW.99>

## Identify the adverbs

FEBRUARY 1, 2015

image: <http://www.englishgrammar.org/images/pdf.gif>



**Adverbs** are words used to modify verbs. Most of them end in **-ly**. Place words and time words are all adverbs. Adverbs may also modify **adjectives** or other adverbs. An adverb that modifies an adjective or another adverb usually goes before that adjective or adverb.  
**Underline the adverbs in the following sentences.**

1. She sings well.
2. The coffee is very hot.
3. Kiran is an extremely good dancer.
4. It is too hot today.

5. She speaks all foreign languages fluently.
6. The child is now happy.
7. He learns his lessons very carefully.
8. I visit my friend daily.
9. I will return immediately.
10. I hardly recognized my old friend.

## Answers

1. She sings well. (Here the adverb 'well' modifies the verb 'sings'.)
2. The coffee is very hot. (Here the adverb 'very' modifies the adjective 'hot'.)
3. Kiran is an extremely good dancer. (Here the adverb 'extremely' modifies the adjective 'good'.)
4. It is too hot today. (Here the adverb 'too' modifies the adjective 'hot'. The word 'today' is also an adverb.)
5. She speaks all foreign languages fluently. (Here the adverb 'fluently' modifies the verb 'speaks'.)
6. The child is now happy. (Here the adverb 'now' modifies the adjective 'happy'.)
7. He learns his lessons very carefully. (Here the adverb 'very' modifies another adverb – carefully.)
8. I visit my friend daily. (Here the adverb 'daily' modifies the verb 'visit'.)
9. I will return immediately. (Here the adverb 'immediately' modifies the verb 'return'.)

10. I hardly recognized my old friend. (Here the adverb 'hardly' modifies the verb 'recognized'.)

Read more at <http://www.englishgrammar.org/identify-adverbs/#17VzQ7JfoDXFLMIW.99>

## Articles exercise

*FEBRUARY 2, 2015*

image: <http://www.englishgrammar.org/images/pdf.gif>



Complete the following sentences using appropriate articles. In some cases, no articles are needed.

1. .... man is mortal.
2. I am ..... university student.
3. She goes to the temple in ..... mornings.
4. Kiran is ..... best student in the class.
5. .... camel is the ship of the desert.
6. This book has won ..... Booker prize.
7. Harishchandra was ..... honest king.
8. I am fond of ..... classical music.
9. I met ..... boy in ..... store.
10. Gold is ..... precious metal.
11. She returned after ..... hour.
12. There is ..... institution for  
..... blind in this city.

13. .... sun rises in the east.
14. He works at ..... factory.
15. He is ..... oldest member of the club.
16. I like to watch ..... football.

## Answers

1. Man is mortal. (No article is needed.)
2. I am **a** university student.
3. She goes to temple in **the** mornings.
4. Kiran is **the** best student in the class.
5. **The** camel is the ship of the desert.
6. This book has won **the** Booker prize.
7. Harishchandra was **an** honest king.
8. I am fond of classical music. (No article is needed.)
9. I met **a** boy in the store.
10. Gold is **a** precious metal.
11. She returned after **an** hour.
12. There is **an** institution for **the** blind in this city.
13. **The** sun rises in the east.
14. He works at **a** factory.
15. He is **the** oldest member of the club.
16. I like to watch football. (No article is needed.)

## Each other and one another

JANUARY 31, 2015

image: <http://www.englishgrammar.org/images/pdf.gif>



In modern English, **each other** and **one another** are used in the same way. One another is preferred in cases where we are making general statements.  
They no longer talk to each other / one another.

Both expressions have possessive forms: each other's / one another's.

They sat for hours listening to each other's / one another's tales.

### Grammar notes

**Each other** is not used with words like **meet, marry and similar**.

- They met at a pub. (NOT They met each other at a pub.)
- They married in 2001. (NOT They married each other in 2001.)

### **Themselves, each other / one another**

There is a difference between themselves and each other / one another.

Compare:

- They love themselves a lot. (= Each of them loves himself or herself.)
- They love each other a lot. (=Each of them loves the other.)

Correct use of only



The adverb **only** should be placed immediately before the word it modifies. Study the following sentence. Note the change in the meaning according to the change in the position of only.

- Only Alice helped me to write the book. (= Only Alice and no one else helped me to write the book.)
- Alice only helped me to write the book. (= Alice helped me to write the book, but she didn't actually write it herself.)
- Only John could solve the problem. (= Only John and no one else could solve the problem.)
- John could only solve the problem. (= John could solve the problem, but couldn't do anything else.)

Read more at <http://www.englishgrammar.org/each-other-and-one-another/#Blz7ZuSkz6pGSHHj.99>

## Tenses review exercise

FEBRUARY 7, 2015

image: <http://www.englishgrammar.org/images/pdf.gif>



Use the correct tense forms of the verbs in brackets and fill in the gaps:

1. She ..... (go) to church regularly.
2. Rani ..... (drink) a cup of milk every morning.
3. I usually ..... (read) biographies.
4. I ..... (read) a novel now.
5. He ..... (prepare) for competitive exams for three years.

6. When I reached home, my son ..... (play) with his toys.
7. I ..... (go) to my native place next month.
8. Sita ..... (eat) an apple in the morning.
9. He ..... (stand) on the bench.
10. He ..... (work) on a new novel for two years.

### Answers

1. She **goes** to church regularly.
2. Rani **drinks** a cup of milk every morning.
3. I usually **read** biographies.
4. I **am reading** a novel now.
5. He **has been preparing** for competitive exams for three years.
6. When I reached home, my son **was playing** with his toys.
7. I **am going** to my native place next month.
8. Sita **ate** an apple in the morning.
9. He **stood** on the bench.
10. He **has been working** on a new novel for two years.

Read more at <http://www.englishgrammar.org/tenses-review-exercise/#zD1HrhRd8eLdELxb.99>

### Pronouns exercise

FEBRUARY 9, 2015

image: <http://www.englishgrammar.org/images/pdf.gif>



**Complete the following sentences using appropriate pronouns.**

1. Diana is one player ..... may beat me.  
(who/whom)

2. I can't bear the thought of ..... leaving.  
(his/him)
3. An argument developed between his sister and  
..... (he/him)
4. Do you think it is ..... who have arrived?  
(they/them)
5. Jane is the person ..... I think spoke to  
you. (who/whom)
6. We don't think we are as strong as .....  
(they/them)
7. We are going to the movies. Would you like to come  
with ..... (we / us)?
8. I cannot believe that she is older than  
..... (he / him).
9. I am not as rich as ....., but I am a lot  
happier. (they / them)

## Answers

1. Diana is one player **who** may beat me.
2. I can't bear the thought of **his** leaving.
3. An argument developed between his sister and him.
4. Do you think it is they **who** have arrived?
5. Jane is the person **who** I think spoke to you.

6. We don't think we are as strong as **they (are)**. / We don't think we are as strong as **them**.

7. We are going to the movies. Would you like to come with **us**?

8. I cannot believe that she is older than **him**. / I cannot believe that she is older than **he (is)**.

9. I am not as rich as **them**, but I am a lot happier. / I am not as rich as **they are**, but I am a lot happier.

[Tweet](#)<sup>3</sup>

Read more at <http://www.englishgrammar.org/pronouns-exercise/#YXMyfpbMRqBk592T.99>

## Subject verb agreement worksheet

FEBRUARY 14, 2015

image: <http://www.englishgrammar.org/images/pdf.gif>



Fill in the blanks with appropriate forms of verb. Choose the answers from the options given in the brackets.

1. One of my friends ..... gone to France.  
(has / have)

2. Each of the boys ..... given a present.  
(was / were)

3. Neither of the contestants ..... able to win a decisive victory. (was / were)

4. Oil and water ..... not mix. (do / does)

5. He and I ..... at Oxford together. ( was / were)

6. Slow and steady ..... the race. (win / wins)

7. Neither Peter nor James ..... any right to the property. (has / have)
8. No prize or medal ..... given to the boy, though he stood first in the examination. (was / were)
9. Either Mary or Alice ..... responsible for this. (is / are)
10. Neither the Minister nor his colleagues ..... given any explanation for this. (have / has)

## Answers

1. One of my friends **has** gone to France.
2. Each of the boys **was** given a present.
3. Neither of the contestants **was** able to win a decisive victory.
4. Oil and water **do** not mix.
5. He and I **were** at Oxford together.
6. Slow and steady **wins** the race.
7. Neither Peter nor James **has** any right to the property.
8. No prize or medal **was** given to the boy, though he stood first in the examination.
9. Either Mary or Alice **is** responsible for this.
10. Neither the Minister nor his colleagues **have** given an explanation for this.

Read more at <http://www.englishgrammar.org/subject-verb-agreement-worksheet/#rADYMac4CogppA4k.99>

## When the verb has two objects

Many verbs can be followed by two objects – **a direct object and an indirect object**. Common verbs that can take two objects are: **give, take, lent, buy, bring, fetch, get** etc.

The indirect object usually refers to a person. The direct object usually refers to a thing.

Two patterns are possible.

## 1. Subject + verb + indirect object + direct object

This pattern is preferred when the indirect object is a pronoun or when it is shorter than the direct object.

Examples are given below.

- I lent him (indirect object) my **camera** (direct object).
- She brought me (indirect object) **a cup of tea** (direct object).
- The teacher gave **us** (indirect object) some **advice** (direct object).
- I have given **him** (indirect object) his **money** (direct object).
- You must tell **him** (indirect object) the **truth** (direct object).
- My father bought **me** (indirect object) a **nice laptop** (direct object).

## Subject + verb + direct object + preposition + indirect object

Note that when the direct object comes before the indirect object, we have to use the preposition 'to' or 'for' between the direct object and the indirect object.

This pattern is preferred when the indirect object is longer than the direct object.

Examples are given below.

- I lent my **camera** (direct object) **to a friend of mine**. (indirect object)

- She made **tea** (direct object) for **her guests** (indirect object) .
- The teacher gave **some advice** (direct object) to **her students**(indirect object).
- I have given **his money** (direct object) to **him** (indirect object) .
- You must tell **the truth** (direct object) to **the police** (indirect object) .
- My father bought **a nice laptop** (direct object) for **me** (indirect object) .

## Verb patterns with to-infinitives

FEBRUARY 20, 2015 -  PDF

To-infinitives are used in several structures. Here is a quick overview of them.

**To-infinitives** can be used after adjectives expressing ideas such as desire or emotion.

We were happy **to see** him.

She is afraid **to talk**.

He is eager **to join** the army.

I will be happy **to accept** your invitation.

He was anxious **to meet** you.

They are impatient **to leave**.

### It + be + adjective + of + noun/pronoun + to-infinitive

The adjectives that are commonly used in this pattern are: *good, kind, generous, stupid, unwise, wrong, brave, politely, silly, wicked, cruel, foolish, wise, nice, careless* etc.

It is kind of you **to help** us.

It was foolish of me **to lend** him money.

It was clever of you **to solve** this puzzle.

It is wicked of her **to do** such things.

It was careless of you **to make** that mistake.

It is unwise of him **to drink** too much.

**To-infinitives** are words like **difficult, easy, hard, impossible** etc.

This book is easy **to understand**.

This carpet is difficult **to wash**.

Your actions are impossible **to justify**.

This food is difficult **to swallow**.

This medicine is pleasant **to taste**.

His speech was difficult **to understand**.

**It + be + adjective + to-infinitive**

It is easy **to learn English**.

It is difficult **to get** a job.

It is cruel **to treat** animals in that way.

It was impossible **to win**.

It is hard **to get** noticed.

The phrase **I wish I had...** is the most common structure used to talk about our wishes. Here are some common wishes people have.

- I wish I had more money.
- I wish I had more friends.
- I wish I had a bigger house.
- I wish I was taller.
- I wish I was more beautiful.
- I wish I had curly hair.
- I wish I had blue eyes.
- I wish I had a caring husband.
- I wish I had a cute daughter.
- I wish I had a better memory.



Note the use of past tense verbs in this structure.

In the phrase **I wish I had...** 'had' is the simple past form of the verb 'have'. Instead of **had**, you can use the simple past form of other verbs as well.

- I wish I spoke French.
- I wish I knew Italian.
- I wish I looked smarter.
- I wish I drove a Ferrari.
- I wish I lived in Shanghai.
- I wish I had a golden voice.
- I wish I knew more people.
- I wish I played the piano.

Although we use past tense forms in this structure, we are not referring to the past in these sentences. Instead, we are merely expressing our wishes in the present.

To talk about past wishes, we can use the structure **I wish I had had...** Note that the second **had** in this structure is the past participle form of **have**. Past participle forms of other verbs are also possible in this case.

- I wish I had had more money.
- I wish I had worked harder. (= I didn't work harder, but now I regret it.)
- I wish I had had more time on my business trip last week.
- I wish I hadn't trusted him.
- I wish I had listened to his advice.

## Grammar Quiz – Tenses

FEBRUARY 23, 2015 -  PDF

**Fill in the blanks with the appropriate form of the verb.**

1. We ..... waiting here since morning.

- a) have been
- b) has been
- c) are
- d) were

2. We ..... them yesterday.

- a) visited
- b) have visited
- c) had visited
- d) was visiting

3. He ..... from Jamaica yesterday.

- a) has returned
- b) have returned
- c) had returned
- d) returned

4. See that you ..... for the meeting on time.

- a) will come
- b) come
- c) would come
- d) came

5. She will come if we ..... her.

- a) invite
- b) will invite
- c) invited
- d) would invite

6. I ..... to Singapore recently.

- a) had been
- b) went
- c) have been
- d) was

7. The doctor concluded that the man ..... ten hours ago.

- a) had died
- b) was dead
- c) has been died
- d) is dead

8. I ..... waiting for your reply for several weeks.

- a) have been
- b) has been
- c) had been
- d) was

9. The train ..... by the time we reach the station.

- a) will leave
- b) will have left
- c) left
- d) would

10. Every morning, I ..... the newspaper.

- a) will read
- b) am reading
- c) read
- d) was reading

## Answers

1. We **have been waiting** here since morning.
2. We **visited** them yesterday.
3. He **returned** from Jamaica yesterday.
4. See that you **come** for the meeting on time.
5. She **will come** if we invite her.
6. I **went** to Singapore recently.
7. The doctor concluded that the man **had died** ten hours ago.
8. I **have been waiting** for your reply for several weeks.
9. The train **will have left** by the time we reach the station.
10. Every morning, I **read** the newspaper.

Please share this with others if you feel it's helpful.

# Verbs of incomplete predication

MARCH 18, 2015 -  PDF

**Intransitive verbs** do not take an object. Examples are given below.

Fire **burns**.

He **sat** on the floor.

The old man **laughed**.

Some **intransitive verbs** require a word or phrase to complete the predicate and make sense of the sentence. Such verbs are called verbs of incomplete predication. Examples are: **is, am, are, was, were, become, look, seem, appear, taste, smell, grow, turn** etc.

The earth **is round**.

Honey **tastes sweet**.

The milk **turned sour**.

He **became a monk**.

The night **grew dark**.

The word or words required to complete the predicate is called the complement of the verb. In the above sentence, the words **round, sweet, sour, monk and dark** are the complements of the verbs **is, tastes, turned, became and grew** respectively.

When the complement of a verb says something about the subject, it is called a **subject complement**.

Read the following sentence.

Susie is a writer.

Here the noun 'writer' is the complement of the verb 'is'. As it says something about the subject Susie, it is a subject complement.

More examples are given below.

She is intelligent. (Subject complement – intelligent)

This house is to let. (Subject complement – to let)

The child continued crying. (Subject complement – crying)

She looked depressed. (Subject complement – depressed)

## Object complements

Transitive verbs have objects, but some transitive verbs require, besides their objects, some complements to complete their meaning.

The teacher appointed Charles monitor.

They elected Ram their president.

Frustration drove him mad.

They named her Angel.

Here the complements *monitor*, *president*, *mad* and *Angel* say something about the objects *Charles*, *Ram*, *him* and *her*. A complement which says something about the object is called an **object complement**.

## TOEFL Practice test

MARCH 21, 2015 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences.

1. She held the bag ..... even though her arm hurt  
.....

- a) tightly, badly
- b) tight, bad
- c) tight, badly
- d) tightly, bad

2. .... as fast as possible, she managed to arrive on time.

- a) Being driving
- b) Driven
- c) Driving
- d) Having driving

3. .... much blood, the driver struggled with the controls, which felt sluggish.

- a) Lost
- b) Having lost
- c) Being lost
- d) Losing

4. The man was charged with theft. ...., he was suspected of committing a serious crime in another state.

- a) For instance
- b) In the same way
- c) In addition
- d) Similarly

5. I believe that smoking is extremely dangerous. .... have you heard of the people who die from cancer because they smoke?

- a) For instance
- b) Similarly

- c) In addition
- d) In the same way

6. You will benefit ..... regular practice.

- a) with
- b) to
- c) from
- d) by

7. I have invited Mark and Mary. .... Harry, I don't care whether he comes or not.

- a) As for
- b) While
- c) As far as
- d) Whereas

#### Answers

1. She held the bag tightly even though her arm hurt badly.
2. Driving as fast as possible, she managed to arrive on time.
3. Having lost much blood, the driver struggled with the controls, which felt sluggish.
4. The man was charged with theft. In addition, he was suspected of committing a serious crime in another state.
5. I believe that smoking is extremely dangerous. For instance, have you heard of the people who die from cancer because they smoke?



6. You will benefit from regular practice.

7. I have invited Mark and Mary. As for Harry, I don't care whether he comes or not.

## Sentence improvement exercise

MARCH 22, 2015 -  PDF

In each of the following sentences a word or phrase is given in bold letters. From the given alternatives, choose the one that is better than the bolded text. If none of the alternatives improves the sentence, indicate (d) as your answer.

1. The traveler asked me if I **had known** the way to the nearest inn.

- a) knew
- b) was knowing
- c) knows
- d) No improvement

2. The doctor **suggested me to take** a holiday.

- a) suggested that I should take
- b) suggested to take
- c) suggested me taking
- d) No improvement

3. He was **cured of** his rheumatism by a specialist.

- a) cured from
- b) cured with
- c) cured after
- d) No improvement

4. He threatened that he would shoot me **unless** I didn't obey his instructions.

- a) if
- b) whether
- c) if not
- d) No improvement

5. There is **no question of denying the fact** that she broke it.

- a) no denying the fact
- b) no denial the fact
- c) no way to deny the fact
- d) No improvement

## Answers

1. The traveler asked me if I **knew** the way to the nearest inn.

2. The doctor **suggested that I should take** a holiday.

3. He was **cured of** his rheumatism by a specialist.

4. He threatened that he would shoot me **if** I didn't obey his instructions.

5. There is **no denying the fact that** she broke it.

## Changing interrogative sentences into the passive

MARCH 24, 2015 -  PDF

Read the following sentences.

Active voice: Did she recognize you?

Passive voice: **Were you recognized** by her?

Active voice: Can anybody cure it?

Passive voice: **Can it be** cured (by anybody)?

Active voice: Who wrote this book?

Passive voice: **By whom** was this book written?

Active voice: Have you finished work?

Passive voice: Has the **work been finished** by you?

Active voice: When will they announce the results?

Passive voice: When will the results **be announced** (by them)?

## Notes

The primary auxiliary verbs **do, does or did** does not appear in the passive form.

The verbs **has, have, had, will, shall, can, may** etc., do not change their position at the beginning of the sentence when the active voice is changed to the passive voice.

Active voice: Have you invited them?

Passive voice: **Have they been invited** by you?

Active voice: Will you help him?

Passive voice: **Will he be helped** by you?

The question words **when, why, where, how or what** does not change their position at the beginning of the sentence when the active voice is changed into the passive voice. Note that **who** changes to **by whom** and **whom** into **who**.

What did he say? (Active Voice)

What **was said** by him? (Passive Voice)

Whom did you invite? (Active Voice)

**Who was invited** by you? (Passive Voice)

## Present perfect tense review

MARCH 26, 2015 -  PDF

Many students find it difficult to use the present perfect tense correctly, but that is not surprising. Although the present perfect tense is a present tense, it is only used to talk about finished actions and situations.

We make the present perfect tense form by putting **has/have** before the past participle form of the verb.

I **have finished** the job.

She **has acted** in a film.

They **have left** for their native place.

She **has agreed** to come.

The present perfect tense is used:

1) To talk about an action that was finished just now or in the immediate past.

They **have just arrived**.

I **have finished** writing.

2. To talk about a past action that has its effect in the present.

Somebody **has let** the cat in. (= The cat is in now. The action took place in the past, but its effect is still present.)

I **have broken** my leg, so I can't walk now.

3. To talk about an action that began sometime in the past and has continued up to the present.

We **have lived** in this city for ten years. (We still live here.)

I **have known** him for a long time. (I still know him.)

4. To talk about a past action

We can use the present perfect tense to talk about a past action when we don't mention when it took place.

He **has helped** me several times.

I **have been** to Australia.

## Notes

The **present perfect tense** cannot be used with adverbs of past time like **yesterday, last year, last week, when, then** etc.

He **went to Mumbai yesterday**. (BUT NOT He has gone to Mumbai yesterday.)

Please share this with others if you feel it's helpful.

## Verb patterns with gerunds and have

MARCH 28, 2015 -  PDF

The **gerund** is the form of the verb ending in **-ing**. Note that the present participle also ends in **-ing**.

The gerund is different from the present participle. While the present participle is mainly used as an adjective, the gerund is used as a noun.

The present participle is also used to form the continuous tenses.

The gerund can be the subject or object of the verb. It can also be the object of a preposition.

In this lesson, we will review some common verb patterns using the gerund. We will also learn about the causative use of have.

### **Subject + Verb + Gerund**

In this structure the gerund is used as the object of the transitive verb.

I enjoy writing.

I don't mind cooking.

He prefers walking to riding.

I couldn't help overhearing their conversation.

She likes reading.

I love playing with my kids.

### **Gerund after prepositions**

A gerund is often placed after a preposition. Note that we cannot use an infinitive after a preposition.

The teacher used a red pen for marking mistakes.

He earns his living by working at a pub.

She is good at singing.

He got married only after getting a good job.

You shouldn't have left the party without thanking the host.

Are you interested in learning palmistry?

### **Causative use of 'have'**

Getting something done by somebody else is expressed by the structure **have/get + object + past participle**.

I must get the computer fixed.

I had my watch repaired.

You must get your hair cut.

She has had her photograph taken.

## Difference between present perfect and present perfect continuous tense

MARCH 31, 2015 -  PDF

**The present perfect tense** and **present perfect continuous tense** have very similar use. They can both be used to talk about actions and situations that started in the past and have continued up to the present.

Present perfect tense form: **Subject + has/have + past participle form of the verb**.

We **have lived** in this city for ten years.

I **have taught** English for twenty years.

Present perfect continuous tense form: Subject + has / have + been + -ing form of the verb

We **have been living** in this city for ten years.

I **have been teaching** English for twenty years.

I **have been working** since morning.

It **has been snowing** since yesterday.

The baby **has been sleeping** for two hours.

She **has been knitting** for hours.

## Difference between present perfect and present perfect continuous tenses

Both present perfect and present perfect continuous tenses can be used to talk about actions and events that started in the past and have continued up to the present.

I **have worked** with them for ten years.

I **have been working** with them for ten years.

The present perfect tense can be used to talk about finished events.

The **present perfect continuous tense** cannot be used to talk about finished events.

Compare:

I **have finished** the job. (I have finished that job. I am free now.) (NOT I have been finishing the job.)

## Had better

APRIL 1, 2015 -  PDF

We use '**had better**' to give strong advice. 'Had better' is not used in polite requests because it may suggest a threat.

Rewrite the following sentences using 'had better'.

1. I would advise you to buy the tickets now.
2. I don't think that you should buy another car now.
3. I think you should take this medicine.



4. I don't think that we can depend on him.
5. I really think you should stop quarrelling with her.
6. You should lock the door before you leave.
7. It would be good for you to stay in the hostel.
8. I ought to publish this book soon.
9. You really ought to visit him one of these days.
10. It would be good for you to invest your money in some profitable business.

## Answers

1. You **had better** buy the tickets now.
2. You **had better** not buy another car now.
3. You **had better** take this medicine.
4. We **had better** not depend on him.
5. You **had better** stop quarrelling with her.
6. You **had better** lock the door before you leave.
7. You **had better** stay in the hostel.
8. I **had better** publish this book soon.
9. You **had better** visit him one of these days.

10. You **had better** invest your money in some profitable business.

## Discourse markers exercise

APRIL 4, 2015 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences using an appropriate discourse marker.

1. .... nurses are overworked and underpaid.

- a) In particular
- b) Broadly speaking
- c) For instance
- d) Except for

2. I don't believe in ghosts. .... I haven't seen one yet.

- a) I think
- b) At least
- c) In other words
- d) That is to say

3. I think he should be acquitted. .... he is too young to know the difference between right and wrong.

- a) After all
- b) Well
- c) Honestly
- d) I suppose

4. The man was sleeping soundly on the river bank. .... a crocodile was creeping closer.

- a) Despite this
- b) As a result
- c) Meanwhile
- d) By contrast

5. The child didn't get any medical attention. \_\_\_\_\_, she died soon after.

- a) Despite this
- b) As a result
- c) In this case
- d) In spite of this

6. He has been warned before. ...., he shouldn't have repeated this.

- a) in this case
- b) instead
- c) despite this

## Answers

1. **Broadly speaking** nurses are overworked and underpaid.
2. I don't believe in ghosts. **At least** I haven't seen one yet.
3. I think he should be acquitted. **After all** he is too young to know the difference between right and wrong.
4. The man was sleeping soundly on the river bank. **Meanwhile** a crocodile was creeping closer.
5. The child didn't get any medical attention. **As a result**, she died soon after.

6. He has been warned before. **In this case**, he shouldn't have repeated this.

## So that

APRIL 11, 2015 -  PDF

**Combine the following pairs of sentences using so that.**

1. He borrowed some money from his friend. He wanted to buy a car.
2. We eat. We want to live.
3. He worked hard. He wanted to pass the test.
4. Our team played well. As a result, they could win the match.
5. They grew vegetables in the backyard. They wanted to have fresh vegetables all year round.
6. I wrote the number on a piece of paper. I didn't want to forget it.
7. He offered his daughter a prize. He wanted her to work hard.
8. She stayed in London for six months. She wanted to perfect her English.
9. I have come early. I want to talk to you.
10. He left home early. He wanted to get to the meeting in time.

## Answers

1. He borrowed some money from his friend **so that** might buy a car.
2. We eat so that we may live.

3. He worked hard **so that** he might pass the test.
4. Our team played well **so that** they could win the match.
5. They grew vegetables in the backyard **so that** they might have fresh vegetables all year round.
6. I wrote the number on a piece of paper **so that** I wouldn't forget it.
7. He offered his daughter a prize **so that** she might work hard.
8. She stayed in London for six months **so that** she might perfect her English.
9. I have come early **so that** I can talk to you.
10. He left home early **so that** he would get to the meeting in time.

Please share this with others if you feel it's helpful.

## Opposites exercise

APRIL 13, 2015 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences using a word opposite in meaning to the underlined word.

1. Coffee is a stimulant while opium is a .....
2. The peacock is beautiful, but the ostrich is .....
3. The tiger is carnivorous whereas the cow is .....
4. The like poles of a magnet ..... while unlike poles attract.

5. Love is a virtue while hatred is a .....
6. The road ascends to the top of the hill and then ..... to the plain on the other side.
7. These rules are too rigid. We need more ..... ones.
8. Kindness is admired, but cruelty is .....
9. Some parts are separable from the whole and some are .....
10. We should not oppose or ..... a government blindly.

## Answers

1. Coffee is a stimulant while opium is a sedative.
2. The peacock is beautiful, but the ostrich is ugly.
3. The tiger is carnivorous whereas the cow is herbivorous.
4. The like poles of a magnet repel while unlike poles attract.
5. Love is a virtue while hatred is a vice.
6. The road **ascends** to the top of the hill and then descends to the plain on the other side.
7. These rules are too rigid. We need more flexible ones.
8. Kindness is admired, but cruelty is despised.
9. Some parts are separable from the whole and some are inseparable.

10. We should not oppose or support a government blindly.

## Tenses worksheet

APRIL 16, 2015 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences using an appropriate verb form.

1. I ..... all novels written by Jane Austen.

- a) read
- b) have read
- c) had read

2. She ..... before I ..... her place.

- a) left, had reached
- b) had left, had reached
- c) had left, reached

3. She ..... here for six months.

- a) has stayed
- b) is staying
- c) has been staying

4. I ..... to become a writer.

- a) have always wanted
- b) am always wanting
- c) always want

5. Last night, there ..... an explosion near the castle.

- a) has been
- b) was
- c) had been

6. I ..... her for a long time.

- a) had known
- b) have known
- c) am knowing
- d) know

7. He never ..... to his native place.

- a) returned
- b) was returning
- c) had returned

8. He ..... by his grandparents.

- a) raised
- b) was raised
- c) has raised
- d) had raised

## Answers

1. I **have read** all novels written by Jane Austen.
2. She **had left** before I **reached** her place.
3. She **has stayed / has been staying** here for six months.
4. I **have always wanted** to become a writer.



5. Last night, there **was** an explosion near the castle.

6. I **have known** her for a long time.

7. He never **returned** to his native place.

8. He **was raised** by his grandparents.

## Idioms and phrases exercise

APRIL 18, 2015 -  PDF

Questions 1 – 7

Each sentence given below contains an idiom/phrase. From the given alternatives, choose the one that best expresses the meaning of this idiom/phrase.

1. He has the gift of the gab.

- a) He is gifted
- b) He is a chatterbox
- c) He is a good conservationist

2. Parental property has become a bone of contention between the siblings.

- a) unifying factor
- b) something that causes a quarrel
- c) a firm view
- d) none of these

3. Once in a blue moon, we meet each other.

- a) frequently
- b) hardly ever
- c) very seldom indeed
- d) in the light of a blue moon

4. He has been jobless for several months, and it is his wife who keeps the pot boiling.

- a) avoids starvation
- b) keeps the fire burning
- c) is angry
- d) keeps firing

5. In the end he had to eat the humble pie.

- a) apologize humbly
- b) defend himself vigorously
- c) adopt an aggressive attitude
- d) none of these

6. To be a good orator, you don't have to play to the galleries.

- a) offend audiences
- b) to be prepared
- c) appease select audience
- d) to appeal to the lower taste

7. The officer took him to task.

- a) rebuked him
- b) dismissed him
- c) promoted him
- d) praised him

## Answers

1. c) He is a good conservationist
2. b) something that causes a quarrel
3. c) very seldom indeed
4. a) avoids starvation
5. a) apologize humbly
6. d) to appeal to the lower taste
7. a) rebuked him

## Change affirmative sentences into negative sentences

APRIL 21, 2015 -  PDF

**Change the following affirmative sentences into negative sentences.**

1. Shyam passed the test.
2. He gave me a glass of milk.
3. The contractor finished the work in one day.
4. He goes to office at 9 o'clock.
5. She speaks English fluently.
6. They arrived in the morning.
7. He calls his mother every day.
8. My father reads a lot.

9. She knows how to knit.
10. He dared to challenge me.
11. They have promised to pay higher wages.
12. My mother and grandmother go to the temple every day.
13. My friend writes short stories.
14. He looked at the pictures on the wall.
15. Her performance in that movie won her many awards.

## Answers

1. Shyam **did not pass** the test.
2. He **did not give** me a glass of milk.
3. The contractor **did not finish** the work in one day.
4. He **does not go** to office at 9 o'clock.
5. She **does not speak** English fluently.
6. They **did not arrive** in the morning.
7. He **does not call** his mother every day.
8. My father **does not read** much.
9. She **does not know** how to knit.

10. He **did not dare** to challenge me.
11. They **have not promised** to pay higher wages.
12. My mother and grandmother **do not go** to the temple every day.
13. My friend **does not write** short stories.
14. He **did not look** at the pictures on the wall.
15. Her performance in that movie **did not win** her any awards.

## Word forms exercise

APRIL 25, 2015 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences using an appropriate form of the verb given in the brackets.

1. If you ..... the dog, it may bite you. (provocation)
2. The old woman looked at the crowds and the traffic in .....  
(bewilder)
3. The actor ..... aimed at becoming a great singer. (wistful)
4. We expect the authorities to investigate the case .....  
(thorough)
5. His ..... with work affected his family life. (preoccupy)
6. His ..... with the sage changed his outlook. (associate)
7. My mother is my biggest ..... (inspire)

8. The floods caused a great deal of ..... in many parts of the country. (destroy)
9. The robbers tried to ..... the traveler. (threat)
10. Although his first few attempts were not ....., he did not lose heart. (success)

## Answers

1. If you **provoke** the dog, it may bite you.
2. The old woman looked at the crowds and the traffic in **bewilderment**.
3. The actor **wistfully** aimed at becoming a great singer.
4. We expect the authorities to investigate the case **thoroughly**.
5. His **preoccupation** with work affected his family life.
6. His **association** with the sage changed his outlook.
7. My mother is my biggest **inspiration**.
8. The floods caused a great deal of **destruction** in many parts of the country.
9. The robbers tried to **threaten** the traveler.
10. Although his first few attempts were not **successful**, he did not lose heart.

# Whatever and wherever

MAY 1, 2015 -  PDF

Study the examples given below.

You are free. Buy anything you like.

We can combine these two sentences using whatever.

You are free to buy whatever you like.

Another example is given below.

We went to many places. We saw beggars.

Wherever we went we saw beggars.

## Exercise

Combine the following sentences using whatever and wherever.

1. The boys were very hungry. They ate everything that we gave them.
2. Jack trusts me blindly. He believes everything that I say.
3. Anything may happen. Keep calm.
4. You can eat anything you want. It does not matter.
5. Mary had a little lamb. It followed her everywhere she went.
6. Go anywhere. You will find mosquitoes.
7. He worked in many places. He made friends everywhere.

8. You can go anywhere in Kerala. You will find coconut palms everywhere.

9. The writer visited many countries. Everywhere he was greeted with great enthusiasm.

### Answers

1. The boys ate **whatever** we gave them.

2. Jack believes **whatever** I say.

3. **Whatever** happens, keep calm.

4. You can eat **whatever** you want.

5. The little lamb followed Mary **wherever** she went.

6. **Wherever** you go, you will find mosquitoes.

7. **Wherever** he worked, he made friends.

8. **Wherever** you go in Kerala, you will find coconut palms.

9. **Wherever** the writer went, he was greeted with great enthusiasm.

## Make questions and negatives

MAY 11, 2015 -  PDF

Change the following affirmative sentences into negative and interrogative sentences.

1. Mary earns a six figure salary.



2. She conducted herself well.
3. I made a cake yesterday.
4. She spent her childhood in Malaysia.
5. John took some books from the library.
6. Rahul reads a lot.
7. She recognized him at once.
8. She told a story.
9. I want to become a millionaire.
10. She lives with her grandparents.

## Answers

1. Mary **does not earn** a six figure salary. / **Does Mary earn** a six figure salary?
2. She **did not conduct** herself well. / **Did she conduct** herself well?
3. I **did not make** a cake yesterday. / **Did I make** a cake yesterday?
4. She **did not spend** her childhood in Malaysia. / **Did she spend** her childhood in Malaysia?
5. John **did not take** any books from the library. / **Did John take** any books from the library? (Some is used in affirmative sentences; any is used in questions and negatives)
6. Rahul **does not read** much. / **Does Rahul read** a lot?

7. She **did not recognize** him at once. / **Did she recognize** him at once?
8. She **did not tell** a story. / **Did she tell** a story?
9. I **do not want** to become a millionaire. / **Do I want** to become a millionaire?
10. She **does not live** with her grandparents. / **Does she live** with her grandparents?

## Mistakes with adverbs

MAY 14, 2015 -  PDF

This grammar exercise tests your knowledge of adverbs.

Adverbs are words used to modify verbs. In the following sentences adverbs are not used correctly. Correct the mistakes and rewrite the sentences.

1. Julia worked hardly and passed the test.
2. Presently all of them disappeared soon.
3. I am very much sorry.
4. We scarcely see a lion.
5. Please tell me everything in details.
6. This movie is too interesting.
7. He behaved cowardly.
8. He comes always late to school.

9. I feel badly about it.

10. I enjoy to read novels.

11. He walked slow.

12. He is so rich.

13. She resembles closely to her mother.

14. These shoes are fairly uncomfortable.

15. The lecture was fairly boring.

## Answers

1. Julia worked **hard** and passed the test.

2. **Presently** all of them disappeared. / All of them disappeared**soon**.

3. I am **very** sorry.

4. We **rarely** see a lion.

5. Please tell me everything **in detail**.

6. This movie is **very** interesting.

7. He behaved like **a coward**. / He behaved **in a cowardly manner**. (Coward is an adjective; it cannot be used to modify the verb behaved.)

8. He **always comes** late to school.

9. I feel **bad** about it.

10. I enjoy **reading** novels.

11. He walked **slowly**. (Slow is an adjective; we need an adverb to modify verbs.)

12. He is **very** rich.

13. She **resembles her mother closely**. (Resemble does not take a preposition before the object.)

14. These shoes are **rather** uncomfortable.

15. The lecture was **rather / quite** boring.

## Present continuous tense worksheet (beginner level)

MAY 15, 2015 -  PDF

Make sentences in the present continuous tense.

The present continuous tense is used to talk about actions and situations that are going on at the moment of speaking. This tense form is also used to talk about pre-planned future events. It is common with the time expressions 'now' and 'at the moment'.

This grammar exercise tests your ability to make sentences in the present continuous tense.

Complete the following sentences with appropriate present continuous tense forms.

1. Alice ..... (sing)
2. She ..... (learn) her lessons.
3. We ..... (wait) for the bus.
4. It ..... (rain)
5. The baby ..... (sleep)
6. Raju ..... (go) to the market.
7. Sheena ..... (do) her home-work.
8. Ramesh ..... (draw) a picture.
9. Seema ..... (leave) for Mumbai tomorrow.
10. We ..... (play) football.
11. The birds ..... (fly) in the sky.
12. The helicopter ..... (hover) over the trees.
13. The teacher ..... (check) the answer sheets.

#### Answers

1. Alice is singing.
2. She is learning her lessons.
3. We are waiting for the bus.

4. It is raining.
5. The baby is sleeping.
6. Raju is going to the market.
7. Sheena is doing her home-work.
8. Ramesh is drawing a picture.
9. Seema is leaving for Mumbai tomorrow.
10. We are playing football.
11. The birds are flying in the sky.
12. The helicopter is hovering over the trees.

## Interrogative pronouns exercise

MAY 18, 2015 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences using appropriate interrogative pronouns.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ did you do then?
2. \_\_\_\_\_ would you like to eat?
3. \_\_\_\_\_ is knocking at the door?
4. \_\_\_\_\_ is your phone number?
5. \_\_\_\_\_ do you want to see?

6. \_\_\_\_\_ will he say?

7. \_\_\_\_\_ did you see?

8. About \_\_\_\_\_ are you speaking?

9. \_\_\_\_\_ came here in the morning?

10. By \_\_\_\_\_ was this book written?

11. \_\_\_\_\_ do you mean?

12. \_\_\_\_\_ do you think took the money?

13. \_\_\_\_\_ is better – wisdom or riches?

14. \_\_\_\_\_ do you think is right?

15. \_\_\_\_\_ is a continent?

## Answers

1. What did you do then?

2. What would you like to eat?

3. Who is knocking at the door?

4. What is your phone number?

5. Who/whom/what do you want to see?

6. What will he say?

7. Who/whom/what did you see?
8. About who/whom/what are you speaking?
9. Who came here in the morning?
10. By who/whom was this book written?
11. What do you mean?
12. Who do you think took the money?
13. Which/what is better – wisdom or riches?
14. Who do you think is right?
15. What is a continent?

### Notes

**Whom** is the object form of **who**. It is rarely used now. However, students should understand the difference between who and whom.

Study the example given below.

Whom did you see? I saw him/her.

Here the pronouns him/her are in the objective case. That is the reason we use 'whom' in the question. **Who** is also possible here in an informal style.

Now study another example.

Who do you think stole the money? I think **he** stole the money.



Here the pronoun 'he' is in the subject case. Therefore, we cannot use **whom** in the question.

13. The teacher is checking the answer sheets.

## Using since and for

MAY 25, 2015 -  PDF

The words **since** and **for** can be used as conjunctions and prepositions. When they are used as conjunctions, they combine two clauses. Note that **since** is a subordinating conjunction whereas **for** is a coordinating conjunction.

When they are used as prepositions, they usually indicate time.

**Since** is used with the starting point of action. **For** shows duration.

Combine the following sentences using since or for.

1. I saw him last month. I haven't seen him afterwards.
2. It was a public holiday. Schools and colleges remained closed that day.
3. I like him very much. So I will help him.
4. The table is made of mahogany wood. It is expensive.
5. It is raining. We can't go out now.
6. It last rained three months ago.
7. I last visited my parents 2 years ago.
8. Something fell. I heard a noise.

## Answers

1. I haven't seen him **since** last month.
2. **Since** it was a public holiday, schools and colleges remained closed.
3. **Since** I like him very much, I will help him.
4. **Since** the table is made of mahogany wood, it is expensive.
5. **Since** it is raining, we can't go out now.
6. It is three months **since** it rained.
7. It is 2 years **since** I visited my parents.
8. Something fell **for** I heard a noise.

## Because and so

MAY 26, 2015 -  PDF

**Because** is a subordinating conjunction. It shows the cause. **So** is a coordinating conjunction. It shows the effect.

We can combine two clauses using because and so.

Study the example given below.

Susie didn't attend the party. She was not invited.

We can combine these two clauses in two different ways.

Susie didn't attend the party because she was not invited.

Susie was not invited, so she did not attend the party.

Combine the following sentences using because and so.

1. He was lazy. He did not study well.

2. He was busy. I could not talk to him.

3. He was ill. He did not attend school for a week.

4. They took him to hospital. He was sick.

5. The teacher asked him to go out. He misbehaved in the class.

6. It was warm. We left the windows open.

## Answers

1. He was lazy **so** he did not study well. / He did not study well **because** he was lazy.

2. He was busy **so** I could not talk to him. / I could not talk to him **because** he was busy.

3. He was ill **so** he did not attend school for a week. / He did not attend school for a week **because** he was ill.

4. They took him to hospital **because** he was sick. / He was sick **so** they took him to hospital.

5. The teacher asked him to go out **because** he misbehaved in the class. / He misbehaved in the class **so** the teacher asked him to go out.

6. It was warm **so** we left the windows open. / We left the windows open **because** it was warm.

## Present tenses exercise

MAY 19, 2015 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences.

1. My father ..... (go) for a walk in the morning. (Habitual action)
2. I ..... (drink) coffee in the morning. (Habitual action)
3. Flowers ..... (bloom) in the spring. (Fact)
4. Birds ..... (make) their nests in trees. (General truth)
5. The pigeon ..... (not know) the art of nest-making.
6. Deciduous trees ..... (shed) their leaves in the autumn.
7. Nobody ..... (like) dishonest people. (Fact)
8. Peter ..... (work) in a factory.
9. My sister ..... (live) abroad. (Fact)
10. I ..... (work) at 8 am in the morning.
11. I ..... (never see) a whale.
12. I ..... (respect) my parents and teachers.

Answers

1. My father goes for a walk in the morning.
2. I drink coffee in the morning.
3. Flowers bloom in the spring.
4. Birds make their nests in trees.
5. The pigeon does not know the art of nest-making.
6. Deciduous trees shed their leaves in the autumn.
7. Nobody likes dishonest people.
8. Peter works in a factory.
9. My sister lives abroad.
10. I was working at 8 am in the morning.
11. I have never seen a whale.
12. I respect my parents and teachers.

## Rewrite using so

MAY 27, 2015 -  PDF

**As** is a subordinating conjunction. It indicates the reason. **So** is a coordinating conjunction. It indicates the effect.

1. As he was busy, he could not attend the party.
2. As she was not there, I left a message with her mother.

3. As it was very hot, I couldn't do any work.
4. As he was angry, I said nothing.
5. As we have plenty of time, let's have something to eat.
6. As tomorrow is a holiday, he will be at home.
7. As I have studied well, I am confident of passing the test.
8. As he was ill, he decided to consult a doctor.
9. As it is raining, we can't go out now.
10. As he was not ready we went without him.

## Answers

1. He was busy, **so** he could not attend the party.
2. She was not there, **so** I left a message with her mother.
3. It was very hot, **so** I couldn't do any work.
4. He was angry, **so** I said nothing.
5. We have plenty of time, **so** let's have something to eat.
6. Tomorrow is a holiday, **so** he will be at home.
7. I have studied well, **so** I am confident of passing the test.
8. He was ill, **so** he decided to consult a doctor.

9. It is raining, **so** we can't go out now.

10. He was not ready, **so** we went without him.

## Or, Or Else, Otherwise

MAY 27, 2015 -  PDF

Combine the following sentences using **or**, **or else**, or **otherwise**.

1. We must hurry up. If we don't, we will be late for the party.

2. I must reach home before 8 o'clock. If I don't, my mother will get angry.

3. You must work hard. If you don't, you will fail.

4. She ought to put the meat in the oven now. If she doesn't, dinner will not be ready when the guests arrive.

5. Walk carefully. If not, you will fall. (or else)

6. Leave at once. If you don't, I will call the police.

7. Consult a doctor immediately. If you don't, your health will get worse.

8. We must water the plants. If we don't, they will die.

9. Put the milk in the fridge. It will turn sour.

10. He should start exercising. If he doesn't, he will get fat.

## Answers

1. We must hurry up **or** we will be late for the party.

2. I must reach home before 8 o'clock **or** my mother will get angry.
3. You must work hard **or** you will fail.
4. She ought to put the meat in the oven now, **or else** dinner will not be ready when the guests arrive.
5. Walk carefully **or else** you will fall.
6. Leave at once **or else** I will call the police.
7. Consult a doctor immediately, **or else** your health will get worse.
8. We must water the plants; **otherwise**, they will die.
9. Put the milk in the fridge; **otherwise** it will turn sour.
10. He should start exercising; **otherwise**, he will get fat.

## Simple present or present continuous tense

JUNE 1, 2015 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences using an appropriate verb form.

1. The hen ..... eggs. (lay)
2. I ..... a cake. (make)
3. The boys ..... in the garden now. (play)
4. 'Which book are you reading now?' 'I ..... David Copperfield.'  
(read)



5. He ..... milk every morning. (drink)
6. I ..... up every day at 6.30. (get)
7. Fortune ..... the brave. (favor)
8. Here ..... the bus. (come)
9. I ..... (think) of visiting America.
10. Jacob ..... care of his baby whenever his wife is away. (take)
11. Barking dogs seldom ..... (bite)
12. I will wait until you ..... your lunch.
13. I ..... for Singapore tomorrow. (leave)

### Answers

1. The hen **lays** eggs.
2. I **am making** a cake.
3. The boys **are playing** in the garden now.
4. 'Which book are you reading now?' 'I **am reading** David Copperfield.'
5. He **drinks** milk every morning.
6. I **get up** every day at 6.30.
7. Fortune **favors** the brave.

8. Here **comes** the bus.
9. I **am thinking** of visiting America.
10. Jacob **takes** care of his baby whenever his wife is away.
11. Barking dogs seldom **bite**.
12. I will wait until you **finish** your lunch.
13. I **am leaving** for Singapore tomorrow.

## Simple past or present perfect tense exercise

JUNE 2, 2015 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences using a verb form in the simple past or present perfect tense.

### Hints

Use the simple past tense with a definite time expression referring to the past.  
The present perfect tense cannot be used with past time adverbs.

1. His father ..... (die) last year.
2. I ..... (eat) an apple in the morning.
3. I ..... (not finish) working on that report yet.
4. We ..... (go) to America last year.
5. I ..... (never eat) a hamburger.

6. You ..... (eat) 12 chocolates since morning.
7. They ..... (live) in this city since 1995.
8. I ..... (meet) John last week and we .....  
(discuss) his plans.
9. I ..... (not receive) the parcel yet.
10. I ..... (receive) the parcel in the morning.

### Answers

1. His father **died** last year.
2. I **ate** an apple in the morning.
3. I **have not finished** working on that report yet.
4. We **went** to America last year.
5. I **have never eaten** a hamburger.
6. You **have eaten** 12 chocolates since morning.
7. They **have lived** in this city since 1995.
8. I **met** John last week and we **discussed** his plans.
9. I **have not received** the parcel yet.
10. I **received** the parcel in the morning.

# Change into past tense

JUNE 7, 2015 -  PDF

In the following sentences change the verbs to the past tense.

1. He writes to his mother every week.
2. He walks fast.
3. The castle stands on the hill.
4. He gets up at six o'clock.
5. He spends his time in idle pursuits.
6. Mark studies very well.
7. He earns 200 dollars a week.
8. What strikes me is the generosity of the offer.
9. He sows the seeds of dissension.
10. She leaves her things on the table.
11. They all tell the same story.
12. People mistake him for an American.
13. He throws cold water on my plans.
14. Trees shed their leaves in the autumn.

## Answers

1. He **wrote** to his mother every week.
2. He **walked** fast.
3. The castle **stood** on the hill.
4. He **got** up at six o'clock.
5. He **spent** his time in idle pursuits.
6. Mark **studied** very well.
7. He **earned** 200 dollars a week.
8. What **struck** me was the generosity of the offer.
9. He **sowed** the seeds of dissension.
10. She **left** her things on the table.
11. They all **told** the same story.
12. People **mistook** him for an American.
13. He **threw** cold water on my plans.
14. Trees **shed** their leaves in the autumn.

## Past continuous tense worksheet

Make sentences in the past continuous tense using the verb given in the brackets.

We make past continuous tense forms by putting **was** or **were** before the -ing form of the verb. **Was** is used with singular subjects. **Were** is used with plural subjects.

1. The boy \_\_\_\_\_ (sleep).
2. I \_\_\_\_\_ (read) when the lights went out.
3. She \_\_\_\_\_ (wash) the clothes.
4. I \_\_\_\_\_ (cook) dinner when the visitors arrived.
5. Julia \_\_\_\_\_ (do) her homework at 8 pm.
6. James \_\_\_\_\_ (repair) the car.
7. Janet \_\_\_\_\_ (rehearse) for the play.
8. Sophia \_\_\_\_\_ (wait) for the bus.
9. The birds \_\_\_\_\_ (chirp).
10. The boys \_\_\_\_\_ (learn) their lesson.
11. She \_\_\_\_\_ (get) dressed.
12. He \_\_\_\_\_ (search) for his purse.
13. The cat \_\_\_\_\_ (chase) the mouse.

14. It \_\_\_\_\_ (rain).

15. The wind \_\_\_\_\_ (blow) fiercely.

16. The dogs \_\_\_\_\_ (bark).

### Answers

1. The boy **was sleeping**.

2. I **was reading** when the lights went out.

3. She **was washing** the clothes.

4. I **was cooking** dinner when the visitors arrived.

5. Julia **was doing** her homework at 8 pm.

6. James **was repairing** the car.

7. Janet **was rehearsing** for the play.

8. Sophia **was waiting** for the bus.

9. The birds **were chirping**.

10. The boys **were learning** their lesson.

11. She was **getting dressed**.

12. He **was searching** for his purse.

13. The cat **was chasing** the mouse.

14. It **was raining**.

15. The wind **was blowing** fiercely.

16. The dogs **were barking**.

## Make questions

JUNE 12, 2015 -  PDF

Change the following statements into questions

1. She moved to California last year.

2. We saw a crocodile at the zoo.

3. I am waiting for his reply.

4. She writes with her left hand.

5. She wants to be an engineer.

6. I made a cake yesterday.

7. She delivered a remarkable performance.

8. I asked him a question.

9. She has written a novel.

10. I have finished fixing the roof.

11. He lent me hundred dollars.



12. She asked him a question.

13. The teacher punished the boy.

14. The boy killed the spider.

15. She won an award.

16. The boys sang a song.

#### Answers

1. Did she move to California last year?

2. Did you see a crocodile at the zoo?

3. Are you waiting for his reply?

4. Does she write with her left hand?

5. Does she want to be an engineer?

6. Did I make a cake yesterday?

7. Did she deliver a remarkable performance?

8. Did you ask him a question?

9. Has she written a novel?

10. Have you finished fixing the roof?

11. Did he lend you hundred dollars?

12. Did she ask him a question?

13. Did the teacher punish the boy?

14. Did the boy kill the spider?

15. Did she win an award?

16. Did the boys sing a song?

## Formation of questions and negatives

JUNE 17, 2015 -  PDF

Change the following affirmative sentences into negatives and questions.

An example is given below:

Jane **drinks** coffee in the morning. (Assertive)

Jane **does not drink** coffee in the morning. (Negative)

**Does Jane drink** coffee in the morning?

Exercise

1. Martha lives with her sister.

2. James owns three cars.

3. Cats chase mice.

4. Birds make their nests in trees.

5. Deciduous trees shed their leaves in autumn.

6. The earth moves around the sun.
7. Honey tastes sweet.
8. My grandparents keep pigs in their shed.
9. He works hard to support his family.
10. Opposite poles attract.

## Answers

1. Martha **does not live** with her sister. / **Does Martha live** with her sister?
2. James **does not own** three cars. / **Does James own** three cars?
3. Cats **do not chase** mice. / **Do cats chase** mice?
4. Birds **do not make** their nests in trees. / **Do birds make** their nests in trees?
5. Deciduous trees **do not shed** their leaves in autumn. / **Do deciduous trees shed** their leaves in autumn?
6. The earth **does not move** around the sun. / **Does the earth move** around the sun?
7. Honey **does not taste** sweet. / **Does honey taste** sweet?
8. My grandparents **do not keep** pigs in their shed. / **Do your grandparents keep** pigs in their shed?
9. He **does not work** hard to support his family. / **Does he work** hard to support his family?

10. Opposite poles **do not** attract. / **Do opposite poles** attract?

## Word formation in English

JUNE 18, 2015 -  PDF

The English language has a genius for the formation of expressive compound words. Common examples include **sun-stroke**, **pick-pocket**, **elbow-room**, **land-lord**, **humming-bird** etc.

The two parts of a compound word are usually separated by a hyphen. However, in the case of many common compound words, the component parts have become so closely connected that they are now written as one word without any hyphen between them.

Examples are: sunstroke, landlord, pickpocket, overload etc.

And in the case of some other compound words, complete integration has been achieved by modifying one or both of the component parts.

For example, **pass time** is now written as **pastime**. In the same way, **holy day** has become **holiday** and **prime rose** has become **primrose**.

There are different types of compound words

### Noun + noun

Examples are: master-piece, table-cloth, maid-servant, bread-winner, shoe-maker etc.

### Noun + gerund

Examples are: wool-gathering, snake-charming, bull-baiting, sooth-saying etc.

### Noun + adjective

Examples are: court-martial, knight-errant

### **Gerund + noun**

Examples are: piping-hot, walking-stick, drawing-room, laughing-stock, skipping-rope etc.

### **Adverb + noun**

Examples are: out-patient, over-load, fore-sight, under-tone, in-sight etc.

### **Verb + noun**

Examples are: dare-devil, cut-throat, break-fast, spend-thrift, pass-port etc.

### **Adjective + noun**

Examples are: short-hand, free-thinker, lay-man, hard-ware, strong-hold etc.

### **Present participle + noun**

Examples are: humming-bird, flying-fish, loving-kindness etc.

### **Pronoun + noun**

Examples are: he-goat

### **Possessive noun + noun** (In this case, the apostrophe is usually omitted)

Examples are: sportsman, craftsman, statesman, hair's-breadth, stone's-throw

## **Position of adjectives**

Adjectives are words used to modify nouns. They usually go before the nouns modified by them.

He lives in **a large house**.

Each hand has **five fingers**.

She has a **lovely voice**.

When two or more adjectives go before a noun, they are not usually separated by 'and'.

I bought **three blue** shirts.

He wore a **large, round** turban.

When the last two are adjectives of color, they are usually separated by 'and'.

A black and white cow

Adjectives can go after the verbs be, seem, look and appear. In this case, 'and' is used between the last two adjectives.

The boy was **handsome, polite and lovable**.

It was **hot and sultry**.

The clouds looked **white and fluffy**.

The trees looked **fresh and charming**.

In phrases such as the following, the adjective always follows the noun.

Alexander, the great

Time immemorial

Heir apparent

God Almighty

Notary public

When an adjective forms a phrase with some other words to explain its meaning, it is placed after the noun.

Gandhi was a man **earnest in his efforts**.

Suddenly there appeared a woman more attractive than all those present in the room.

In lines of poetry also, the adjective often goes after the noun.

He drank the milk **warm and sweet**.

We saw the sun **red and strong**.

## Kinds of nouns exercise

JUNE 22, 2015 -  PDF

Underline the nouns in the following sentences and state their kind.

1. The book was lying on the table.
2. Love begets love.
3. We cannot live without water.
4. The jury has given its verdict.
5. The Hindus regard Krishna as an incarnation of Lord Vishnu.
6. Alcohol is injurious to health.
7. Smoking is a bad habit.
8. Wild animals live in forests.

9. The childhood of Peter was full of misery.

10. All the girls were singing.

11. Gold is a precious metal.

12. Rice is the staple food of South Indians.

13. The earth moves round the sun.

14. Mankind should love nature.

15. We get wool from sheep.

### **Answers**

1. The book was lying on the **table**. (book – common noun; table – common noun)

2. Love begets love. (love – abstract noun)

3. We cannot live without water. (water – material noun)

4. The jury has given its verdict. (jury – collective noun; verdict – abstract noun)

5. The Hindus regard Krishna as an incarnation of Lord Vishnu. (Hindus – proper noun; Krishna – proper noun; incarnation – common noun; Vishnu – proper noun)

6. Alcohol is injurious to health. (alcohol – material noun; health – abstract noun)

7. Smoking is a bad habit. (habit – abstract noun)



8. Wild animals live in forests. (animals – common noun; forests – common noun)
9. The childhood of Peter was full of misery. (childhood – abstract noun; Peter – proper noun; misery – abstract noun)
10. All the girls were singing. (girls – common noun)
11. Gold is a precious metal. (Gold – material noun; metal – common noun)
12. Rice is the staple food of South Indians. (rice – material noun; food – common noun; Indians – proper noun)
13. The earth moves round the sun. (earth – common noun; sun – common noun)
14. Mankind should love nature. (mankind – collective noun; nature – common noun)
15. We get wool from sheep. (wool – material noun; sheep – common noun)

## Collective nouns

JUNE 22, 2015 -  PDF

A collective noun denotes a collection of people, things, animals, emotions or concepts considered as a single whole.

A collective noun is usually treated as singular.

Consider the expression 'a committee of members'

There can be several members but only one committee. In this case, 'members' is a common noun whereas 'committee' is a collective noun.

More examples of collective nouns are given below.

- A bunch of grapes or keys
- A gang of bandits
- A class of students
- An army of soldiers
- A hive of bees
- A fleet of ships
- A constellation of stars or galaxy
- An archipelago of islands
- A bevy of girls
- A crowd of people
- A mob of people
- A swarm of flies
- A jury of judges
- A herd of cattle
- A flock of sheep
- A team of players

Examples are given below.

- This class consists of fifty students.
- The jury was unanimous in its decision.
- The crowd was too large to be controlled by the police.
- The mob attacked the police station.
- The Australian cricket team is scheduled to visit India in July.
- A bevy of girls entered the garden.
- A bunch of keys was lying on the table.
- You can find a swarm of flies hovering over uncovered trays of sweets.
- The crew of sailors controlled the ship in the stormy sea.

## Simple past or present perfect tense

Complete the following sentences using appropriate simple past or present perfect tense forms.

1. I ..... (meet) an old friend of mine yesterday.
2. I ..... (read) all the plays of Shakespeare.
3. She ..... (act) in two films.
4. I ..... (never see) a ghost.
5. She ..... (refuse) to help him.
6. I .....(finish) my homework.
7. She ..... (leave) home early.
8. Janet ..... (tell) me a story the other day.
9. Maya and her family ..... (move) to Chicago last year.
10. I ..... (not hear) anything from them since then.
11. He ..... (say) that he would not do it.
12. Amir said nothing when he ..... (hear) the news.

#### Answers

1. I met an old friend of mine yesterday.
2. I have read all the plays of Shakespeare.

3. She has acted in two films.
4. I have never seen a ghost.
5. She refused to help him.
6. I have finished my homework.
7. She left home early.
8. Janet told me a story the other day.
9. Maya and her family moved to Chicago last year.
10. I have not heard anything from them since then.
11. He said that he would not do it.
12. Amir said nothing when he heard the news.

## Grammar exercise | Prepositions

JULY 1, 2015 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences using appropriate prepositions.

1. We climbed ..... the hill with great difficulty.  
a) up  
b) on  
c) to
2. Distribute these toffees ..... these two boys.  
a) among  
b) between

3. Riches are a source ..... great distress.

- a) of
- b) off
- c) for

4. Cut your coat according ..... your cloth.

- a) to
- b) with
- c) for

5. We should try to live ..... our means.

- a) within
- b) beyond

6. A man is known ..... the company he keeps.

- a) with
- b) by

7. She was born ..... noble parents.

- a) to
- b) of
- c) Either could be used here

8. The lion pounced ..... the deer.

- a) on
- b) at
- c) with

9. This way, you can kill two birds ..... one stone.

- a) with
- b) by

10. He was killed ..... the robber ..... a sword.

- a) by; with
- b) with; with
- c) by; by

#### Answers

1. We climbed up the hill with great difficulty.
2. Distribute these toffees between these two boys.
3. Riches are a source of great distress.
4. Cut your coat according to your cloth.
5. We should try to live within our means.
6. A man is known by the company he keeps.
7. She was born to/of noble parents.
8. The lion pounced on the deer.
9. This way, you can kill two birds with one stone.
10. He was killed by the robber with a sword.

## Uses of the article the

JULY 2, 2015 -  PDF

The definite article 'the' is used in the following cases.

- 1. When a singular noun represents a whole class.**

The camel is a beast of burden. (Here the singular noun camel is used to refer to all the camels.)

Note that when a plural noun is used to talk about things in general, articles are usually omitted.

Camels are beasts of burden.

Computers are expensive.

More examples are given below:

The whale is a kind of mammal.

The rose smells sweet.

Note that the article 'the' is never used before the nouns 'man' and 'woman' when they represent the whole class.

Man is mortal. (NOT The man is mortal.)

## **2. While speaking of something or somebody already referred to**

The boy who came to see me yesterday was my brother.

The story that he told us yesterday was very interesting.

## **3. While speaking of a particular person or thing**

The poor beggar could get no alms.

## **4. When you refer to classics and holy books**

Examples are: The Ramayana; The Mahabharata; The Iliad

Note that when the author's name is mentioned with the book, the article is usually omitted.

Homer's Iliad (NOT Homer's the Iliad)

## 5. While referring to the names of journals and newspapers

The New York Times

The Wall Street Journal

## 6. When we refer to imaginary geographical lines

Examples are: The equator; the Tropic of Cancer; the Tropic of Capricorn; the latitude; the longitude

# Adjectives used as nouns

JULY 8, 2015 -  PDF

In many sentences, adjectives are used to perform the purpose of nouns.

Examples are given below.

- The English are proud of their sense of humor.

Adjectives can be used with the article 'the'. These expressions are plural.

Examples are given below: **the rich, the poor, the jobless, the unemployed, the deaf, the blind etc.**

- The rich should help the poor.
- The unemployed are losing hope.
- The government should do something for the jobless.



The adjective cannot be used without the article 'the' in these expressions. In some cases, these expressions can have a singular meaning. Examples are: **the accused, the injured, the diseased etc.**

- The diseased is survived by his wife.

Some adjectives stand for persons. They can also be used as nouns.

- We should respect our elders.
- We should be kind to our inferiors.
- The seniors should not torment their juniors.
- The rights of minors should be protected.

Adjectives can form part of certain phrases.

- In short, you must behave well.
- The long and short of this is that he has lost his credibility.
- I shall stand by you through thick and thin.
- At best, I can arrange lodging for two more nights.

Nouns are commonly used as adjectives.

- She is a book worm. (Here the noun book acts as an adjective modifying the noun worm.)
- You lack table manners.

## What is a clause?

JULY 14, 2015 -  PDF

**A clause** is a group of words with a subject and a predicate. A clause can make a sentence. A **simple sentence** consists of just one clause.

Study the examples given below.

- He took out his pen and started writing.

The above sentence has two clauses:

1. He took out his pen.
2. He started writing.

The two clauses are connected using the coordinating conjunction 'and'.

Another example is given below.

- I will help him because I like him.

The above sentence also has two clauses:

1. I will help him.
2. I like him.

The two clauses are connected using the subordinating conjunction '**because**'.

There are two types of clauses: **coordinate clause and subordinate clause**

When a sentence consists of two clauses of equal rank, they are called **coordinate clauses**.

Consider the sentence given below.

- I went to Delhi, but I could not meet him.

The above sentence has two clauses:

1. I went to Delhi.
2. I could not meet him.

Both clauses make complete sense and can stand independently. They are connected by the conjunction 'but'.

When two independent clauses are connected by a coordinating conjunction, we get a **compound sentence**.

The first part of the compound sentence is called the **main or principal clause**. The second part which is connected to the first part with a coordinating conjunction is called the **coordinate clause**.

## Sentence correction

JULY 15, 2015 -  PDF

**Correct the following sentences.**

1. The boy looked pail.
2. Jack and Jill went up the hill to fetch a pale of water.
3. He went to london.
4. The children has finished their homework.
5. The dog licked it's baby.
6. Its raining.
7. Let's go on train.
8. They made the cake in the oven.
9. The movie was disinteresting.

10. The man told to his wife to look after their children.

## Answers

1. The boy looked **pale**. (Pale means feeble or weak.)
2. Jack and Jill went up the hill to fetch a **pail** of water. (Pail means a bucket.)
3. He went to **London**. (Proper nouns should begin with a capital letter.)
4. The children **have** finished their homework. (We use have with plural nouns and pronouns.)
5. The dog licked **its** baby. (Its is a possessive word.)
6. **It's** raining. (It's means it is or it has.)
7. Let's go **by** train. (The preposition is not used correctly.)
8. They **baked** the cake in the oven. (We bake cakes; the verb make is not appropriate here.)
9. The movie was **uninteresting**. (If something is not interesting, it is uninteresting.)
10. The man **told his wife** to look after their children. (The verb 'tell' does not take a preposition before its object.)

## Gerund or infinitive

JULY 17, 2015 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences using gerunds or to-infinitives whichever is appropriate.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ events cast their shadow. (come)
2. He was punished for \_\_\_\_\_ late. (come)
3. \_\_\_\_\_ lies will not help anyone. (tell)
4. \_\_\_\_\_ is to believe. (see)
5. Children learn \_\_\_\_\_ and writing at school. (read)
6. I won't mind your \_\_\_\_\_ early today. (leave)
7. He left the faucet \_\_\_\_\_ (run)
8. Do you know the man \_\_\_\_\_ at the corner? (stand)
9. \_\_\_\_\_ done my homework, I went to play. (have)
10. His behaviour was \_\_\_\_\_ (irritate)
11. I want \_\_\_\_\_ why you are late. (know)
12. I would like \_\_\_\_\_ that scenery. (paint)

## *Answers*

1. **Coming** events cast their shadow.
2. He was punished for **coming** late.
3. **Telling** lies will not help anyone.
4. **To see** is to believe.

5. Children learn **reading** and writing at school.
6. I won't mind your **leaving** early today.
7. He left the faucet **running**.
8. Do you know the man **standing** at the corner?
9. **Having** done my homework, I went to play.
10. His behaviour was **irritating**.
11. I want **to know** why you are late.
12. I would like **to paint** that scenery.

## Agreement of the verb with the subject

JULY 21, 2015 -  PDF

We have already learned that a singular noun takes a singular verb.

John **likes** science fiction. (Here the singular verb 'likes' agrees with the singular subject John.)

A plural subject requires a plural verb.

My children **like** video games.

### Notes

A verb becomes singular when we add –s to it. Study the examples given below.

I **enjoy** classic music.

My son **enjoys** classic music. (By adding –s to the verb enjoy, we make it singular.)

Many students find this rule confusing because in the case of nouns –s is added to the plural. For example, the noun ‘boy’ is singular whereas ‘boys’ is plural.

My son enjoys singing and dancing. (Here the singular noun ‘son’ takes the singular verb ‘enjoys’.)

My sons enjoy singing and dancing. (Here the plural noun ‘sons’ requires the plural verb ‘enjoy’.)

The pronouns **I and you** are unusual. They take plural verbs although they are singular in number. Note that the pronoun ‘you’ can also be plural.

I like to paint. (NOT I likes to paint.)

You play cricket. (NOT You plays cricket.)

This means that only a subject in the third person singular requires a singular verb.

The pronoun I is in the first person. The pronoun you is in the second person.

I speak English.

You speak English.

He speaks English.

She speaks French.

## Fill in the blanks

JULY 22, 2015 -  PDF

Read the story given below and fill in the blanks with appropriate verb forms.

Once upon a time there \_\_\_\_\_ (live) a man called Damocles. A friend of his eventually \_\_\_\_\_ (become) the ruler of a small city. Damocles thought, 'How lucky my friend \_\_\_\_\_ (be). He \_\_\_\_\_ (be) now a ruler. He must \_\_\_\_\_ (have) a great time. He \_\_\_\_\_ have fine clothes, lots of money and a number of servants. I wish I \_\_\_\_\_ (have) his luck.' He \_\_\_\_\_ (decide) to visit his friend to enjoy his hospitality. When he \_\_\_\_\_ (reach) the palace, the king himself \_\_\_\_\_ (receive) him with respect and affection. Damocles then \_\_\_\_\_ (tell) the king that he \_\_\_\_\_ (be) indeed a lucky man. The king \_\_\_\_\_ (smile). He \_\_\_\_\_ (invite) his friend to have dinner with him.

### Answers

Once upon a time there **lived** a man called Damocles. A friend of his eventually **became** the ruler of a small city. Damocles thought, 'How lucky my friend **is**. He **is** now a ruler. He **must be having** a great time. He **must have** fine clothes, lots of money and a number of servants. I wish I **had** his luck.' He **decided** to visit his friend to enjoy his hospitality. When he **reached** the palace, the king himself **received** him with respect and affection. Damocles then **told** the king that he **was** indeed a lucky man. The king **smiled**. He **invited** his friend to have dinner with him.

## Adjectives worksheet

JULY 23, 2015 -  PDF

Adjectives are words used to modify nouns. Adjectives tell us something about the noun.



Underline the adjectives in the following sentences.

1. There I met a very beautiful woman.
2. The kind hostess made sure that everyone was happy.
3. He was wearing a red shirt.
4. The rich woman is known for her generosity.
5. In spite of being rich and famous, she leads a miserable life.
6. Her arrogant nature made her very unpopular.
7. He wants to be a successful lawyer.
8. The anxious mother waited for a call from her son.
9. The old man has seen better days.
10. Iron is a useful metal.
11. The offer was so good that I could not refuse it.
12. As time went by, things began to get worse.

### **Answers**

1. There I met a very beautiful woman.
2. The kind hostess made sure that everyone was happy.
3. He was wearing a red shirt.

4. The rich woman is known for her generosity.
5. In spite of being rich and famous, she leads a miserable life.
6. Her arrogant nature made her very unpopular.
7. He wants to be a successful lawyer.
8. The anxious mother waited for a call from her son.
9. The old man has seen better days.
10. Iron is a useful metal.
11. The offer was so good that I could not refuse it.
12. As time went by, things began to get worse.

The word **about** can be used an adverb or a preposition. When about is used as a preposition, it will be followed by a noun.

About can mean in various directions or places.

- Clothes were lying about the room.
- The children were running about the garden.

About can also mean 'near' or 'near by'.

- Is anybody about?

The expression 'How about?' is used to ask someone what their opinion is. Note that after 'how about' we use a noun or an -ing form.

- How about getting something to eat?
- He is a rich guy but how about his character?

About can mean 'roughly'.

- It is about 3 o'clock.
- There were about 50 students in the class.

## Above

The word above can be used as a preposition or an adverb. 'Above' means 'higher than', 'greater than' or 'more than'.

- She is above average in intelligence.
- The water rose above my knees.

If you think you are above something, you are too proud to do it.

- He thinks he is above mingling with us. (= He is too proud to mingle with us.)
- Nobody is above law.

If something is above you, it is too difficult for you.

- Einstein's theories have always been above me. (= I have always had difficulty understanding Einstein's theories.)

### Above-board

If a business deal is above board, it is thoroughly honest.

## Correct the following sentences

JULY 26, 2015 -  PDF

Correct the following sentences

1. I have seen him yesterday.
2. We had gone to the movies last night.
3. I had spoken to them about my holiday.
4. You must attend your teacher's instructions.
5. The hen has lain six eggs.
6. I have seen him a moment ago.
7. They discussed about the whole matter.
8. We are playing tennis every day.
9. He is sleeping for two hours.
10. Neither of the boys have returned.

### Answers

1. I **saw** him yesterday. (We do not use the present perfect tense with past time expressions.)
2. We **went** to the movies last night.
3. I **spoke** to them about my holiday. (The past perfect tense is not used to say that something happened in the past. It is used to indicate the earlier of the two past actions.)
4. You must **listen to** your teacher's instructions.

5. The hen **has laid** six eggs.

6. I **saw** him a moment ago.

7. They **discussed** the whole matter. (The verb discuss does not take a preposition.)

8. We **play** tennis every day. (We use the simple present tense to talk about our habits and general facts.)

9. He **has been sleeping** for two hours. (We use the present perfect continuous tense to show duration.)

10. Neither of the boys **has** returned. (After 'either' and 'neither' we use a singular verb.)

## Complete the given passage

JULY 27, 2015 -  PDF

Read the passage given below and fill in the blanks.

India ..... (stud) with many historical places and monuments.  
 Agra ..... (occupy) an important place among them. The famous Taj  
 Mahal ..... (immortal) this city. It ..... (be) my long cherished  
 dream to visit Taj Mahal and it ..... (fulfill) last month when the  
 school ..... (organize) a trip to Agra. Taj Mahal .....  
 (be) one of the most famous buildings in the world. It ..... (be)  
 situated on the River Yamuna. Its four minarets, the tombs and the white marble  
 ..... (make) it the most beautiful building in the world. Poets  
 ..... (praise) it. Common people ..... (adore) it.

Lovers of art from all over the world visit it. It is a sign of undying love. It is a symbol of culture.

## Answers

India **is studded** with many historical places and monuments. Agra **occupies** an important place among them. The famous Taj Mahal **has immortalized** this city. It **was** my long cherished dream to visit Taj Mahal and it **was fulfilled** last month when the school **organized** a trip to Agra. Taj Mahal is one of the most famous buildings in the world. It **is situated** on the River Yamuna. Its four minarets, the tombs and the white marble **make** it the most beautiful building in the world. Poets **have praised** it. Common people **adore** it. Lovers of art from all over the world **visit** it. It is a sign of undying love. It is a symbol of culture.

## Order of words in a sentence

JULY 28, 2015 -  PDF

English grammar supports very few inflexions. Therefore the order of words in a sentence is very important.

The following is the usual order of words in a sentence.

The subject usually goes before the verb.

- The cat chased the mouse. (Here the subject 'cat' goes before the verb 'chased'.)

The object usually goes after the verb.

- The dog bit the man. (Here the object 'man' goes after the verb 'bit'.)

If the verb has two objects, the indirect object usually goes before the direct object.

- Will you lend me your pen? (Here the indirect object 'me' goes before the direct object 'pen'.)

When the adjective is used attributively, it goes before the noun.

- He was wearing a red cap. (Here the adjective red goes before the noun cap.)
- Few cats like cold water. (Here the adjective 'few' goes before the noun 'cats'.)

When the adjective is used predicatively, it goes after 'be' and other copular verbs.

- The boy is asleep. (Here the adjective 'asleep' goes after the verb 'is'.)
- The horse became restive. (Here the adjective 'restive' goes after the copular verb 'became'.)

The adverb should be placed close to the word which it modifies.

- Nothing ever happens by chance.
- He is rather lazy.
- He solved two problems.
- He never tells a lie.

## The same word used as different parts of speech

JULY 31, 2015 -  PDF

The same word can be used as different parts of speech. Always remember that it is the function that determines which part of speech the word belongs to.

Study the examples given below

## About

About can be used as an adverb and a preposition.

- They wandered about in sheepskins. (Adverb)
- There is something attractive about him. (Preposition)

## Above

The word above can be used as an adverb, an adjective, a preposition and a noun. Examples are given below.

- The heavens showered blessings from above. (Adverb)
- She is above average in intelligence. (Preposition)
- Study the above sentence. (Adjective)

## After

The word after can be used as an adverb, a preposition, an adjective and a conjunction.

- They arrived soon after. (Adverb)
- He takes after his father. (Preposition)
- He went to the US after he finished his studies. (Conjunction)

## All

All can be an adjective, an adverb or a pronoun.

- All lights were out. (Adjective)
- He lives all alone. (Adverb)
- All is lost. (Pronoun)

## Any



Any can be an adjective or an adverb.

- Has she got any friends? (Adjective)
- Is he any better? (Adverb)

## As

As can be an adverb or a conjunction.

- He ran as fast as he could. (Adverb)
- As he was poor he could not send his children to school. (Conjunction)

# Relative pronouns

AUGUST 1, 2015 -  PDF

Combine the following sentences using appropriate relative pronouns.

1. Jane is a nice girl. I traveled with her to Delhi. (whom)
2. This is the hotel. Our meetings used to take place here. (where)
3. I bought these apples yesterday. They were good. (which)
4. This is the girl. She won the first prize. (who)
5. This is the house. My father bought this last year.
6. People lived here in the 1950's. Then the cost of living was low. (when)
7. I bought a washing machine yesterday. It was not very expensive. (which)
8. I met a traveler on the way. He was a well-read person. (whom)

9. I saw a girl. Her beauty took my breath away. (whose)

10. He has written a novel. I have forgotten its name. (whose)

### Answers

1. Jane with **whom** I traveled to Delhi is a nice girl.

2. This is the hotel **where** our meetings used to take place.

3. The apples **which** I bought yesterday were good.

4. This is the girl **who** won the first prize.

5. This is the house **which** my father bought last year.

6. **When** people lived here in the 1950's, the cost of living was low.

7. The washing machine **which** I bought yesterday was not very expensive.

8. The traveler **whom** I met on the way was a well-read person.

9. I saw a girl **whose** beauty took my breath away.

10. He has written a novel **whose** name I have forgotten.

## Kinds of conjunctions

AUGUST 2, 2015 -  PDF

There are mainly two types of conjunctions – coordinating conjunctions and subordinating conjunctions.

Underline the conjunctions in the following sentences and state whether they are coordinating and subordinating.

1. She will not come unless you invite her.
2. I arrived after they had gone.
3. I waited till he arrived.
4. Jack and Jill went up the hill.
5. You will get a promotion if you deserve it.
6. When you are called you must come in at once.
7. Don't go before I come.
8. He is richer than I am.
9. We reached home before the storm broke out.
10. Catch me if you can.
11. They must be sleeping for there is no light in their room.
12. She neither phoned nor wrote.

#### Answers

1. She will not come unless you invite her. (Subordinating conjunction)
2. I arrived after they had gone. (Subordinating conjunction)

3. I waited till he arrived. (Subordinating conjunction)
4. Jack and Jill went up the hill. (Subordinating conjunction)
5. You will get a promotion if you deserve it. (Subordinating conjunction)
6. When you are called you must come in at once. (Subordinating conjunction)
7. Don't go before I come. (Subordinating conjunction)
8. He is richer than I am. (Subordinating conjunction)
9. We reached home before the storm broke out. (Subordinating conjunction)
10. Catch me if you can. (Subordinating conjunction)
11. They must be sleeping for there is no light in their room. (Coordinating conjunction)
12. She neither phoned nor wrote. (Coordinating conjunction)

## Countable and uncountable nouns

AUGUST 3, 2015 -  PDF

**Countable nouns** are the words for things that we can count. Countable nouns have singular and plural forms. Examples are: *boy, boys, girl, girls, flower, flowers, book, books, chair, chairs, student, students etc.*

A singular countable noun requires an article or another determiner (e.g. the, my, this etc.) with it.

I ate an orange. (NOT I ate orange.)

She put the book on the table. (NOT She put book on table.)

Would you like a piece of cake?

Where shall I put my coat?

**Uncountable nouns** are the words for things that cannot be counted.

Uncountable nouns cannot be used with **a/an**. Also, they do not have plural forms.

I would like some advice. (NOT I would like some advices.)

Have you got any information? (NOT Have you got any informations?)

Mix the water with the flour.

Here are some examples of common uncountable nouns: *advice, air, anger, beauty, behavior, damage, furniture, happiness, homework, information, meat, luggage, progress, safety, money, knowledge, water and work.*

You have to be careful with uncountable nouns because they can be countable in your language. Remember that uncountable nouns are considered as singular and hence they should be followed by singular verbs.

The **meat has** to be cooked properly.

The **information** that we received from him **was** not correct.

Your rude **behavior upsets** everyone.

## Identify the tense

AUGUST 5, 2015 -  PDF

**Underline the verbs in the following sentences and state their tense.**

1. She took her daughter to the doctor.

2. I will always remember this.

3. They asked me to wait.
4. I have been studying since morning.
5. I have finished the task assigned to me.
6. Who broke the window?
7. What were you doing then?
8. Who gave you the information?
9. He had forgotten to take his umbrella.
10. This time tomorrow I will be playing with my friends.
11. They will have gone to bed.
12. She stays with her grandparents.
13. I am working on a new project.

### **Answers**

1. She took her daughter to the doctor. (Simple past tense)
2. I will always remember this. (Simple future tense)
3. They asked me to wait. (Simple past tense)
4. I have been studying since morning. (Present perfect continuous tense)
5. I have finished the task assigned to me. (Present perfect tense)

6. Who broke the window? (Simple past tense)
7. What were you doing then? (Past continuous tense)
8. Who gave you the information? (Simple past tense)
9. He had forgotten to take his umbrella. (Past perfect tense)
10. This time tomorrow I will be playing with my friends. (Future continuous tense)
11. They will have gone to bed. (Future perfect tense)
12. She stays with her grandparents. (Simple present tense)
13. I am working on a new project. (Present continuous tense)

## Review: Common punctuation marks

AUGUST 10, 2015 -  PDF

**Punctuation** is the practice of putting proper stops and marks in writing. Punctuation makes the meaning of a sentence clear. In some cases, a wrongly used punctuation mark can change the entire meaning of the sentence.

In this article, we will review common punctuation marks in English.

### Full stop

The full stop is used at the end of a statement, order, request or command. The full stop indicates a complete pause.

Examples:

- Look here.
- Please help me.
- Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall.

The full stop is also used in abbreviations. This is common in American English.

## Comma

The comma indicates a shorter pause. It is used to separate words in a list.

- I have planted roses, jasmines, lilies, dahlias and sunflowers in the garden.

Sometimes we use the comma to separate clauses in a sentence.

- After he finished his studies, he went abroad. (Here the comma separates the two clauses.)

## Colon

The colon is used to introduce a list of examples:

- There are three tenses: the present tense, the past tense and the future tense.
- There are three types of rocks: sedimentary, igneous and metamorphic.

## Question mark

The question mark is used at the end of questions.

- What is your name?
- Where does she work?

## Exclamation mark

The exclamation mark is used after exclamatory words or sentences.



- Alas! We have lost.
- What a lovely picture!

## Hyphen

The hyphen is used to connect the parts of a compound word.

Examples are: living-room, one-man show etc.

Note that hyphens are disappearing. Many compound words are now written as one word with no hyphen between them.

## Dash

The dash is sometimes used instead of a colon.

## Identify the tense

AUGUST 5, 2015 -  PDF

**Underline the verbs in the following sentences and state their tense.**

1. She took her daughter to the doctor.
2. I will always remember this.
3. They asked me to wait.
4. I have been studying since morning.
5. I have finished the task assigned to me.
6. Who broke the window?
7. What were you doing then?

8. Who gave you the information?
9. He had forgotten to take his umbrella.
10. This time tomorrow I will be playing with my friends.
11. They will have gone to bed.
12. She stays with her grandparents.
13. I am working on a new project.

### Answers

1. She took her daughter to the doctor. (Simple past tense)
2. I will always remember this. (Simple future tense)
3. They asked me to wait. (Simple past tense)
4. I have been studying since morning. (Present perfect continuous tense)
5. I have finished the task assigned to me. (Present perfect tense)
6. Who broke the window? (Simple past tense)
7. What were you doing then? (Past continuous tense)
8. Who gave you the information? (Simple past tense)
9. He had forgotten to take his umbrella. (Past perfect tense)

10. This time tomorrow I will be playing with my friends. (Future continuous tense)

11. They will have gone to bed. (Future perfect tense)

12. She stays with her grandparents. (Simple present tense)

13. I am working on a new project. (Present continuous tense)

## Nouns: Gender

AUGUST 11, 2015 -  PDF

Living beings are of either the male or the female sex.

A noun that denotes a male animal is of the masculine gender.

Examples are: *boy, lion, hero, peacock, tiger and cock-sparrow*

A noun that denotes a female animal is of the feminine gender.

Examples are: *girl, lioness, heroine, peahen, tigress, and hen sparrow*

A noun that denotes either a male or a female is said to be of the **common gender**. Examples are: *parent, child, baby, student, servant, doctor, teacher, singer, dancer, enemy, friend, cousin and neighbor*

A noun that denotes an inanimate object is of the **neuter gender**. Examples are: *book, pen, tree, stone, house and country*

## How to form nouns in the feminine gender

Some nouns in the feminine gender can be formed from the corresponding nouns in the masculine gender. Here are some common methods used.

### By adding the ending –ess

Shepherd – shepherdess

Lion – lioness

Prince – princess (If the word ends in ‘e’, you only have to add ‘ss’.)

Actor – actress (Sometimes you have to drop the vowel before the last letter before adding –ess.)

Tiger – tigress

Duke – duchess (Sometimes you have to change the spelling before adding –ess.)

God – goddess (Sometimes you have to double the last consonant before adding –ess.)

In some cases there is a complete change of form. Examples are given below:

Boy -> girl

Papa -> mama

Nephew -> niece

Bull -> cow

Cock -> hen

## Ing form as gerund and present participle

AUGUST 13, 2015 -  PDF

The **–ing form of the verb** can be the **present participle** or the **gerund**.

When the –ing form is used as a present participle, it helps make continuous tense forms. Study the examples given below:

- I am writing an email. (Here the present participle 'writing' helps form the present continuous tense verb 'am writing'.)
- They are playing. (Here the present participle 'playing' helps form the present continuous verb 'are playing'.)
- We have been waiting for them. (Here the present participle 'waiting' helps form the present perfect continuous tense form 'have been waiting'.)

The present participle can also be used as an adjective. In this case, it goes before nouns.

- A rolling stone gathers no moss. (Here the present participle 'rolling' modifies the noun 'stone'.)
- Barking dogs seldom bite. (Here the present participle 'barking' modifies the noun 'dogs'.)

When the –ing form is used as a gerund, it serves the same purpose as a noun. That means, it can be used as the subject or object of the verb. It can also be used as the object of prepositions. Study the examples given below.

- Reading is my favorite pastime. (Here the –ing form 'reading' acts as the subject of the verb 'is'.)
- She enjoys dancing. (Here the –ing form 'dancing' acts as the object of the verb 'enjoys'.)
- There is no point in waiting for her. (Here the –ing form 'waiting' acts as the object of the preposition 'in'.)

## Gap fills | Adjectives

AUGUST 14, 2015 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences using appropriate adjectives. Choose your answers from the options given below.

(different, favorite, hard-earned, holy, helpless, puzzled, risky, science, unique, whole, six)

1. The sick woman lay ..... in her bed.
2. The old farmer had ..... children of ..... ages.
3. He said that he would not leave until he gets his ..... money back.
4. We visited many ..... places on our pilgrimage.
5. It was a ..... project.
6. The brave boy undertook a ..... task by jumping into the river to save his drowning brother.
7. She spent the ..... day talking about her pet projects and bored us all.
8. I was ..... by his strange behavior.
9. You can make changes if you think it is .....
10. The time machine is a ..... topic with writers of ..... fiction.

### Answers

1. The sick woman lay **helpless** in her bed.
2. The old farmer had **six** children of **different** ages.

3. He said that he would not leave until he gets his **hard-earned** money back.
4. We visited many **holy** places on our pilgrimage.
5. It was a **unique** project.
6. The brave boy undertook a **risky** task by jumping into the river to save his drowning brother.
7. She spent the **whole** day talking about her pet projects and bored us all.
8. I was **puzzled** by his strange behavior.
9. You can make changes if you think it is **necessary**.
10. The time machine is a **favorite** topic with writers of **science** fiction.

## Verb patterns with -ing forms

AUGUST 16, 2015 -  PDF

There are several verb patterns with –ing forms.

### Subject + verb + gerund

Study the sentences given below.

- She began crying.
- He has finished speaking.
- I hate being late.
- You must not miss seeing him.
- He loves reading.
- I enjoy playing cricket.
- I suggest consulting a doctor.

- The doctor advised taking a holiday.
- She kept saying that she hadn't taken the money.
- I had finished working before they arrived.

In the sentences given above, the gerund is used as the object of the verb.

Common verbs used in this pattern include: *begin, start, love, like, hate, finish, stop, enjoy, fear, prefer, remember, mind, forget, suggest, miss, try, understand, practise, keep, help, advise, avoid, consider, delay, deny, intend.*

### **Subject + verb + noun/pronoun + present participle**

Study the examples given below.

- I saw him jumping into the river.
- I can smell something burning.
- We watched him walking down the street.
- I caught him stealing my vegetables.
- They kept the fire burning.
- Please start the clock going.
- I heard him singing a song.
- I observed them playing.
- They left him starving in the desert.

Common verbs that can be used in this pattern include: hear, smell, see, feel, watch, find, notice, observe, get, listen, keep, leave, set, start, get

## **Replace a phrase with a word**

AUGUST 19, 2015 -  PDF

Each sentence given below has an underlined part. Replace that underlined part with a word that expresses the same idea and rewrite the sentence.

1. Even after the teacher entered the classroom, the boys went onplaying.



2. He is in debt because of his habit of spending money wastefully.
3. The celebrations went on for a whole month.
4. His uncle is a famous designer of buildings.
5. The drunkard abused people without discrimination.
6. He spent most of his life abroad as one sent out of his country.
7. The country is passing through a critical phase.
8. Bacon's essays are full of terse, witty, pointed statements.
9. If you lose your good name, it is not easy to get it back.
10. There was no famine in our country during the last twenty years.
11. The Mona Lisa is the best among the works of Leonardo da Vinci.
12. My friend had the special right or advantage of visiting England as the official guest of the Queen.

### **Answers**

1. Even after the teacher entered the classroom, the boys continued playing.
2. He is in debt because of his extravagance.
3. The celebrations lasted / continued for a whole month.
4. His uncle is a famous architect.

5. The drunkard abused people indiscriminately.
6. He spent most of his life abroad as an exile.
7. The country is passing through a crisis.
8. Bacon's essays are full of epigrams.
9. If you lose your reputation, it is not easy to get it back.
10. There was no famine in our country during the last two decades.
11. The Mona Lisa is the masterpiece of Leonardo da Vinci.
12. My friend had the privilege of visiting England as the official guest of the Queen.

## Sentence synthesis

AUGUST 20, 2015 -  PDF

There are very many ways to combine sentences. For example, we can use **conjunctions or relative pronouns**. Conjunctions merely connect two clauses. The relative pronoun also acts as the subject or object of the verb in the relative clause.

**Participles and infinitives** can also be used to connect clauses.

### Exercise

Combine the following sentences.

1. He stood on tip-toe. He reached for the bunch of grapes. (Use a present participle)

2. He works very hard. He wants to obtain the first rank in the examination. (Use an infinitive)
3. The boy complained to the teacher. His bicycle had been stolen. (Use a relative pronoun)
4. I like to watch television. More than that I like to read books. (Use prefer)
5. I was looking for a book. Then I came across this old photograph. (Use while)
6. Susan got the telegram. She started for home at once. (Use as soon as)
7. You should not go to his house. You should not speak to him. (Use neither...nor)
8. The house is spacious. It will accommodate us all. (Use enough)
9. The germ is very small. It cannot be seen with the naked eye. (Use too...to)

### Answers

1. **Standing** on tip-toe, he reached for the bunch of grapes.
2. He works very hard **to obtain** the first rank in the examination.
3. The boy **whose** bicycle had been stolen complained to the teacher.
4. I **prefer** reading books to watching television. / I **prefer to read books rather than** watch television.
5. **While** I was looking for a book, I came across this old photograph.
6. **As soon** as Susan got the telegram, she started for home.

7. You should **neither go to his house nor speak** to him.

8. The house is **spacious enough** to accommodate us all.

9. The germ is **too small to be seen** with the naked eye.

## Two word verbs exercise

AUGUST 22, 2015 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences.

1. The politician broke \_\_\_\_\_ in the middle of his speech. (up / in / down / off)

2. Could you blow \_\_\_\_\_ the candle? (off / on / out / up)

3. At last the storm has blown \_\_\_\_\_ (off / over / out / in)

4. The opposition parties said that they would bring \_\_\_\_\_ a No-Confidence Motion against the Prime Minister. (up / forward / out / about)

5. The witness said that she could not call \_\_\_\_\_ the whole events. (up / in / on / at)

6. The labour union leaders have called \_\_\_\_\_ the strike. (off / on / at / in)

7. The investigating officer tried to call \_\_\_\_\_ vital information from the accused. (off / forth / up / out)

8. The army foiled the terrorists' plan to blow \_\_\_\_\_ the bridge. (out / off / up / over)

9. He is cut ————— for a career in sales and marketing. (out / off / up / down)

10. If you work hard, you will come ————— with flying colors in the examination. (out / off / on / after)

### Answers

1. The politician **broke down** in the middle of his speech.
2. Could you **blow out** the candle?
3. At last the storm has **blown over**.
4. The opposition parties said that they would **bring forward** a No-Confidence Motion against the Prime Minister.
5. The witness said that she could not **call up** the whole events.
6. The labour union leaders have **called off** the strike.
7. The investigating officer tried to **call forth** vital information from the accused.
8. The army foiled the terrorists' plan to **blow up** the bridge.
9. He is **cut out** for a career in sales and marketing.
10. If you work hard, you will **come off** with flying colors in the examination.

## Common idiomatic expressions in English

AUGUST 26, 2015 -  PDF

Here is a list of common idiomatic expressions in English.

**Eat humble pie**

To eat humble pie is to apologize humbly.

**Eat your words**

To eat your words is to retract something you have said.

**Meet someone halfway**

To meet someone halfway is to come to a compromise with them.

**Meet trouble half-way**

To meet trouble halfway is to worry about it even before it comes.

**Put someone on their mettle**

To put someone on their mettle is to encourage them to do their best.

**Not worth their salt**

If somebody is not worth their salt, they are worthless.

**Set your face against somebody/something**

To set your face against somebody or something is to oppose them sternly.

**Be within an ace of**

If you are within an ace of something, you are on the brink of it.

**Lose ground**

If something is losing ground, it is becoming less acceptable or powerful.

### **With open arms**

To receive someone with open arms is to give them a warm welcome.

### **Play fast and loose**

To play fast and loose is to say one thing and do another.

### **Take someone to task**

To take someone to task is to rebuke them.

### **Turn a deaf ear**

To turn a deaf ear to something is to disregard it.

### **Hold water**

If something holds water, it stands scrutiny.

### **By hook or by crook**

To achieve something by hook or by crook is to do it by fair means or foul means.

## **Verb patterns with it**

AUGUST 28, 2015 -  PDF

There are several verb patterns with 'it'.

**It + be + adjective + of + noun / pronoun + to-infinitive**

It is kind of you to help them.  
 It is clever of you to solve this puzzle.  
 It is careless of you to make this mistake.  
 It was unwise of me to lend him money.  
 It was foolish of him to reject the offer.  
 It is wicked of her to say such things.  
 It is cruel of him to treat his servants like that.

Common adjectives that can be used in this pattern include: good, kind, generous, foolish, unwise, stupid, considerate, clever, wise, nice, brave, polite, wicked, silly, careless, cruel, cowardly etc.

### **It + be + adjective + to-infinitive**

It is easy to solve this problem.  
 It may be difficult to find another job.  
 It is bad to tell lies.  
 It is cruel to treat animals in that way.  
 It was impossible to win.

### **It + be + (no) good, etc. + gerund phrase**

It is no good talking to him.  
 It is no use waiting for them.  
 It is no use worrying about it.  
 It is worth visiting Kashmir.  
 It is not worth talking to him.

### **It + be + adjective / noun + noun clause**

It is strange that she should have behaved like that.  
 It is possible that they do not understand our language.  
 It is fortunate that you escaped unhurt.



# Subordinate clause exercise

AUGUST 25, 2015 -  PDF

**Clauses** that are introduced by a **subordinating conjunction** are called **subordinate clauses**. A subordinate clause cannot stand alone. It has to be attached to an independent clause.

In English, there are mainly three types of subordinate clauses: **adjective clause**, **adverb clause** and **noun clause**.

**Underline the subordinate clause in the following sentences.**

1. As he was not there, I could not speak to him.
2. I waited for him until he came.
3. We eat so that we may live.
4. I don't know whether he is innocent.
5. If you eat too much, you will fall ill.
6. I am sure that you are wrong.
7. The teacher said that honesty is the best policy.
8. Tell me where you have put my books.
9. The man who committed the theft last night has been caught.
10. It is difficult to understand why he distrusts his own children.

**Answers**

1. As he was not there, I could not speak to him.
2. I waited for him until he came.
3. We eat so that we may live.
4. I don't know whether he is innocent.
5. If you eat too much, you will fall ill.
6. I am sure that you are wrong.
7. The teacher said that honesty is the best policy.
8. Tell me where you have put my books.
9. The man who committed the theft last night has been caught.
10. It is difficult to understand why he distrusts his own children.

## Verbal ability test

AUGUST 29, 2015 -  PDF

From the given options choose the word that will complete the sentence.

1. She showed great ..... and finesse in handling the situation.
  - a) tact
  - b) ability
  - c) trick
  - d) power

2. The heiress ..... her inheritance and married outside her father's faith.

- a) forfeited
- b) lost
- c) fined
- d) deprived

3. I couldn't help but admire the ..... with which she handled the situation.

- a) stability
- b) equanimity
- c) wit
- d) ability

4. His stance on this issue is ..... and no one knows how he will react.

- a) clear
- b) transparent
- c) equivocal
- d) oblique

5. When she was pressed for an answer, she .....

- a) surrendered
- b) resisted
- c) gave up
- d) equivocated

6. Conversation stopped as we ..... the church.

- a) entered
- b) entered into
- c) entered at
- d) entered to

7. Martina ..... a rich man old enough to be her father.

- a) married
- b) married to
- c) married with
- d) married off

### Answers

1. She showed great **tact** and finesse in handling the situation.
2. The heiress **forfeited** her inheritance and married outside her father's faith.
3. I couldn't help but admire the **equanimity** with which she handled the situation.
4. His stance on this issue is **equivocal** and no one knows how he will react.
5. When she was pressed for an answer, she **equivocated**.
6. Conversation stopped as we **entered** the church.
7. Martina **married** a rich man old enough to be her father.

## Grammar worksheet

AUGUST 31, 2015 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences using an appropriate word or phrase.

1. I don't care ..... your opinion. I will do what I want.

- a) about
- b) for
- c) of
- d) with

2. Sorry I broke the vessel – I ..... help it.

- a) couldn't
- b) couldn't have
- c) couldn't but
- d) can't

3. Who takes ..... the sick in hospitals?

- a) care of
- b) care about
- c) after
- d) none of these

4. Janet is a selfish woman, but still I ..... her.

- a) can't help liking
- b) can't help but liking
- c) can't help like
- d) help can't liking

5. I am the happiest woman ..... the world.

- a) of
- b) in

c) on

d) at

6. The apartment ..... I live is very small.

a) where

b) that

c) which

d) were

7. I haven't paid the fee. I haven't .....

a) neither

b) either

c) also

d) as well as

8. Books ..... all over the room.

a) were laying

b) were lying

c) laid

d) were laid

9. I always have trouble ..... phone numbers.

a) to remember

b) remembering

c) remember

d) to remembering

10. It ..... for six hours.

- a) has been raining
- b) is raining
- c) was raining
- d) had been raining

## Answers

1. I don't **care about** your opinion. I will do what I want.
2. Sorry I broke the vessel – I **couldn't help** it.
3. Who takes **care of** the sick in hospitals?
4. Janet is a selfish woman, but still I **can't help liking** her.
5. I am the happiest woman **in** the world.
6. The apartment **where** I live is very small.
7. I haven't paid the fee. I haven't **either**.
8. Books **were lying** all over the room.
9. I always have trouble **remembering** phone numbers.
10. It **has been raining** for six hours.

## Going to

SEPTEMBER 1, 2015 -  PDF

The going to form is used to talk about our intentions.

I am going to resign my job.

She is going to marry her boyfriend.

They are going to buy a new car.

I am going to ask her out.

We are going to complain to the police.

I am going to teach him a lesson.

I am going to start a business.

I am going to apply for that job.

Note that we use the 'going to' form when the action has already been decided and preparations have been made. The **simple future tense**, on the other hand, is used to announce decisions that we take at the moment of speaking.

Compare:

'There is the doorbell'. 'I'll go.' (NOT I'm going to go.)

'I'm starving.' 'I'll get you something to eat.' (NOT I am going to get you something to eat.)

We also use 'going to' to talk about things that seem likely because there is outside evidence.

Look at the sky. It is going to rain.

Mary is going to have another baby in October.

The boat is full of water. It is going to sink.



**The going to form** may also be used to express an action which is on the point of happening.

Look! The cracker is going to explode.

The bus is going to leave.

The expression 'about to' can also be used to express the same idea.

The bus is about to leave.

## General grammar worksheet

SEPTEMBER 2, 2015 -  PDF

1. The accused was let off ..... he will not commit the same offence again.

- a) so that
- b) in order that
- c) on condition that
- d) because

2. We bought a chicken ..... we might have some fresh meat to eat.

- a) in order that
- b) provided that
- c) on condition that
- d) so as to

3. We have been living in this city ..... 1995.

- a) for
- b) from

c) since

d) ago

4. The conference will take place ..... the 10th and the 14th of this month.

a) between

b) from

c) through

d) none of these

5. This is not the kind of music I like to listen .....

a) to

b) from

c) at

d) with

6. This is the woman I was talking to you .....

a) at

b) about

c) with

d) none of these

7. .... my best efforts, I could not win the election.

a) by means of

b) owing to

c) in spite of

d) on behalf of

8. Pay your bills on time lest you ..... hurt your credit score.

- a) would
- b) could
- c) should
- d) might

### Answers

1. The accused was let off **on condition that** he will not commit the same offence again.
2. We bought a chicken **in order that** we might have some fresh meat to eat.
3. We have been living in this city **since** 1995.
4. The conference will take place **between** the 10th and the 14th of this month.
5. This is not the kind of music I like to listen **to**.
6. This is the woman I was talking to you **about**.
7. **In spite of** my best efforts, I could not win the election.
8. Pay your bills on time lest you **should** hurt your credit score.

## Conjunctions or prepositions

SEPTEMBER 4, 2015 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences using an appropriate conjunction or preposition.

1. .... I had a headache, I enjoyed the movie. (Although / Even if)
2. We were late ..... the rain. (because / because of)

3. We managed to reach on time ..... the rain. (because of / in spite of)
4. She went to work ..... her illness. (despite / because)
5. .... his best efforts, he could not pass the test. (In spite of / Because of)
6. The car is parked ..... the post office. (in front of / before)
7. I have bought a chicken ..... Peter comes. (if / in case)
8. .... he hadn't paid the fee, they cancelled his subscription. (Since / so)
9. .... his stellar performance, he could not advance to the next round. (In spite of / despite of)

### Answers

1. **Although** I had a headache, I enjoyed the movie.
2. We were late **because of** the rain.
3. We managed to reach on time **in spite of** the rain.
4. She went to work **despite** her illness.
5. **In spite of** his best efforts, he could not pass the test.
6. The car is parked **in front of** the post office.
7. I have bought a chicken **in case** Peter comes.

8. **Since** he hadn't paid the fee, they cancelled his subscription.

9. **In spite of** his stellar performance, he could not advance to the next round.

## Adjective clauses used as co-ordinate clauses

SEPTEMBER 6, 2015 -  PDF

**An adjective clause** is a subordinate clause which serves the same purpose as an adjective. It modifies a noun or pronoun in the main clause.

Adjective clauses are introduced by a relative pronoun or relative adverb.

Examples are given below.

Uneasy lies the head **that wears the crown**. (Here the adjective clause 'that wears the crown' modifies the noun head.)

Winston Churchill was a great statesman **who also wrote many books**. (Here the adjective clause 'who also wrote many books' modifies the noun statesman.)

This is the house **where I was born**. (Here the adjective clause 'where I was born' modifies the noun house.)

The reason **why she did it is obvious**.

Sometimes a relative pronoun may introduce a coordinate clause.

Study the example given below.

I met **James who gave** me this book. (= I met James and he gave me this book.)

Here the clause 'who gave me this book' does not identify James. It is a co-ordinate clause that can stand on its own.

Now study the example given below.

He is the **boy who** stole the watch.

Here the adjective clause 'who stole the watch' identifies and describes the noun 'boy'. Therefore, it is an adjective clause.

More examples of '**who**' and '**which**' used to introduce coordinate clauses are given below.

I called **James who** came at once. (= I called James and he came at once.)

The prisoner was taken before the **General, who** condemned him to death. (=

The prisoner was taken before the General and he condemned him to death.)

## When to use some and any

SEPTEMBER 8, 2015 -  PDF

The words **some** and **any** are determiners. They are used to modify nouns. **Some** and **any** can be used with both countable and uncountable nouns. They show an indefinite quantity or number.

- There are some mangoes on the tree. (We don't mention the exact number of mangoes on the tree.)
- I haven't got any money.
- She has some friends in Hong Kong.

**Some** and **any** can be used with both singular and plural nouns.

- Have you got any friends? (Here 'any' is used to modify the plural noun 'friends'.)
- We haven't got any oil. (Here 'any' is used with the singular uncountable noun 'oil'.)

**Some and any** are used to refer to an indefinite quantity or number.

Use 'some' in affirmative sentences. We can use some with both countable and uncountable nouns.

- I need some oil.
- There were some boys in the class.
- I need some help.

Use 'any' in negative and interrogative sentences.

- She hasn't got any friends.
- Have you got any milk?

### Exceptions

Some can be used in polite requests and offers.

- Would you like some cheese? (More natural than 'Would you like any cheese?')
- Could I have some more rice? (Polite request)

Common expressions with some include: **somebody, someone, something and somewhere**. They are all used in affirmative sentences.

- I need someone to help you.

Common expressions with any include: **anybody, anyone, anything and anywhere**. They are all mainly used in negative sentences and questions.

- I haven't got anything to do.
- She hasn't got anyone to help her.

# Common similes

SEPTEMBER 10, 2015 -  PDF

A simile is a figure of speech in which one thing is compared with another things. Here are some common similes in English.

## **As crooked as a dog's hind leg**

If somebody is as crooked as a dog's hind leg, they are dishonest.

No one will trust you if you are as crooked as a dog's hind leg.

## **As fat as a pig**

If somebody is as fat as a pig, they are very fat.

I must start dieting. I am as fat as a pig.

## **As gentle as a lamb**

If somebody is as gentle as a lamb, they are very gentle.

The boy is as gentle as a lamb when his parents are around.

## **As gruff as a bear**

If somebody is as gruff as a bear, they are very unsociable.

The lady next door is as gruff as a bear. She never invites people to her home.

## **As hungry as a bear**

When you are as hungry as a bear, you are very hungry.



The boy was as hungry as a bear when he got home from school.

### **As innocent as a lamb**

If someone is as innocent as a lamb, they are very innocent or naïve.

Everybody loves Julie. She is as innocent as a lamb.

### **As meek as a lamb**

If somebody is as meek as a lamb, they are very quiet or docile.

As a teenager Frieda was as meek as a lamb. I still can't believe that she has become an aggressive business woman.

### **As nervous as a cat**

If somebody is as nervous as a cat, they are very nervous.

She was as nervous as a cat during the interview.

The infinitive cannot be used with certain words which require a preposition followed by a gerund (ing form). Here is a list of verbs that are followed by preposition + ing form.

He is addicted to gambling. (NOT He is addicted to gamble.)

I don't believe in pampering children.

He is bent on going abroad.

I had hardly any chance of succeeding.

I am confident of winning.

He is desirous of winning the first prize.

There is some difficulty in understanding his motive.

She excels in singing.

She is averse to cooking.

You have no excuse for behaving impolitely.

He is an expert in telling stories.

I am fond of reading books.

We were fortunate in securing their support.

His illness prevented him from going abroad.

I insisted on having my say.

He is intent on marrying his childhood sweetheart.

He despaired of achieving his goal.

You were not justified in insulting him.

He has a knack of doing things.

I understand the necessity of acting promptly.

He persisted in disobeying my orders.

Though he is a great scholar, he lacks the power of imparting.

It was only a pretext for delaying the matter.

The practice of cramming should be discouraged.

I had the privilege of being their guest.

They were prohibited from entering their village.

You should refrain from hurting her feelings.

There is hardly any satisfaction in sitting idle.

## **Underline the prepositions**

SEPTEMBER 17, 2015 -  PDF

Underline the prepositions in the following sentences.

1. Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall.
2. The lion and the unicorn fought for the crown.
3. Little Jack Horner sat in a corner.
4. Wee Willie Winkie runs through the town.
5. A fair little girl sat under a tree.
6. I bring fresh showers for the thirsty flowers from the seas and the streams.

7. She laid her arms across her breast.
8. I tried to reason him out of his fears.
9. He swore by the nine Gods.
10. One day the boy took his breakfast and ate it by a purling brook which ran through his mother's orchard.
11. One crowded hour of glorious life is worth an age without a name.

## Answers

1. Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall.
2. The lion and the unicorn fought for the crown.
3. Little Jack Horner sat in a corner.
4. Wee Willie Winkie runs through the town.
5. A fair little girl sat under a tree.
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9. He swore by the nine Gods.
10. One day the boy took his breakfast and ate it by a purling brook which ran through his mother's orchard.

11. One crowded hour of glorious life is worth an age without a name.

## Distributive pronouns

SEPTEMBER 18, 2015 -  PDF

Read the following sentences.

- Each of the boys got a prize.
- Each of these answers is correct.
- Each of these roads leads to the airport.
- Each individual is different.
- Neither of the keys opens the door.
- Either answer is correct.

The words **each**, **either** and **neither** are called distributive pronouns because they refer to people or things one at a time. Because of this reason, distributive pronouns are always singular.

### Notes

**Each** is used to refer to every one of a number of people or things taken singly. **Either** means one or the other of two. **Neither** is the opposite of either. It means 'not the one nor the other' of two.

**Either** and **neither** are only used to speak of two individuals or things.

- Neither method is right.

When more than two people or things are spoken of, we use other expressions like **any**, **none** or **no one**.

The word **each** can go in different positions in a sentence.

- She kissed them each on the forehead.
- She kissed each of them on the forehead.
- The boys were each given a present.
- Each of the boys was given a present.
- These pens cost 70 cents each.
- Each of these pens costs 70 cents.

The words **each**, **either** and **neither** can also be used as adjectives. In this case, they are followed by a singular noun.

- Each girl took her turn.
- Neither accusation is true.
- There were roses on either side.

## Edit the passage

SEPTEMBER 19, 2015 -  PDF

The passage given below contains several grammar mistakes. The mistakes are in the numbered words or phrases. Correct the mistakes.

The auditorium **was decorating** (1) with buntings. Chairs **are neatly arranged** (2) in rows for the invitees. The dais **was** (3) a beautiful backdrop. The principal **was escorted** (4) the chief guest to the stage. When they **were all occupied** (5) their seats, two girls **sung**(6) the prayer. After that the principal **was reading** (7) the annual report. Then the chief guest **had made** (8) a brief speech. He **was advised** (9) the students to work hard. He said that they should aim at success and **bringing** (10) credit to the school. This **followed** (11) by the prize distribution ceremony. Students who **have won** (12) prizes in various competitions **invited** (13) to the stage. They **had received** (14) prizes from the chief guest.

### Solution

The auditorium **was decorated** (1) with buntings. Chairs **were** neatly arranged (2) in rows for the invitees. The dais **had** (3) a beautiful backdrop. The principal **escorted** (4) the chief guest to the stage. When they all **occupied** (5) their seats, two girls **sang** (6) the prayer. After that the principal **read** (7) the annual report. Then the chief guest **made** (8) a brief speech. He **advised** (9) the students to work hard. He said that they should aim at success and **bring** (10) credit to the school. This **was followed** (11) by the prize distribution ceremony. Students who **had won** (12) prizes in various competitions **were invited** (13) to the stage. They **received** (14) prizes from the chief guest.

## Adjectives: Common mistakes

SEPTEMBER 20, 2015 -  PDF

Incorrect: Every people know this.

Correct: **Everybody knows** this. / **Everyone knows** this.

Incorrect: Each hands have five fingers.

Correct: **Each hand has** five fingers.

Incorrect: Either roads lead to the airport.

Correct: **Either road leads** to the airport.

The adjectives **each, every, either and neither** should be followed by a singular noun and a singular verb.

Incorrect: I have **no any** friends.

Correct: I have **no** friends. / I **haven't any** friends. / I **haven't got any** friends.

The word **any** has a negative meaning. It is not used with 'no'.

Incorrect: Both men have not come.

Correct: **Neither man** has come.

Instead of 'both ... not', we normally use **neither**.

Incorrect: Shakespeare is greater than any playwright.

Correct: Shakespeare is greater than **any other** playwright.

Shakespeare himself is a playwright. So, the first sentence actually says that Shakespeare is greater than Shakespeare. As you can see, it does not make any sense.

Incorrect: Samuel is **elder** than Mark.

Correct: Samuel is **older** than Mark.

Incorrect: Jennifer is the **eldest** girl in the class.

Correct: Jennifer is the **oldest** girl in the class.

The adjectives **elder** and **eldest** are only used attributively (before nouns). After a verb, we use **older** and **oldest**.

Incorrect: He is more better than I.

Correct: He is **better** than I.

Adjectives of one or two syllables form their comparative and superlative forms by adding **–er** or **–est**. Longer adjectives take **more** or **most**. **More** and **most** cannot be used with adjectives ending in **–er** or **–est**.

## How to combine two or more simple sentences into a single compound sentence

SEPTEMBER 21, 2015 -  PDF

A **simple sentence** has just one clause. Two or more simple sentences can be combined by the use of **coordinating conjunctions**. Common coordinating conjunctions are: *and, but, or, yet, nor, for, so, as well as, not only...but also*.



Harry is smart. Harry is handsome.

We can combine these two sentences into one in several ways.

Harry is smart **and** handsome.

Harry is **both** smart **and** handsome.

Harry is smart **as well as** handsome.

Harry is **not only smart but also** handsome.

More examples are given below.

He is slow. He is steady.

He is slow **but** he is steady.

She was annoyed. She said nothing.

She was annoyed **but** she said nothing.

She was annoyed, **yet** she said nothing.

I will not oppose your plan. I cannot approve it.

I will not oppose your plan; **however**, I cannot approve it.

He was all right. He was tired.

He was all right; **only** he was tired.

**Combine the following pairs of sentences into a compound sentence.**

1. The way was long. The wind was cold.
2. The wind blew. The lightning splashed. The rain started falling.
3. It was a cold night. We ventured out.
4. He is foolish. He is obstinate.
5. Come in. Go out.
6. Do not be a borrower. Do not be a lender.

## Answers

1. The way was long **and** the wind was cold.
2. The wind blew, the lightning splashed **and** the rain started falling.
3. It was a cold night **but** we ventured out.
4. He is foolish **and** obstinate.
5. Come in **or** go out. / **Either** come in **or** go out.
6. Do not be a borrower **or** a lender. / Be **neither** a borrower **nor** a lender.

## Review: Conjunctions

SEPTEMBER 29, 2015 -  PDF

**Conjunctions** are words used to join clauses. They can also be used to join words or phrases of the same kind.

Read the following sentences:

- Susie wrote the letters and Jane posted them.
- He is rich but he is not happy.

In sentence 1, the word 'and' joins the clauses 'Susie wrote the letters' and 'Jane posted them'. In sentence 2, the word 'but' joins the clauses 'He is rich' and 'He is not happy'. Here the words 'and' and 'but' are conjunctions.

**Definition: A conjunction is a word which joins words or clauses together.**

### Kinds of Conjunctions

There are mainly two types of conjunctions: ***coordinating conjunctions and subordinating conjunctions.***

A coordinating conjunction joins words, phrases or clauses of equal rank or importance.

- Alice sang and Susie danced.

The two clauses 'Alice sang' and 'Susie danced' are of equal rank and are independent of each other. Therefore, 'and' is a coordinating conjunction. The common coordinating conjunctions are: *and, but, for, still, only, both...and, either...or, neither...nor*.

**A subordinating conjunction** joins clauses of unequal rank or importance. Note that subordinating conjunctions cannot be used to join words. Read the following sentence.

- I said **that he should find a job**.

Here 'I said' is the main clause, and 'that he should find a job' is the subordinate clause which acts as the object of the verb 'said' in the main clause.

Note that we need just one conjunction to connect two clauses. Using more than one conjunction to connect two clauses is wrong.

## Nouns mistakes

SEPTEMBER 30, 2015 -  PDF

In this lesson, we will take a look at some common mistakes in the use of nouns.

- Incorrect: He is leaving his service.
- Correct: He is **leaving his job**. / He is quitting his job.

The expression 'leaving one' service' isn't considered correct in Standard English.

- Incorrect: All his relations are poor.
- Correct: All his **relatives** are poor.

A relative is a person connected by blood or marriage. Relation means connection or relationship.

- Incorrect: We had a good play of tennis.
- Correct: We had a good **game of tennis**.
- Incorrect: In Africa, there are many poors.
- Correct: In Africa, there are **many poor people**.
- Incorrect: He provided the poors with food.
- Correct: He provided **the poor** with food. / He provided **poor people** with food.

The word 'poors' does not even exist. The correct expression is 'poor people'.

- Incorrect: The government does not do anything for poors.
- Correct: The government does not do anything for **the poor**.

The expression 'the poor' means 'all poor people'. In the same way, the expression 'the blind' means 'all blind people'. Note that the article 'the' cannot be removed from these expressions.

- Incorrect: He took troubles to do his work.
- Correct: He took **the trouble** to do his work.
- Correct: He took **trouble over** his work.
- Incorrect: The weather of Kashmir does not suit me.
- Correct: The **climate** of Kashmir does not suit me.

## Join the sentences with a conjunction

SEPTEMBER 30, 2015 -  PDF

Conjunctions are words used to join clauses together. Combine the following sentences using an appropriate conjunction.

1. She is pretty. She is intelligent.

2. He is greedy. He is dishonest.
3. God made small things. God made great things.
4. Martin is not tall. His father is not tall.
5. She is not honest. She is not hard working.
6. They gave her the best treatment. They could not save her.
7. She had the qualifications. She did not get the job.
8. He was ill. He attended the meeting.
9. The lawyer defended his client very well. He lost the case.
10. He is not educated. He possesses practical wisdom.

#### Answers

1. She is pretty as well as intelligent.
2. He is greedy as well as dishonest.
3. God made small things as well as great things.
4. Neither Martin nor his father is tall.
5. She is neither honest nor hard working.
6. Although / though they gave her the best treatment, they could not save her.
7. Although / though she had the qualifications, she did not get the job.

8. He was ill but he attended the meeting. / Though he was ill he attended the meeting.

9. Though / although the lawyer defended his client very well, he lost the case.

10. Though he is not educated, he possesses practical wisdom. / He is not educated but he possesses practical wisdom.

## Rewrite using modal auxiliary verbs

OCTOBER 7, 2015 -  PDF

In English, we can express a lot of ideas using modal auxiliary verbs.

The modal auxiliary verbs are: **will, would, can, could, may, might, must, ought to, need, used to and dare.**

They express ideas such as possibility, permission, prohibition, obligation, necessity, duty, willingness etc.

Rewrite the following sentences using modal auxiliary verbs. Make sure that the meaning does not change.

1. It is not necessary for you to wait any longer.

2. You are required to respect the national flag.

3. She was able to read when she was three.

4. I was able to solve the problem.

5. Perhaps she would come.

6. You are prohibited from entering my home.

7. You are allowed to go home.
8. She is able to speak English.
9. It is possible to blow glass.
10. It is not necessary for her to pay for that call.
11. It is possible for wars to break out at any time.
12. I prefer to stay at home instead of going to the club.

### Answers

1. You **need** not wait any longer.
2. You **must** respect the national flag.
3. She **could** read when she was three.
4. I **could** solve the problem.
5. She **might** come.
6. You **must** not enter my home.
7. You **may** go home.
8. She **can** speak English.
9. Glass **can** be blown.
10. She **need** not pay for that call.

11. Wars **can** break out at any time.

12. I **would** rather stay at home than go to the club.

## Word order | Grammar worksheet

OCTOBER 14, 2015 -  PDF

This is a general grammar exercise that tests your knowledge of various grammar rules.

1. A strimmer is a machine used ..... grass and weeds.

- a) to cut
- b) for cutting
- c) to cutting
- d) none of these

2. To ....., he lost the bet.

- a) noone's surprise
- b) no one's surprise
- c) no ones surprise
- d) no ones' surprise

3. The circus ..... round of applause for the perfectly timed acrobatic stunts.

- a) audience received a well-deserved
- b) audience gave a well deserved
- c) audience gave a well-deserved
- d) audience did receive a well deserved



4. Because of its warm tropical climate, Hawaii ..... subzero temperatures.

- a) experiences almost never
- b) almost experiences never
- c) almost never experiences
- d) experiences never almost

5. You ..... working hard.

- a) definitely been have
- b) definitely have been
- c) have been definitely
- d) have definitely been

### Answers

1. A trimmer is a machine used **for cutting** grass and weeds.

2. To **no one's** surprise, he lost the bet.

3. The circus **audience gave a well-deserved round of applause** for the perfectly timed acrobatic stunts.

4. Because of its warm tropical climate, Hawaii **almost never experiences** subzero temperatures.

5. You **have definitely been working** hard. (Adverbs usually go after modal auxiliary verbs and before other verbs.)

## Tenses worksheet | Gap fills

Insert the correct tense of the verb in the blank spaces and complete the sentences.

1. I waited for him until he ..... (come)
2. As long as the rain ....., I stayed at home. (continue)
3. He ran as fast as he ..... (can/could)
4. He was so tired that he ..... barely stand. (can / could)
5. Wherever he ....., the people gathered to listen. (preach)
6. He ..... because he was in a hurry. (run)
7. Although he began late, he ..... first. (finish)
8. I asked him what I ..... do for him. (can / could)
9. He said the he ..... make another attempt. (will / would)
10. He rested his horse because it ..... (limp)

### Answers

1. I waited for him until he **came**.
2. As long as the rain **continued**, I stayed at home.
3. He ran as fast as he **could**.
4. He was so tired that he **could** barely stand.

# Grammar practice test

OCTOBER 26, 2015 -  PDF

**Complete the following sentences.**

1. The boy held the box ..... even though his arm hurt .....

- a) tightly, badly
- b) tight, bad
- c) tightly, bad
- d) tight, badly

2. .... as fast as she could, she managed to arrive on time.

- a) Being driving
- b) Driven
- c) Having driving
- d) Driving

3. .... much blood, the driver struggled with the controls.

- a) Being lost
- b) Having lost
- c) Losing
- d) Lost

4. The man was charged with DUI. ...., he was suspected of committing robbery in another state.

- a) In addition
- b) For instance
- c) In the same way
- d) Similarly

5. I believe that smoking is extremely injurious ..... health.

- a) to
- b) for
- c) with
- d) on

6. You will greatly benefit ..... the experience.

- a) with
- b) to
- c) from
- d) by

7. I have invited Alice and Rebecca. .... Sally, I don't care whether she comes or not.

- a) As far as
- b) As for
- c) While
- d) Whereas

8. The train was late. .... I managed to arrive on time.

- a) On the contrary
- b) By contrast
- c) Despite that
- d) Incidentally

9. Why do you want to get a job as a typist? You won't be able to work from 9 to 6. .... you can't type.

- a) In any case
- b) In general
- c) For instance
- d) Incidentally

### Answers

1. The boy held the box **tightly** even though his arm hurt **badly**.
2. **Driving** as fast as she could, she managed to arrive on time.
3. **Having lost** much blood, the driver struggled with the controls.
4. The man was charged with DUI. **In addition**, he was suspected of committing robbery in another state.
5. I believe that smoking is extremely injurious **to** health.
6. You will greatly benefit **from** the experience.
7. I have invited Alice and Rebecca. **As for Sally**, I don't care whether she comes or not.
8. The train was late. **Despite that** I managed to arrive on time.
9. Why do you want to get a job as a typist? You won't be able to work from 9 to 6.
6. **In any case** you can't type.

## Reporting verbs in English

OCTOBER 27, 2015 -  PDF

**Say and tell** are common reporting verbs.

- Direct speech: Alice said, 'I am not going to come with you.'
- Indirect speech: Alice **said** that she was not going to come with me.
- Indirect speech: Alice **told me that** she was not going to come with me.

**Say and tell** aren't the only reporting verbs in English. Of course, they are the most common, but there are other reporting verbs too.

In this article, we will take a look at some not-so-common reporting verbs.

Study the examples given below.

- Direct speech: I will help you. I promise.
- Indirect speech: He **said** that he would help me.
- Indirect speech: He **promised me that** he would help me. / He **promised to help** me.

The verb **promise** can be followed by a **to-infinitive** or a **that-clause**.

## **Advise**

The verb **advise** can be followed by **object + to-infinitive/that clause**.

- The doctor **advised him to get** rest.
- OR The doctor **advised that he should get** rest.
- I **advise you to reject** the offer.
- OR I **advise that you should reject** the offer.

## **Encourage**

The verb **encourage** can be followed by **object + infinitive**.

- Our teacher always **encouraged us to discuss** our problems with her.
- He **encouraged her to make** another attempt to pass the test.
- The doctor **encouraged him to go** on a diet.

## Warn

**Warn** can be followed by an **object + infinitive**

- The teacher **warned the students to work** hard.
- I **warned you not to bet** on that horse.

## Subject-verb agreement: Quick overview

NOVEMBER 4, 2015 -  PDF

The verb should agree with the subject in number and person.

Here is a quick overview of the basic rules of subject-verb agreement.

When two or more singular subjects are connected by 'and', the verb is plural.

- Rohan and Sania **go** to the same school.
- Fire and water **do not agree**.
- Oil and water **do not mix**.
- He and his wife **have arrived**.

If two singular nouns refer to the same person, the verb must be singular in number.

- My friend and benefactor **has** come.
- My uncle and guardian **has given** me the permission to go abroad.

Note that the article is used only once when the two nouns refer to the same person. If we are referring to different persons, we should use the article before each noun.

When two singular subjects preceded by **each or every** are connected by 'and', the verb should be singular.

- Every boy and **every girl was** ready.
- Each man and **each woman has** a vote.

Two or more singular subjects connected by **or, nor, either...or or neither...nor** take a singular verb.

- No nook or **corner was** left unexplored by them.
- Neither he nor **I was** there.
- Either Harry or **Tom has** stolen the money.
- Neither praise nor **blame seems** to affect him.

When subjects joined by **or** or **nor** are of different numbers, the verb must be plural and the plural subject should be placed close to the verb.

- Neither the manager **nor his colleagues were** present.
- Neither James nor his **friends were invited** to the party.

When the subjects joined by **or or nor** are of different persons, the verb should agree in person with the subject nearest to it.

- Either you **or he has** to finish the job. (Here the verb 'has' agrees with the third person singular pronoun 'he'.)

## Was or were worksheet | Beginner level

OCTOBER 29, 2015 -  PDF

Use **was** when the subject is a singular noun. Was is also used with I, he, she and it.

Use **were** when the subject is a plural noun. Were is also used with they, we and you.



Complete the following sentences with was/were.

1. I ..... hungry.
2. The boy ..... sleeping.
3. We ..... waiting for them.
4. The girls ..... singing.
5. The peacock ..... dancing.
6. It ..... getting dark.
7. She ..... upset.
8. You ..... playing with your friends.
9. They ..... working on an important project.
10. Samuel ..... anxious to leave.
11. James and John ..... playing chess.
12. Maria ..... listening to a song.
13. The princess ..... beautiful but the frog ..... ugly.
14. The dogs ..... barking.
15. I ..... reading a detective novel.
16. Yamuna ..... playing with her daughter.

**Answers**

1. I **was** hungry.
2. The boy **was** sleeping.
3. We **were** waiting for them.
4. The girls **were** singing.
5. The peacock **was** dancing.
6. It **was** getting dark.
7. She **was** upset.
8. You **were** playing with your friends.
9. They **were** working on an important project.
10. Samuel **was** anxious to leave.
11. James and John **were** playing chess.
12. Maria **was** listening to a song.
13. The princess **was** beautiful but the frog was ugly.
14. The dogs **were** barking.
15. I **was** reading a detective novel.
16. Yamuna **was** playing with her daughter.

# Quick overview of adverbs

OCTOBER 30, 2015 -  PDF

**Adverbs** are words used to modify verbs. Adverbs can also modify adjectives and other adverbs. There are several different types of adverbs.

## Adverbs of time

Time adverbs answer the question 'when'. Examples are: *before, now, already, then, late, early, yesterday, tomorrow etc.*

I have seen him before.

You should start now.

I haven't heard anything from him lately.

I have already discussed this with him.

## Adverbs of frequency

Frequency adverbs answer the question 'how often'. Common examples are: *twice, once, always, often, seldom, again, frequently etc.*

He often visits his grandmother.

I will not invite him again.

I met him only once.

He is seldom late for work.

## Adverbs of place

Adverbs of place answer the question 'where'. Examples are: *here, there, up, down, in, out.*

He looked up.

He is not in at the moment.

Put it there.

Come here

Get out.

Come in.

### **Adverbs of manner**

Adverbs of manner answer the question 'how'. Most adverbs ending in -ly are examples of adverbs of manner. Examples are: *kindly, cruelly, pleasantly, softly, cleverly, bravely, slowly, sadly, well, hard etc.*

I can see clearly.

Our soldiers fought bravely.

The child wept bitterly.

She speaks English well.

You must work hard.

### **Adverbs of degree**

Degree adverbs answer the question 'to what extent' or 'in which degree'.

Examples are: *too, very, almost, any, quite, enough, pretty etc.*

You are too late.

She was very happy.

You are partly right.

She sings pretty well.

I am rather busy.

She was so happy.

## **Infinitive complements worksheet**

NOVEMBER 1, 2015 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences

1. He is the ..... athlete ever to have won an Olympic gold medal.

- a) eldest
- b) oldest
- c) Either could be used here

2. There is no .....

- a) hope of arriving
- b) hope to arrive
- c) Either could be used here

3. Why won't you .....?

- a) let me to explain
- b) let me explain
- c) let me explaining

4. She .....

- a) seems to cry
- b) seems to be crying
- c) Either could be used here

5. I ..... the door and go out.

- a) heard her open
- b) heard her to open

6. I ..... by tomorrow evening.

- a) expect to be finishing
- b) expect to have finished

7. Cricket is not very .....

- a) interesting to watch
- b) interesting to watch it

8. I told her that I ..... to leave.

- a) have decided
- b) had decided
- c) am decided

9. The hate the thought ..... old.

- a) to get
- b) of getting

### Answers

1. He is the **oldest** athlete ever to have won an Olympic gold medal.

2. There is no **hope of arriving**.

3. Why won't you **let me explain**?

4. She seems **to be crying**.

5. I **heard her open** the door and go out.

6. I expect **to have finished** by tomorrow evening.

7. Cricket is not very **interesting to watch**.

8. I told her that I **had decided** to leave.

9. I hate the thought **of getting** old.

## Too, too much or too many

NOVEMBER 2, 2015 -  PDF

**Complete the following sentences using too, too much or too many.**

1. He is ..... old to work. (too / too much)
2. It is ..... cold to go out now. (too / too much)
3. There was ..... snow to go walking. (too / too much)
4. You put ..... salt in the soup. (too / too much)
5. I put down the box because it was ..... heavy. (too / too much)
6. He does not like women who are ..... tall. (too / too much)
7. I cannot solve this problem – it's ..... difficult. (too / too much)
8. I have got ..... work to do. (too / too much / too many)
9. You have eaten ..... rice. (too / too much / too many)
10. You ask ..... questions. (too / too much / too many)

### Answers

1. He is **too old** to work.

2. It is **too cold** to go out now.
3. There was **too much** snow to go walking.
4. You put **too** much salt in the soup.
5. I put down the box because it was **too** heavy.
6. He does not like women who are **too** tall.
7. I cannot solve this problem – it's **too** difficult.
8. I have got **too much** work to do.
9. You have eaten **too much** rice.
10. You ask **too many** questions.

## Time as a countable and uncountable noun

OCTOBER 24, 2015 -  PDF

The word **time** has both countable and uncountable uses.

When we talk about the amount of time (number of hours/days etc.) required to complete something, **time** is usually uncountable.

- How much time do we need to paint the walls? (NOT How many time do we need...?)
- We took quite some time to put the child to bed.
- Hurry up – we haven't got enough time.
- The project was a complete waste of time and money.



In expressions like **a long time** or **a short time**, the word **time** is used as a countable noun.

- I took a long time to proofread the work.

When we talk about clock times, time is countable.

- Five o'clock would be a great time to start.
- I called him at various times yesterday.

### **When time is used without a preposition**

Prepositions are often dropped before common expressions with **time**.

- I'm busy right now. Can you come another time? (More natural than 'Can you come at another time?')
- What time does the train leave? (More natural than 'At what time does the train leave?')
- You can't fool me this time.

### **On time and in time**

On time means 'at the planned time'. In time means 'with enough time to spare.'

- It is important that the meeting start on time.
- She would have died if they hadn't taken her to hospital in time.

## **Intermediate grammar exercise**

NOVEMBER 3, 2015 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences using an appropriate word or phrase.

1. No football team ..... championship without defenders.

- a) can't win a
- b) can win a
- c) can't win no

2. How many players ..... baseball team?

- a) there are in a
- b) is there in a
- c) was there
- d) are there in a

3. ...., a deer leapt out in front of me.

- a) While driving down the road
- b) While I was driving down the road
- c) I was driving down the road
- d) Driving down the road

4. The Turks ..... Constantinople in 1453 and that was the end of the Byzantine Empire.

- a) have captured
- b) had captured
- c) captures
- d) captured

5. Although it ..... for days, the cricket pitch was in perfect condition.

- a) had been raining
- b) is raining
- c) had raining
- d) has been raining

6. ...., but she could not understand the Genoese dialect.

- a) Maria speaks Italian well
- b) Though Maria speaks Italian well
- c) As Maria speaks Italian well

### Answers

1. No football team **can win a** championship without defenders.
2. How many players **are there** in a baseball team?
3. **While I was driving down the road**, a deer leapt out in front of me.
4. The Turks **captured** Constantinople in 1453 and that was the end of the Byzantine Empire.
5. Although it **had been raining** for days, the cricket pitch was in perfect condition.
6. **Maria speaks Italian well**, but she could not understand the Genoese dialect.

## Intermediate grammar exercise

NOVEMBER 3, 2015 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences using an appropriate word or phrase.

1. No football team ..... championship without defenders.
- a) can't win a
  - b) can win a
  - c) can't win no

2. How many players ..... baseball team?

- a) there are in a
- b) is there in a
- c) was there
- d) are there in a

3. ...., a deer leapt out in front of me.

- a) While driving down the road
- b) While I was driving down the road
- c) I was driving down the road
- d) Driving down the road

4. The Turks ..... Constantinople in 1453 and that was the end of the Byzantine Empire.

- a) have captured
- b) had captured
- c) captures
- d) captured

5. Although it ..... for days, the cricket pitch was in perfect condition.

- a) had been raining
- b) is raining
- c) had raining
- d) has been raining

6. ...., but she could not understand the Genoese dialect.

- a) Maria speaks Italian well
- b) Though Maria speaks Italian well
- c) As Maria speaks Italian well

### Answers

1. No football team **can win a** championship without defenders.
2. How many players **are there** in a baseball team?
3. **While I was driving down the road**, a deer leapt out in front of me.
4. The Turks **captured** Constantinople in 1453 and that was the end of the Byzantine Empire.
5. Although it **had been raining** for days, the cricket pitch was in perfect condition.
6. **Maria speaks Italian well**, but she could not understand the Genoese dialect.

## By and until | Grammar exercise

NOVEMBER 5, 2015 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences using by or until.

1. I will keep asking ..... you send my payment. (by / until)
2. The shop is open ..... 9 pm. (by / until)
3. They said that they would finish the job ..... Friday. (by / until)
4. I waited for him ..... 12 o'clock and then I went home. (by / until)

5. I will be staying in this city ..... the end of this month. (by / until)

6. I will be home ..... five o'clock. (by / until)

7. .... the end of the party, everybody was drunk. (by / until)

8. I will be in bed ..... the time you get home. (by / until)

9. I will be ready ..... the time you arrive. (by / until)

10. I will wait here ..... you come back. (by / until)

### Answers

1. I will keep asking **until** you send my payment.

2. The shop is open **until** 9 pm.

3. They said that they would finish the job **by** Friday.

4. I waited for him **until** 12 o'clock and then I went home.

5. I will be staying in this city **until** the end of this month.

6. I will be home **by** five o'clock.

7. **By** the end of the party, everybody was drunk.

8. I will be in bed **by** the time you get home.

9. I will be ready **by** the time you arrive.

10. I will wait here **until** you come back.

# Many and many of

NOVEMBER 6, 2015 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences using many or many of

1. .... families own more than one vehicle these days. (Many / Many of)
2. .... us are disappointed with the government's economic policies. (Many / Many of)
3. .... them are late. (Many / Many of)
4. There weren't .... students in the class. (many / many of)
5. How .... you have submitted your assignments? (many / many of)
6. She has got .... friends in the city. (many / many of)
7. .... them are not interested in the offer. (Many / Many of)
8. There aren't .... apples on the tree. (many / many of)
9. How .... people were there? (many / many of)
10. .... those who participated in the program said that they enjoyed it. (Many / Many of)

## Answers

1. **Many** families own more than one vehicle these days.

2. **Many of** us are disappointed with the government's economic policies.
3. **Many of** them are late.
4. There weren't **many** students in the class.
5. How **many of** you have submitted your assignments?
6. She has got **many** friends in the city.
7. **Many of** them are not interested in the offer.
8. There aren't **many** apples on the tree.
9. How **many** people were there?
10. **Many of** those who participated in the program said that they enjoyed it.

## Phrasal verbs beginning with H

NOVEMBER 7, 2015 -  PDF

Here is a list of phrasal verbs beginning with the letter H. Each phrasal verb is followed by its meaning or definition. Example sentences are also given.

### Hand in

To hand an essay or an assignment in is to give it to someone in charge.

- All students must hand in their work before Friday.
- The minister handed in his registration when his involvement in the scam came under public scrutiny.
- As she had received a better job offer she handed in her notice at work.



**Hand on**

To hand something on to somebody is to give it to them.

- These stories were handed on verbally from one generation to the next.
- When my sister outgrew her clothes, my mother handed them on to me.

**Hand out**

To hand something out is to distribute it.

- The teacher told the students to hand out the pamphlets.

**Hand over**

To hand something over to somebody is to give it to them so that they can take control.

- He handed over the reins of the company to his son.

**Hang about / around**

Even after his friends had gone, he hanged around in the street for a little longer.

- You shouldn't let your kids hang about in the street after dark.

**Hang on**

To hang on is to wait.

- Hang on a minute; I want to talk to you.

**Hang out**

To hang out is to spend time somewhere.

- I would rather play with my children than hang out at the bar.

Complete the following sentences using ever or never.

1. I have ..... been to a foreign country.

- a) ever
- b) never

2. Have you ..... seen her perform?

- a) ever
- b) never

3. Do you ..... go to Ireland on holiday?

- a) ever
- b) never

4. I shall ..... remember you.

- a) always
- b) ever

5. Do you ..... go to live concerts?

- a) ever
- b) never

6. Nobody ..... visits them.

- a) never
- b) ever
- c) always

7. I have ..... seen a ghost.

- a) ever
- b) never
- c) always

8. I .....want to see you again.

- a) ever
- b) never
- c) always

9. I don't ..... want to see you again.

- a) always
- b) ever
- c) never

10. I hardly ..... see my brother or sister.

- a) ever
- b) never
- c) always

### Answers

1. I have **never** been to a foreign country.

2. Have you **ever** seen her perform?

3. Do you **ever** go to Ireland on holiday?

4. I shall **always** remember you.

5. Do you **ever** go to live concerts?

6. Nobody **ever** visits them.

7. I have **never** seen a ghost.

8. I **never** want to see you again.

9. I don't **ever** want to see you again.

10. I hardly **ever** see my brother or sister.

## Early and soon | Grammar exercise

NOVEMBER 9, 2015 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences.

1. I don't like to get up .....

a) early

b) soon

2. By Charlie, see you .....

a) early

b) soon

3. Susie left her office at 6 o'clock, so she should be here .....

a) early

b) soon

4. The government is expected to announce revised tax policies .....

a) early

b) soon

5. I arrived .....

a) early

b) soon

6. Could you finish this job as ..... as possible?

a) early

b) soon

7. She is in her ..... twenties.

a) early

b) soon

8. My parents immigrated to Canada in the ..... 1980s.

a) early

b) soon

9. Look at the sky. It is going to rain .....

a) early

b) soon

10. Get well .....

a) early

b) soon

### Answers

1. I don't like to get up **early**.

2. By Charlie, see you **soon**.

3. Susie left her office at 6 o'clock, so she should be here **soon**.

4. The government is expected to announce revised tax policies**soon**.

5. I arrived **early** so I went for a walk.

6. Could you finish this job as **soon** as possible?

7. She is in her **early** twenties.

8. My parents immigrated to Canada in the **early** 1980s.

9. Look at the sky. It is going to rain **soon**.

10. Get well **soon**.

## Preposition after adjectives

NOVEMBER 10, 2015 -  PDF

Some adjectives can be followed by **preposition + noun or –ing form**.

1. Theresa has been married ..... Charles for thirty years.

- a) to
- b) with

2. Alex is married ..... three kids.

- a) to
- b) with

3. Your hair color is similar ..... mine.

- a) to
- b) from
- d) than

4. She is interested ..... philosophy.

- a) in
- b) at
- c) on

5. You are responsible ..... the mess.

- a) for
- b) with
- c) to

6. That is typical ..... her.

- a) of
- b) off
- c) for

7. I am sick ..... his erratic behavior.

- a) of
- b) with
- c) at

8. He is quite capable ..... defending himself.

- a) to
- b) of
- c) for

9. As I was short ..... cash, I borrowed some from my uncle.

- a) of
- b) off
- c) for

10. I wasn't aware ..... his motives.

- a) of
- b) for
- c) with

11. Susie is quite good ..... solving puzzles.

- a) at
- b) with
- c) in

## Few or little



Complete the following sentences using few or little.

1. I have a ..... friends in Malaysia.

- a) few
- b) little

2. He has ..... interest in politics.

- a) few
- b) little

3. He won't make a good teacher. He has very ..... patience.

- a) few
- b) little

4. There is only a ..... oil left.

- a) little
- b) few

5. I have visited Japan a ..... times.

- a) few
- b) little

6. I watched a ..... films on the weekend.

- a) few
- b) little

7. He is a busy executive. He has got very ..... spare time.

a) few

b) little

8. I don't think I will pass the test. I could answer only a ..... questions.

a) few

b) little

9. His latest book was not a success. Only a ..... copies were sold.

a) few

b) little

10. I only like a ..... sugar in my tea.

a) few

b) little

### Answers

1. I have a **few** friends in Malaysia.

2. He has **little** interest in politics.

3. He won't make a good teacher. He has very **little** patience.

4. There is only a **little** oil left.

5. I have visited Japan a **few** times.

6. I watched a few **films** on the weekend.

7. He is a busy executive. He has got very **little** spare time.

8. I don't think I will pass the test. I could answer only a **few** questions.

9. His latest book was not a success. Only a **few** copies were sold.

10. I only like a **little** sugar in my tea.

2. Alex is **married with** three kids.

3. Your hair color is **similar to** mine.

4. She is **interested in** philosophy.

5. You are **responsible for** the mess.

6. That is **typical of** her.

7. I am **sick of** his erratic behavior.

8. He is quite **capable of** defending himself.

9. As I was **short of** cash, I borrowed some from my uncle.

10. I wasn't **aware of** his motives.

11. Susie is quite **good at** solving puzzles.

## Unless, provided that, as long as

NOVEMBER 19, 2015 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences using an appropriate conjunction.

1. We will reach there on time ..... we start now.

a) unless

b) if

2. I will leave now ..... there is anything left to do.

a) unless

b) providing

c) as long as

3. We are holding a party on Sunday ..... it does not rain.

a) unless

b) provided

4. You can borrow my car ..... you return it by tonight.

a) provided that

c) unless

5. Children cannot watch this film ..... they are accompanied by an adult.

a) unless

b) as long as

6. You must not call me ..... there is an emergency.

a) unless

b) providing

7. You can borrow my car ..... you drive carefully.

a) as long as

b) unless

### Answers

1. We will reach there on time **if** we start now.
2. I will leave now **unless** there is anything left to do.
3. We are holding a party on Sunday **provided** it does not rain.
4. You can borrow my car **provided that** you return it by tonight.
5. Children cannot watch this film **unless** they are accompanied by an adult.
6. You must not call me **unless** there is an emergency.
7. You can borrow my car **as long as** you drive carefully.

## Making questions

NOVEMBER 24, 2015 -  PDF

Affirmative sentences in the simple present and simple past tense do not have an auxiliary verb. We use **do, does or did** to change them into questions.

Note that **do and does** are used in the present tense. **Do** is used with plural nouns and the pronouns **I, we, they and you**. **Does** is used with singular nouns and the pronouns **he, she and it**.

**Did** is used in the past tense with both singular and plural nouns and pronouns. Study the examples given below.

- She writes short stories.

This statement is in the simple present tense and it doesn't have an auxiliary verb. When we change this statement into a question, we use **does** as the first word. Note that we use **does** because the subject is a third person singular pronoun.

- Does she write short stories? (NOT Does she writes short stories?)
- Mike likes strawberries. (Statement)
- Does Mike like strawberries? (NOT Does Mike likes strawberries?)
- They live in the same house. (Statement)
- Do they live in the same house? (Question)

Here we use **do** because the subject is a plural pronoun.

- I like Beethoven. (Statement)
- Do you like Beethoven? (Question)
- I enjoyed the movie. (Statement)

This statement is in the **simple past tense**. When we change it into a question, we use **did** as the first word. Note that **did** is used with both singular and plural nouns and pronouns.

- Did you enjoy the movie? (Question) (NOT Did you enjoyed the concert?)  
Did + enjoy = enjoyed
- I met James yesterday. (Statement)
- Did you meet James yesterday? (Question)
- She watched a movie last night. (Statement)
- Did she watch a movie last night? (NOT Did she watched a movie last night?)
- Susie called Jack in the morning. (Statement)
- Did Susie call Jack in the morning? (Question) (NOT Did Susie called Jack in the morning?)

# Talking about things you have done and you want to do

NOVEMBER 25, 2015 -  PDF

## I have + (past participle)

This structure is used to talk about things that you have done in the past.

- I've done it.
- I've tried parasailing.
- I have visited Australia.
- She has acted in a film.
- I've watched that film.
- She's written several books.
- I've written twelve letters since morning.
- I've been to this place before.
- I've seen him before.

## Talking about things you want to do

### I wanna + (verb)

The structure wanna is the conversational equivalent of want to. The structure I wanna can be used to talk about things you want to do.

- I wanna talk to you. (= I want to talk to you.)
- I wanna find a job. (= I want to find a job.)
- I wanna marry you. (= I want to marry you.)
- I wanna try this food. (= I want to try this food.)

The structure 'don't wanna' is used to talk about things that you don't want to do.

- I don't wanna accept this job. (= I don't want to accept this job.)

- I don't wanna marry you. (= I don't want to marry you.)
- I don't wanna meet him. (= I don't want to meet him.)

### Talking about things you have to do

#### I gotta + (verb)

The word gotta is the conversational equivalent of got to. In conversation I gotta is often used instead of I have got to.

- I gotta get up early tomorrow. (= I have got to get up early tomorrow.)
- I gotta win her trust. (= I have got to win her trust.)
- I gotta get my car repaired. (= I have got to get my car repaired.)

## Expressions about fear

NOVEMBER 26, 2015 -  PDF

Here are some expressions and phrases that you can use to talk about fear.

**A terrifying ordeal:** If something is a tarrying ordeal it is a very frightening experience

- It was such a terrifying ordeal. I'm glad that it's over.

**Send shivers down my spine:** When something sends shivers down your spine, it terrifies you.

- I watched a horror movie yesterday. Some of the scenes and the sound effects were so frightening that they sent shivers down my spine.

**Give me goose bumps:** Goose bumps are the little bumps that your skin gets when you are frightened or cold.

- I can't watch horror films. They give me goose bumps.



### **Make the hairs on the back of my neck stand up**

- If something makes the hairs on the back of your neck stand up, they scare you.

### **Scare the hell out of me**

If something scares the hell out of you, they frighten you.

- I don't like to watch horror films because they scare the hell out of me.

### **Afraid or Scared – General Sentences**

Fear is a universal emotion that all of us are familiar with. Here are a few sentences that you can use to talk about fear.

- I get scared really easily.
- I'm afraid of the dark.
- I can't watch horror films. They scare me.
- I had a terrifying experience last week.
- I get scared when I'm at home all by myself.

## **Present continuous tense review**

NOVEMBER 27, 2015 -  PDF

**The present continuous tense** is used to talk about things that are happening at the moment of speaking. For example, *I am working on my computer at the moment. What are you doing? You are reading this article.*

Form: Subject + is / am / are + -ing form of the verb

- What is your mother doing now? Is she cooking? No, she is watching TV.
- What is your sister doing at the moment? She is writing a letter.

- What is your brother doing now? He is playing chess with his friend.
- What is your father doing now? He is reading the newspaper.

More examples are given below.

- What are the birds doing? The birds are chirping.
- What is the baby doing? The baby is sleeping.
- What are the children doing? The children are playing cricket in the garden.
- What are you doing now? I am learning about the present continuous tense.

### **Suggested activity**

Take a story book with lots of pictures. Go through the pages and ask yourself questions based on the pictures.

- What are the girls doing now? They are dancing.
- What is that cat doing now? It is chasing a mouse.
- What are the birds doing now? They are flying in the sky.
- What are the boys doing? Are they playing cricket? No, they are flying kites.
- What is that girl holding in her hand?
- Is she holding a bird? No, she is not holding a bird.
- She is holding a puppy in her hand. The puppy is howling in pain because it has hurt its leg.
- What is that old man doing?
- Is he sleeping? No, he is not sleeping. He is sitting under a tree.
- What are the dogs doing? Are they chasing a cat? No, they are not chasing a cat. They are fighting for a bone.

## **Formation of questions: basic rules**

NOVEMBER 28, 2015 - PDF

It is important to know how to form questions. The rules given below apply to almost all written questions and most spoken questions.

### **Auxiliary verb before subject**

In a question, the auxiliary verb comes before the subject. Note that if there are two auxiliary verbs, only the first comes before the subject. Study the examples given below.

He is working in the garage. (Statement)  
Is he working in the garage? (Question)

That was a silly question. (Statement)  
Was that a silly question? (Question)

They have arrived. (Statement)  
Have they arrived? (Question)

She has been invited. (Statement)  
Has she been invited? (NOT Has been she told?)

The above sentence contains two auxiliary verbs, but we have already learned that only the first auxiliary verb comes before the subject in a question.

She should have been more careful. (Statement)  
Should she have been more careful? (Question) (NOT Should have been she more careful?)

The boys have been rewarded. (Statement)  
Have the boys been rewarded? (Question)

The police have caught the thief. (Statement)

Have the police caught the thief? (Question)

### Cases where there is no auxiliary verb

Affirmative sentences in the simple present and simple past tense do not have an auxiliary verb. We use **do, does or did** to change them into questions.

Note that **do and does** are used in the present tense. **Do** is used with plural nouns and the pronouns **I, we, they and you**. **Does** is used with singular nouns and the pronouns **he, she and it**.

## Giving orders and instructions in English

DECEMBER 1, 2015 -  PDF

How can you ask someone to do something for you without sounding rude? Here are some of the ways that you can use to give orders and instructions.

### 1. Use the imperative form

We use the imperative form to give orders, warnings and advice:

- Be quiet!
- Take care!
- Listen!
- Sit down.
- Get me something to drink.

You should soften the imperative form with **let's or please** while talking to an adult.

- Let's go now, shall we?
- Let's take a break, shall we?

- Please listen to what I'm saying. (More polite than 'Listen to what I am saying.')

## 2. Use a modal verb to turn the order into a request

Modal auxiliary verbs can make orders and instructions sound more polite. For example, 'Could you help me?' is more polite than 'Help me!'

More examples are given below.

- Could you make me some tea?
- Could you post this letter?
- Could you lend me 50 dollars, please?
- Could you bring me that file, please?
- Could you pick up the kids from school, please?
- Can you come here please?
- Can you do something for me?
- Can you do this for me?
- Can you wait a minute?
- Can you give me a lift?
- Can you fetch Mary from the airport?
- Will you keep quiet please?
- Would you wait here until I'm back?

**Could** is more polite than **can**. **Both can and could** are followed by a verb without to.

- Could you help me with this? (NOT Could you to help me...?)

## Elder, older, eldest, oldest

DECEMBER 11, 2015 -  PDF

**Complete the following sentences using elder / older, eldest / oldest.**

1. I am visiting my ..... sister tomorrow.

a) elder

b) older

2. Julie is five years ..... than me.

a) elder

b) older

3. My ..... brother is a pilot.

a) elder

b) older

4. I have two ..... sisters.

a) elder

b) older

5. His ..... son works abroad.

a) eldest

b) oldest

6. My grandmother is the ..... member of my family.

a) eldest

b) oldest

7. She is the ..... student in her class.

a) oldest

b) eldest

8. His ..... son is a journalist.

a) eldest

b) oldest

9. He is the ..... in the family.

a) oldest

b) eldest

10. She is a couple of years ..... than him.

a) older

b) elder

### Answers

1. I am visiting my **elder / older** sister tomorrow.

2. Julie is five years **older** than me.

3. My **elder / older** brother is a pilot.

4. I have two **elder / older** sisters.

5. His **eldest / oldest** son works abroad.

6. My grandmother is the **oldest** member of my family.

7. She is the **oldest** student in her class.

8. His **eldest** / **oldest** son is a journalist.
9. He is the **oldest** in the family.
10. She is a couple of years **older** than him.

## Last and the last

DECEMBER 8, 2015 -  PDF

Fill in the blanks with last or the last.

1. I had a discussion with him ..... week.

- a) last
- b) the last

2. I think ..... time I met him was when I was in Singapore.

- a) last
- b) the last

3. I ..... met him in January.

- a) last
- b) the last

4. I had a cold ..... week.

- a) last
- b) the last

5. Were you at the conference ..... week?



- a) last
- b) the last

6. We bought this house ..... year.

- a) last
- b) the last

7. We have lived here for ..... year.

- a) last
- b) the last

8. I have been too busy for ..... three months.

- a) last
- b) the last

9. This is ..... car I buy.

- a) last
- b) the last

10. .... few days have been very wet.

- a) last
- b) the last

### Answers

1. I had a discussion with him **last** week.

2. I think **the last** time I met him was when I was in Singapore.

3. I **last** met him in January.
4. I had a cold **last** week.
5. Were you at the conference **last** week?
6. We bought this house **last** year.
7. We have lived here for **the last** year.
8. I have been too busy for **the last** three months.
9. This is **the last** car I buy.
10. **The last** few days have been very wet.

## Both, either, neither

DECEMBER 14, 2015 -  PDF

Fill in the blanks

1. .... of them were ill so they stayed at home.  
  
a) Both  
b) Either  
c) Neither
2. I didn't like ..... of these colors.  
  
a) either  
b) neither  
c) both

3. I can't decide between these gowns. I like them .....

- a) either
- b) neither
- c) both

4. .... Angelina nor Jennifer turned up today.

- a) Either
- b) Neither
- c) Both

5. You can take ..... the bus or the train.

- a) either
- b) neither
- c) both

6. I know you don't like me. I don't like you .....

- a) either
- b) neither
- c) both

7. .... John nor Peter could solve the problem.

- a) Either
- b) Neither
- c) Both

8. .... my parents enjoy riding.

- a) Either
- b) Neither
- c) Both

9. She has invited us .....

- a) either
- b) neither
- c) both

10. She ..... dances and sings.

- a) either
- b) neither
- c) both

### Answers

1. **Both** of them were ill so they stayed at home.
2. I didn't like **either** of these colors.
3. I can't decide between these gowns. I like them **both**.
4. **Neither** Angelina nor Jennifer turned up today.
5. You can take **either** the bus or the train.
6. I know you don't like me. I don't like you **either**.
7. **Neither** John nor Peter could solve the problem.
8. **Both** my parents enjoy riding.

9. She has invited us **both**.

10. She **both** dances and sings.

## Question tags worksheet

JANUARY 4, 2016 -  PDF

Add appropriate question tags and complete the following sentences.

1. The earth is not flat, .....?

a) is it

b) isn't it

2. She isn't coming, .....?

a) is she

b) isn't she

3. She called him yesterday, .....?

a) did she

b) didn't she

4. Smoking is injurious to health, .....?

a) is it

b) isn't it

5. You met him yesterday, .....?

a) did you

b) didn't you

6. Let us go for a walk, .....?

- a) should we
- b) let's we
- c) shall we

7. She will come, .....?

- a) will she
- b) won't she

8. Your parents know this, .....?

- a) do they
- b) don't they

9. Nobody knows the answer, .....?

- a) do they
- b) do nobody
- c) don't they

10. She passed the exam, .....?

- a) did she
- b) didn't she

### **Answers**

1. The earth is not flat, **is it?**

2. She isn't coming, **is she?**

3. She called him yesterday, **didn't she?**
4. Smoking is injurious to health, **isn't it?**
5. You met him yesterday, **didn't you?**
6. Let us go for a walk, **shall we?**
7. She will come, **won't she?**
8. Your parents know this, **don't they?**
9. Nobody knows the answer, **do they?**
10. She passed the exam, **didn't she?**

## **If clauses | Sentence completion exercise**

JANUARY 10, 2016 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences.

1. If you work hard .....
2. If you do not leave now, .....
3. If I had known her address, .....
4. I would buy a car if .....
5. If you had been there, .....
6. If he had applied for the post, .....

7. If we hadn't hired the taxi, .....
8. If he had studied well, .....
9. If he had asked me, .....
10. If the driver had been a little careful, .....
11. If I were the Prime Minister, .....
12. If I were you, .....
13. If I were a millionaire, .....
14. If I had seen her, .....

### Answers

1. If you work hard **you will succeed.**
2. If you do not leave now, **you will miss the last train.**
3. If I had known her address, **I would have written to her.**
4. **I would buy a car** if got my raise.
5. If you had been there, **you could have seen them.**
6. If he had applied for the post, **he would have got the job.**
7. If we hadn't hired the taxi, **we would have missed the train.**
8. If he had studied well, **he would have passed the test.**



9. If he had asked me, **I would have helped him.**
10. If the driver had been a little careful, **the accident could have been avoided.**
11. If I were the Prime Minister, **I would make education free.**
12. If I were you, **I wouldn't permit this.**
13. If I were a millionaire, **I would be very happy.**
14. If I had seen her, **I would have invited her to my party.**

## **Even, even if, even though, even so**

JANUARY 11, 2016 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences.

1. She eats anything. She eats ..... raw potatoes.

- a) even
- b) even if
- c) even so

2. I will do it ..... he forbids me.

- a) even if
- b) even though
- c) even so

3. .... I had a headache, I enjoyed the movie.

- a) Even if
- b) Even though
- c) Even so

4. He is rude to everybody. He is ..... rude to his parents and professors.

- a) even
- b) even though
- c) even if

5. Anybody can solve this puzzle. .... a child can do it.

- a) Even
- b) Even if
- c) Even so

6. She didn't ..... say 'thank-you'.

- a) even
- b) even if
- c) even though

7. She is selfish. .... I can't help liking her.

- a) Even if
- b) Even so
- c) Even though

8. I will do it ..... it kills me.

- a) even
- b) even if
- c) even so

9. He works every day, ..... on Sundays.

- a) even
- b) even so
- c) even if

### Answers

1. She eats anything. She eats **even** raw potatoes.
2. I will do it **even if** he forbids me.
3. **Even though** I had a headache, I enjoyed the movie.
4. He is rude to everybody. He is **even** rude to his parents and professors.
5. Anybody can solve this puzzle. **Even** a child can do it.
6. She didn't **even** say 'thank-you'.
7. She is selfish. **Even so** I can't help liking her.
8. I will do it **even if** it kills me.
9. He works every day, **even** on Sundays.

# More and more of

JANUARY 17, 2016 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences.

1. I need ..... time to finish this job.

- a) more
- b) more of

2. Could I have some ..... potatoes?

- a) more
- c) more of

3. .... students are having to borrow money these days.

- a) More
- b) More of

4. Two hundred years ago, much ..... India was covered with trees.

- a) more
- b) more of

5. He is ..... a fool than I thought.

- a) more
- b) more of

6. Three ..... the hostages have been rescued.

- a) more
- b) more of

7. Could I have some ..... that fried rice?

- a) more
- b) more of

8. I don't think any ..... them are interested.

- a) more
- b) more of

9. There is just one ..... hurdle to cross.

- a) more
- b) more of

10. I hate this city ..... every day.

- a) more
- b) more of

### Answers

1. I need **more** time to finish this job.
2. Could I have some **more** potatoes?
3. **More** students are having to borrow money these days.
4. Two hundred years ago, much **more of** India was covered with trees.

5. He is **more of** a fool than I thought.
6. Three **more of** the hostages have been rescued.
7. Could I have some **more of** that fried rice?
8. I don't think any **more of** them are interested.
9. There is just one **more** hurdle to cross.
10. I hate this city **more** every day.

## Articles worksheet

JANUARY 31, 2016 -  PDF

Here are the basic rules for the use of articles.

Use **a/an** before a singular countable noun. Note that a singular countable noun requires an article or another determiner before it.

- I saw a tiger behind the bushes. (NOT I saw tiger behind the bushes.)
- She met a stranger on the road. (NOT She met stranger on road.)
- I have always wanted to become an engineer. (NOT I have always wanted to become engineer.)

Plural and uncountable nouns can be used with or without an article or another determiner.

Use **a/an** when we use a noun for the first time. Use **the** when the same noun is used for the second time.

- A man was walking down a street with a dog. The dog ran after a cat.  
(NOT A dog ran after a cat.)

We use a/an when we wish to express surprise, horror, joy, disgust etc.

- What a lovely flower!
- What a silly fellow!
- What a nice guy!

We use the before a singular noun that is used to refer to a class of people, animals or things.

- The red panda is a cute little creature that resembles a teddy bear.
- The yak is found in Nepal and Ladakh.

We use the before an adjective that refers to a special class of people.

- The government should do something for the poor.
- Mother Teresa cared for the old and the infirm.

We use the before certain numbers like first and second.

- I still remember the first time I met you.

## Combine the following sentences

FEBRUARY 7, 2016 -  PDF

### Combine the following sentences.

1. They caught the thief. They handed him over to the police. (Use having)
2. The thief heard a noise. He ran away. (Use hearing)
3. He is very fat. He cannot walk fast. (Use too)

4. She was very tired. She could not stand up. (Use so that)
5. She left home at 4. She hasn't arrived yet. (Use although)
6. The tortoise was slow. He beat the hare in the race. (Use though)
7. You will not be able to meet him. You have to be there before 3 pm. (Use unless or if)
8. You may work very hard. Still you cannot please him. (Use however)
9. He is ill. He attends office regularly. (Use in spite of)
10. I bought some apples yesterday. They were good. (Use which)

## Answers

1. **Having caught** the thief, they handed him over to the police.
2. **Hearing** a noise, the thief ran away.
3. He is **too fat to walk** fast.
4. She was **so tired that** she could not stand up.
5. **Although** she left home at 4, she hasn't arrived yet.
6. **Though** the tortoise was slow, he beat the hare in the race.
7. **Unless** you reach there before 3 pm, you will not be able to meet him. / **If** you do not reach there before 3 pm, you will not be able to meet him.
8. **However** hard you may work, you cannot please him.



9. **In spite of** his illness, he attends office regularly.

10. The apples that I bought yesterday were good.

## Direct to indirect speech: General rules

FEBRUARY 9, 2016 -  PDF

When we report something using the exact words of the speaker, we use **direct speech**. When we report something in our own words, we use **indirect speech**.

Direct speech: The boy said, 'I'm happy with my results.'

Indirect speech: The boy said that he **was happy** with his results.

## General rules for changing direct speech into indirect speech

Omit all inverted commas or quotation marks. End the sentence with a full stop.

If the verb inside the inverted commas/quotation marks is in the present tense, change it into the corresponding past tense. If it is in the simple past tense, change it into the past perfect tense.

Direct speech: The girl said, 'I like singing.'

Indirect speech: The girl said that she liked singing.

Direct speech: Rahul said, 'I will have to reach home by 8.30.'

Indirect speech: Rahul said that he **would have** to reach home by 8.30.

Direct speech: Alina said, 'I **met** James yesterday.'

Indirect speech: Alina said that she **had met** James yesterday.

When the verb inside the quotation marks expresses a universal truth, we do not normally change it into the past tense.

He said, 'All people have equal rights.'

He said that all people **have** equal rights. (More natural than 'He said that all people had equal rights.')

Use pronouns appropriately.

Study the examples given below.

Direct speech: The boy told the girl, '**I told you that we** were not going on a holiday.'

Indirect speech: The boy told the girl that **he had told her that they** were not going on a holiday.

## Notes

When the reporting verb is in a present or future tense, we do not change the tense of the verb inside the quotation marks.

Direct speech: She says, 'I will come.'

Indirect speech: She **says that she will come**.

## Reporting different kinds of sentences

FEBRUARY 9, 2016 -  PDF

### Reporting statements

Put 'that' before the reported statement.

Use the reporting verb 'said' or 'told'. Note that the verb 'told' should be followed by an object. The verb 'said' cannot be followed by an object.

Direct speech: Rohan said, 'I like this music.'

Indirect speech: Rohan said that he liked that music.

Direct speech: Alice said, 'James, I want you to attend the function.'

Indirect speech: Alice told James that she wanted him to attend the function.

(NOT Alice said James...)

## Reporting WH-questions

Omit the question mark.

Put the subject of the question before the verb.

Use a reporting verb like **asked, requested, or wanted to know**.

Put an object after the reporting verb.

Direct speech: 'What are you doing?' asked his father.

Indirect speech: His father asked him what he was doing. (NOT His father asked him what was he doing.)

## Reporting Yes-No questions

Omit the question mark.

Introduce the reported question with whether or if.

Put the subject of the Yes-No question before the verb.

Use the reporting verb **asked**.

Direct speech: 'Are you happy?' he asked her.

Indirect speech: He asked her if she was happy.

## Reporting imperative sentences

Put 'to' before the reported command or request.

Use a reporting verb like **asked, told, ordered, requested, urged, advised or begged.**

'Alice, bring me a chair,' said her father.

Alice's father asked her to bring him a chair.

## Can, could, may, might

FEBRUARY 11, 2016 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences.

1. I ..... swim across the river. (can / may)
2. .... you lift this box? (can / may / either could be used here)
3. .... I come in? (can / may / either could be used here)
4. .... I borrow your bicycle? (can / may / either could be used here)
5. It ..... rain in the evening. (can / may / either could be used here)
6. .... this be true? (can / may / either could be used here)
7. It ..... not be true. (can / may / either could be used here)
8. .... you find love and happiness! (can / may / either could be used here)
9. I ..... swim across the river when I was young. (might / could / either could be used here)
10. She said that she ..... come. (may / might / either could be used here)

## Answers

1. I **can** swim across the river.
2. **Can** you lift this box?
3. **Can / May** I come in?
4. **Can / May** I borrow your bicycle?
5. It **may** rain in the evening.
6. **Can** this be true?
7. It **cannot** be true.
8. **May** you find love and happiness!
9. I **could** swim across the river when I was young.
10. She said that she **might** come.

## Will, would, shall, should

FEBRUARY 10, 2016 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences.

1. You ..... see that I am right. (will / shall / would / should)
2. .... I open the door? (shall / will / would)
3. Which pen ..... I buy? (shall / should / either could be used here)

4. He ..... talk about nothing but movies. (will / shall)
5. She ..... sit for hours listening to the radio. (will / shall)
6. That ..... be the postman, I think. (will / shall / either could be used here)
7. .... you have tea? (Will / Shall / either could be used here)
8. .... you lend me your scooter? (Will / Shall / either could be used here)
9. She ..... sit for hours talking to herself. (would / should / either could be used here)
10. You ..... keep your promise. (should / would / either could be used here)

## Answers

1. You **will** see that I am right.
2. **Shall** I open the door?
3. Which pen **shall / should** I buy?
4. He **will** talk about nothing but movies.
5. She **will** sit for hours listening to the radio.
6. That **will** be the postman, I think.
7. **Will** you have tea?

8. **Will** you lend me your scooter?
9. She **would** sit for hours talking to herself.
10. You **should** keep your promise.

## Simple past or past participle

FEBRUARY 11, 2016 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences using the simple past or past participle form of the verb.

1. It has been years since I last ..... him. (see / saw / seen)
2. She has ..... better days. (see / saw / seen)
3. Marathi is ..... in the Deccan. (speak / spoke / spoken)
4. The inscription has ..... away in several places. (wear / wore / worn)
5. The country is ..... by factions. (tear / tore / torn)
6. In a fit of rage, she ..... up the letter. (tear / tore / torn)
7. He ..... for his life. (run / ran)
8. You look as if you ..... all the way home. (run / ran)
9. We could not have ..... a better day for the drive. (chose / choose / chosen)
10. The old beggar was ..... by a mad dog. (bit / bitten)

## Answers

1. It has been years since I last **saw** him.
2. She has seen **better** days.
3. Marathi is **spoken** in the Deccan.
4. The inscription has **worn** away in several places.
5. The country is **torn** by factions.
6. In a fit of rage, she **tore** up the letter.
7. He **ran** for his life.
8. You look as if you **ran** all the way home.
9. We could not have chosen a better day for the drive.
10. The old beggar was **bitten** by a mad dog.

## Subject verb agreement

FEBRUARY 12, 2016 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences using an appropriate verb form.

1. Either he or I ..... mistaken.

- a) am
- b) are
- c) is



2. Either the boy or his parents ..... erred.

- a) has
- b) have

3. My parents and I ..... lived here for five years.

- a) has
- b) have

4. The council ..... elected its President.

- a) has
- b) have

5. A number of boys ..... caught cheating on the exam.

- a) were
- b) was

6. A number of interesting suggestions ..... been made.

- a) have
- b) has

7. The news ..... true.

- a) is
- b) are

8. Each of the boys ..... given a prize.

a) was

b) were

9. The chief, as well as his men, ..... massacred.

a) was

b) were

10. John, as well as James, ..... praise.

a) deserve

b) deserves

## Answers

1. Either he or I **am** mistaken.

2. Either the boy or his parents **have** erred.

3. My parents and I **have** lived here for five years.

4. The council **has** elected its President.

5. A number of boys **were** caught cheating on the exam.

6. A number of interesting suggestions **have** been made.

7. The news **is** true.

8. Each of the boys **was** given a prize.

9. The chief, as well as his men, **was** massacred.

10. John, as well as James, **deserves** praise.

## Intransitive verbs as transitive verbs

FEBRUARY 14, 2016 -  PDF

When an intransitive verb is used in a causative sense, it becomes transitive.

Study the examples given below.

The horse **walks**. (Intransitive)

The man **walks** the horse. (Transitive – here the man causes the horse to walk.)

Birds **fly**. (Intransitive)

The boys **fly** their kites. (Transitive)

The spellings of certain common verbs indicate whether they are transitive or intransitive.

Many trees **fell** in the storm. (Intransitive)

Woodcutters **felled** the trees. (Transitive)

**Lie** still. (Intransitive)

**Lay** the basket on the table. (Transitive)

**Rise** early with the lark. (Intransitive)

**Raise** your hands. (= Cause your hands to rise.)

**Sit** here.

**Set** the lamp on the table.

Some intransitive verbs become transitive when a preposition is added to them.

His friends **laughed at** him. (Laugh is an intransitive verb and does not take any object. Laugh at is a transitive verb and takes the object 'him'.)

He soon **ran through** his fortune. (The verb run is intransitive whereas run through is transitive. To run through one's fortune is to use it rapidly.)

Please **look into** the matter carefully.

I **wish for** nothing.

Sometimes the preposition is prefixed to the verb.

He **overcame** his enemy. (Come is an intransitive verb, but overcome is transitive.)

He bravely **withstood** the attack. (Stand is an intransitive verb, but withstand is transitive.)

## Non-finites exercise

FEBRUARY 22, 2016 -  PDF

Rewrite the following sentences by changing the participle into a finite verb.

1. Having learnt his lesson, he went out to play cricket.
2. Walking along the street one day, I saw a dead cobra.
3. Leaving the forest we advanced into the open plain.

4. Driven out of his country, he sought asylum in a foreign land.
5. It being a very hot day, I remained in my tent.
6. A gipsy, wandering across the meadows, found the child.
7. I once saw a man walking on a rope.
8. Not knowing my way, I asked a policeman.
9. Hearing the noise, I woke up.
10. Being paralytic, he could not walk.

### **Answers**

1. **After he learnt his lesson**, he went out to play cricket.
2. **While I was walking along the street one day**, I saw a dead cobra.
3. **We left the forest** and advanced into the open plain.
4. **As he was driven out of his country**, he sought asylum in a foreign land.
5. **As it was a very hot day**, I remained in my tent.
6. A gipsy found the child **while he was wandering across the meadows**.
7. I once saw a man **who was walking on a rope**.
8. **As I did not know my way**, I asked a policeman.
9. **When I heard the noise**, I woke up.

10. **As he was paralytic**, he could not walk.

## Uses of the infinitive

FEBRUARY 24, 2016 -  PDF

**The infinitive** can be used as a noun. As a noun it can be the subject or object of the verb.

- To find fault is easy. (Here the infinitive 'to find' is the subject of the verb is.)
- To err is human. (Here the infinitive 'to err' is the subject of the verb is.)
- He likes to play cards. (Here the infinitive 'to play' serves as the object of the verb likes.)
- I don't want to go. (Here the infinitive 'to go' serves as the object of the verb want.)

The infinitive can also be the complement of a verb.

- Her greatest pleasure is to sing. (Here the infinitive 'to sing' is the complement of the verb is.)

The infinitive can also be the object of a preposition.

- The speaker is about to begin. (Here the infinitive 'to begin' is the object of the preposition about.)

The infinitive can also be used to qualify a verb.

- He called to see my brother.
- We eat to live.
- I came to bury Caesar.

The infinitive can be used to qualify an adjective.

- Figs are good to eat.
- The boys are anxious to learn.
- He is too ill to do any work.

The infinitive can be used to qualify a noun.

- This is not the time to play.
- Here is a house to let.

The infinitive can be used to qualify a sentence.

- To tell the truth, I don't have any interest in politics.

## Reported speech worksheet

FEBRUARY 25, 2016 -  PDF

Sentences are given in direct speech. Change them into indirect speech.

1. The teacher said to the boys, 'Have you done your homework?'
2. The little girl asked the man, 'Will you help me?'
3. Janaki said, 'I have been reading this book.'
4. Mother said to the daughter, 'Go and change your dress.'
5. Susie said, 'I had read this book before I gave it to you.'
6. Mike said, 'I will bring my piano.'
7. The officer told the clerk, 'Bring me that file.'
8. Jane asked, 'Have you read that book?'

9. Malathi asked, 'Where is your watch?'
10. Sophia said, 'I watched this movie last week.'
11. Mother asked, 'What is the matter?'
12. Shyam said, 'I can solve this problem.'

### **Answers**

1. The teacher **asked the boys if they had done their homework.**
2. The little girl **asked the man if he would help her.**
3. Janaki said **that she had been reading that book.**
4. Mother **told the daughter to go and change her dresses.**
5. Susie said that **she had read that book before she gave it to me.**
6. Mike said **that he would bring his piano.**
7. The officer **told the clerk to bring him that file.**
8. Jane asked **if I had read that book.**
9. Malathi asked **where my watch was.**
10. Sophia said that **she had watched that movie the previous week.**
11. Mother asked **what the matter was.**
12. Shyam said **that he could solve that problem.**



# Infinitives worksheet

FEBRUARY 26, 2016 -  PDF

Combine the following sentences using an infinitive.

1. Napoleon was one of the greatest generals who ever lived. He is universally acknowledged to be so.
2. He didn't have even a penny with him. He could not buy a loaf of bread.
3. He went to Amritsar. He wanted to visit the Golden Temple.
4. The robber took out a knife. He intended to frighten the traveler.
5. I speak the truth. I am not afraid of it.
6. He wants to earn his livelihood. He works hard for that reason.
7. Everyone should do their duty. The nation expects this.
8. She helps the poor. She is anxious to relieve them of their sufferings.
9. He was desirous of impressing his host. He conducted himself rather well.
10. The young man has squandered away his wealth. He must have been very foolish.

## Answers

1. Napoleon is universally acknowledged **to have been one of the greatest generals who ever lived.**
2. He didn't have even a penny with him **to buy a loaf of bread.**

3. He went to Amritsar **to visit the Golden Temple.**
4. The robber took out a knife **to frighten the traveler.**
5. I am not afraid **to speak the truth.**
6. He works hard **to earn his livelihood.**
7. The nation expects everyone **to do their duty.**
8. She helps the poor **to relieve them of their sufferings.**
9. He conducted himself rather well **to impress his host.**
10. The young man must have been very foolish **to squander away his wealth.**

## Since and for worksheet

FEBRUARY 29, 2016 -  PDF

**Complete the following sentences using for and since.**

1. I have been waiting for the guests ..... morning.

a) since

b) for

2. He has been suffering from fever ..... Monday.

a) for

b) since

3. It has been raining heavily ..... last night.

- a) for
- b) since

4. My father has been serving in the army ..... 20 years.

- a) for
- b) since

5. He has not been attending the school ..... last Monday.

- a) since
- b) for

6. I have been teaching in this college ..... 10 years.

- a) for
- b) since

7. The masons have been building this house ..... last March.

- a) for
- b) since

8. Man has been struggling against the forces of nature ..... times immemorial.

- a) since
- b) for

9. A cold breeze has been blowing ..... yesterday.

- a) since
- b) for

10. He has been doing his homework ..... .. 4 o'clock.

a) since

b) for

### Answers

1. I have been waiting for the guests **since** morning.

2. He has been suffering from fever **since** Monday.

3. It has been raining heavily **since** last night.

4. My father has been serving in the army **for** 20 years.

5. He has not been attending the school **since** last Monday.

6. I have been teaching in this college **for** 10 years.

7. The masons have been building this house **since** last March.

8. Man has been struggling against the forces of nature **since** times immemorial.

9. A cold breeze has been blowing **since** yesterday.

10. He has been doing his homework **since** 4 o'clock.

## A Snappy Guide to Differentiating “Affect” and “Effect”

MARCH 1, 2016 -  PDF

Do you often catch yourself in a situation wherein you do not know whether to use the word “affect” or “effect” in a sentence?

Well, you are not alone.

The affect-effect dilemma is a common grammatical issue plaguing many people, even writers and professionals.

Here is a quick guide you can bookmark in case you experience such confusion again or you simply need to review the proper use of both words.

In that case, the verb “**affect**” denotes the act of changing or influencing something while the noun “**effect**” is defined as something that occurs due to a cause. An effect is usually the result of something that has been affected.

Here’s a quick informal technique for you: If it is not easy for you to remember that the word “affect” is most commonly used as a verb while “effect” is usually used as a noun, then label this confusion as “aven.” It sounds like amen. The “av” in aven should make you recall affect as verb and the “en” is effect as noun.

Affect as Verb	Effect as Noun
The hurricane affected several areas including key cities in the U.S.	The drastic effect of the hurricane’s destruction left U.S. politicians scrambling for immediate rehabilitation plans.

Climate change has greatly affected the world's approach towards energy production.	The effect of climate change is evident in the increase of global temperature.
The proliferation of social media has dramatically affected the youth's approach towards building relationships with other people.	Does this medicine have any side effect?

## *The other side of “affect” and “effect”*

There are less known uses for both these words.

“Effect” can sometimes used as a verb to express “**to bring about.**”

### **Examples:**

- **Incorrect:** The clamor for renewable energy are pressuring legislators to **affect** change through a new energy bill.
- **Correct:** American athletes use their money and influence to **effect** change in the behaviour of youth, particularly the less privileged kids.
- **Incorrect:** We need unity as a nation because politicians alone cannot **affect** progress in our country.
- **Correct:** It's the millennials' turn now to **effect** the social changes that this country needs.

On the other hand, “affect” has a secondary, less known use as a verb which indicates “**to put on a false show of.**”

**Examples:**

- Michelle **affected** surprise when they gave her the gift she was expecting.
- He **affected** remorse over the death of his long-time enemy.

*Trickier uses*

“Affect” can also be used as a noun in a sentence **to describe facial expression**.

**Examples:**

- Dr. Cooper took the news of her father’s passing with little **affect**.
- Don’t give me that **affect** when I am trying to discipline you.

The plural form “effects” can also be used **to refer to personal belongings**.

**Examples:**

- You must leave your personal **effects** before entering a highly secured correctional facility.
- When they saw the zombies, they forgot to get their **effects** and ran fast.

*Still not an affect-effect wizard?*

Getting the accurate uses of affect and effect doesn’t start with simply knowing each word can be used in different forms.

Instead, start with getting to know the purpose of your sentence.

What do you want to say or emphasize to your readers? Is it about how the weather changed your mood (focusing on the action = it affected your mood) or to describe the impact right away of the weather on your mood (describing the state of your mood = the effect of weather)?

Try to read it aloud or to a friend. Sometimes, instinct will tell you that something doesn't sound right. For example, "I left my personal affects in the bathroom." "Personal affects" sounds like some feelings were left in the bathroom. That might work for very deep poets but the accurate term is "personal effects."

Get help. If a mentor is not available, you can check your text online. There's a link [in our tools section](#).

If you want to master "affect" and "effect" by heart, then practice. I've found two affect/effect writing exercises that you can do: [this one](#) and [this one](#).

Use the following table as a quick guide. Copy, print it out, and keep it handy.

	Affect	Effect
<b>Most common form used</b>	Verb – to change or influence something.  Ex. Smoking cigarettes could adversely affect your lungs.	Noun – something that occurs due to a cause.  Ex. The effect of cigarette smoking on our lungs is undesirable.
<b>Other less common uses</b>	Verb – to put on a false show of.  Ex. She affected surprise towards the news because she has already been	Verb – to bring about.  Ex. We need to effect change ourselves in order to inspire the youth to



informed earlier.	follow suit.
Noun – description of a facial expression. Ex. Schizophrenia causes young men to have a flat affect.	Noun – plural form; personal belongings. Ex. Some of his personal effects were on display during the interment.

So don't let tricky grammar rules affect your confidence because the effect of continuous learning and practice can do wonders.

## Comparatives worksheet

MARCH 3, 2016 -  PDF

Make meaningful sentences using the hints given in the brackets. An example is given below.

Silver is ..... gold. (precious)

Silver is not as precious as gold.

### Exercise

1. Mount Everest is ..... than K2. (high)

2. The sun is ..... than the moon. (hot)

3. The moon is ..... the sun. (hot)

4. Iron is ..... wood. (heavy)

5. Wood is ..... iron. (heavy)
6. Dogs are ..... cats. (faithful)
7. Cats are ..... dogs. (faithful)
8. The sparrow is ..... the crow. (small)
9. The crow is ..... the sparrow. (small)
10. The elephant is ..... of the land animals. (big)
11. Samuel ..... boy in the class. (smart)

### Answers

1. Mount Everest is **higher than** K2.
2. The sun is **hotter than** the moon.
3. The moon is **not as hot as** the sun.
4. Iron is **heavier than** wood.
5. Wood **is not as** heavy as iron.
6. Dogs are **more faithful than** cats.
7. Cats are not **as faithful as** dogs. / Cats are **less faithful** than dogs.
8. The sparrow is **smaller** than the crow.
9. The crow is not **as small as** the sparrow.

10. The elephant is **the biggest** of the land animals.

11. Samuel is **smarter than** any other boy in the class. / Samuel is **the smartest boy** in the class.

Please share this post if you like it, or comment below if you have questions.

## Gap fills worksheet

MARCH 4, 2016 -  PDF

There are blank spaces in the given passage. Fill in the blanks with an appropriate verb form.

Mrs. Samuel ..... (have) a busy day. She ..... (get) up early in the morning and ..... (be) ready by 8 am. First, she ..... (drive) her husband to his office. Then she ..... (come) home, ..... (pick) up her kids and ..... (drop) them at their school. On her way back from school, she ..... (stop) at the gymnasium. She ..... (work) out for about 45 minutes. She then ..... (go) to the market and ..... (buy) some vegetables. Then she ..... (return) home. After reaching home, she ..... (take) a bath. Then she ..... (read) the newspaper for about 1 hour. Afterwards, she ..... (start) cooking lunch. She ..... (have) her lunch at 1.30 and then she ..... (take) a short nap.

## Answers

Mrs. Samuel **had** a busy day. She **got** up early in the morning and **was** ready by 8 am. First, she **drove** her husband to his office. Then she **came** home, **picked** up her kids and **dropped** them at their school. On her way back from school, she **stopped** at the gymnasium. She **worked** out for about 45 minutes. She then **went** to the market and **bought** some vegetables.

Then she **returned** home. After reaching home, she **took** a bath. Then she **read** the newspaper for about 1 hour. Afterwards, she **started** cooking lunch. She **had** her lunch at 1.30 and then she **took** a short nap.

## Emphatic and reflexive pronouns

MARCH 5, 2016 -  PDF

Read the following sentences and state whether the pronouns are emphatic or reflexive.

1. Who painted this portrait? I did it myself.
2. I myself went to the post office to post the letter.
3. The captain himself led the attack.
4. We did it ourselves.
5. Don't touch that wire. You will hurt yourself.
6. I will give myself five days to finish the job.
7. The spy shot himself.
8. Jane herself told me that she was quitting the dance class.
9. Believe me. I myself heard him.
10. What is the point in asking them? They themselves don't know anything.
11. She made herself a cup of tea.

## Answers

1. Who painted this portrait? I did it myself. (myself – emphatic)
2. I myself went to the post office to post the letter. (myself – emphatic)
3. The captain himself led the attack. (himself – emphatic)
4. We did it ourselves. (ourselves – emphatic)
5. Don't touch that wire. You will hurt yourself. (yourself – reflexive)
6. I will give myself five days to finish the job. (myself – reflexive)
7. The spy shot himself. (himself – reflexive)
8. Jane herself told me that she was quitting the dance class. (herself – emphatic)
9. Believe me. I myself heard him. (myself – emphatic)
10. What is the point in asking them? They themselves don't know anything. (themselves – emphatic)
11. She made herself a cup of tea. (herself – emphatic)

## Indicating the future

MARCH 7, 2016 -  PDF

Read the following sentences.

'Jack, can you post this letter?'

'Yes, Mummy, I will post it on my way to school. '

‘And Jack you said something about Alice.’

‘Yes, she will be here in the evening.’

In English, there are several ways to indicate the future. We can, for example, use **will or shall**. Note that **shall** is becoming much less common in American English. It is still used in British English with first person pronouns (I and we).

Compare:

- I shall / will finish this job tomorrow. (British)
- I will finish this job tomorrow. (American)
- We will / shall meet next week. (British)
- We will meet next week. (American)

With second and third person subjects, will is used in both British and American English to indicate future.

- Ravi will be here in the afternoon.
- She will write her exam tomorrow.
- He will leave on Monday.
- He will tell you what to do.
- You will find him in the playground.
- They will make fun of you.
- You will fall ill if you eat too much.
- In speech, the form 'll is used. In this case, the distinction between shall and will is lost.
- I'll invite them to my party. (This can be 'I will...' or 'I shall...')

The negative form of shall is shall not or shan't. The negative form of will is will not or won't.

- I shan't go.
- He won't listen to me.

# Such and such a

MARCH 10, 2016 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences using such and such a.

1. You talk ..... nonsense.

- a) such
- b) such a
- c) Either could be used here

2. It took ..... long time to finish the job.

- a) such
- b) such a
- c) Either could be used here

3. I had ..... difficulty finding accommodation in Beijing.

- a) such
- b) such a

4. You are ..... fool.

- a) such
- b) such a
- c) Either could be used here

5. It was ..... difficult test that I couldn't answer most of the questions.

- a) such
- b) such a
- c) Either could be used here

6. We are having ..... terrible weather at the moment.

- a) such
- b) such a
- c) Either could be used here

7. I won't agree with any ..... plan.

- a) such
- b) such a
- c) Either could be used here

8. I won't agree with ..... plan.

- a) such
- b) such a
- c) Either could be used here

9. I had ..... terrible experience yesterday.

- a) such
- b) such a
- c) Either could be used here

10. She is ..... lovely girl.

- a) such
- b) such a
- c) Either could be used here

## *Answers*

1. You talk **such** nonsense.



2. It took **such a** long time to finish the job.
3. I had **such** difficulty finding accommodation in Beijing.
4. You are **such a** fool.
5. It was **such a** difficult test that I couldn't answer most of the questions.
6. We are having **such** terrible weather at the moment.
7. I won't agree with any **such** plan.
8. I won't agree with **such a** plan.
9. I had **such a** terrible experience yesterday.
10. She is **such a** lovely girl.

## Enough as an adjective and an adverb

MARCH 2, 2016 -  PDF

**Enough** can be used as an adjective and an adverb. As an adjective, enough goes before the noun it modifies. As an adverb, enough goes after the adjective or adverb it modifies.

1. Have you bought .....?

- a) apples enough
- b) enough apples

2. The water is .....

a) hot enough

b) enough hot

3. She is ..... to understand things better.

a) enough old

b) old enough

4. We haven't got .....

a) volunteers enough

b) enough volunteers

5. She hasn't got .....

a) experience enough

b) enough experience

6. I haven't got .....

a) money enough

b) enough money

7. He is ..... to buy a luxury car.

a) enough rich

b) rich enough

8. He is ..... to solve this puzzle.

a) enough clever

b) clever enough

9. The mangoes are ..... to be eaten.

a) enough ripe

b) ripe enough

10. He hasn't got .....

a) enough clothes

b) clothes enough

### Answers

1. Have you bought **enough apples**?

2. The water is **hot enough**.

3. She is **old enough** to understand things better.

4. We haven't got **enough volunteers**.

5. She hasn't got **enough experience**.

6. I haven't got **enough money**.

7. He is **rich enough** to buy a luxury car.

8. He is **clever enough** to solve this puzzle.

9. The mangoes are **ripe enough** to be eaten.

10. He hasn't got **enough clothes**.

# Noun phrases worksheet

MARCH 11, 2016 -  PDF

Identify the noun phrases in the following sentences.

## Hints

A noun phrase serves the same purpose as a noun. That means it can be the subject or object of the verb. It can also be the object of a preposition.

1. He wished to talk to his manager.
2. The wicked man loves getting poor people into trouble.
3. The poor man wanted to pay back every penny he owed.
4. He hates having to punish his servants.
5. Horses prefer living in dark stables.
6. I will never do such a thing.
7. Have you ever tried to climb a tree?
8. He refused to answer my question.
9. He promised to get me something.
10. Why do you want to meet him?
11. He denied taking the money.
12. Your doing such a thing surprises me.

## Answers

Noun phrases are underlined in the following sentences.

1. He wished to talk to his manager.
2. The wicked man loves getting poor people into trouble.
3. The poor man wanted to pay back every penny he owed.
4. He hates having to punish his servants.
5. Horses prefer living in dark stables.
6. I will never do such a thing.
7. Have you ever tried to climb a tree?
8. He refused to answer my question.
9. He promised to get me something.
10. Why do you want to meet him?
11. He denied taking the money.
12. Your doing such a thing surprises me.

## Common idioms

MARCH 13, 2016 -  PDF

Here are some common idiomatic expressions.

**Give someone the benefit of doubt**

To give someone the benefit of doubt is to believe something good about them, rather than something bad when you have the possibility of doing either.

- I really feel that we should give him the benefit of doubt.

**Give someone the creeps**

If something gives you the creeps, it induces the feeling of fear or revulsion in you.

- The eels gave me the creeps.

**Give someone the cold shoulder**

To give someone the cold shoulder is to treat them in an unfriendly way.

- Susie was upset with Michael and gave him the cold shoulder when she met him at the party.

**Give the game away**

To give the game away is to spoil the surprise or joke.

- I wanted to give my parents a special gift on their wedding anniversary, but my sister unwittingly gave the game away.

**Give someone the green light**

To give someone the green light is to give them the permission to do something.

- My parents have given me the green light to join the local soccer team.

## Give someone the evil eye

To give someone the evil eye is to look at them in an angry or unpleasant way.

- My sister gave me the evil eye when I told our parents that she had let the cat in.

## Despite, in spite of, however, although

MARCH 14, 2016 -  PDF

Complete the following sentences using an appropriate conjunction or preposition.

1. We went out ..... the rain.

- a) in spite of
- b) in spite
- c) despite of

2. She went on working ..... it was raining.

- a) although
- b) despite
- c) in spite of

3. She went to work ..... the fact that it was a holiday.

- a) despite
- b) in spite of
- c) Either could be used here

4. .... she didn't like the cutlet, I enjoyed it very much.

- a) Although
- b) Despite
- c) However

5. I had invited him; ....., he didn't come.

- a) although
- b) despite
- c) however

6. It was fun, ..... dangerous.

- a) though
- b) however
- c) in spite of

7. I was late; ..... everybody else was on time.

- a) although
- b) however
- c) despite

8. .... I was late, everybody else was on time.

- a) Although
- b) However
- c) Though

9. They managed to do it, ..... I was not there.

- a) although
- b) however
- c) despite



10. I went ..... I had not been invited.

- a) although
- b) however
- c) Either could be used here

## Answers

1. We went out **in spite of** the rain.
2. She went on working **although** it was raining.
3. She went to work **in spite of** the fact that it was a holiday.
4. **Although** she didn't like the cutlet, I enjoyed it very much.
5. I had invited him; **however**, he didn't come.
6. It was fun, **though** dangerous.
7. I was late; **however** everybody else was on time.
8. **Although** I was late, everybody else was on time.
9. They managed to do it, **although** I was not there.
10. I went **although** I had not been invited.

## Phrases worksheet

MARCH 18, 2016 -  PDF

Identify the phrases in the following sentences and state their kind.

1. He was a man of great wealth.
2. The principal was an old man of friendly disposition.
3. The workers belonged to a tribe dwelling in the hills.
4. There I met a boy with red hair.
5. Only a man with plenty of money can buy a car of such beauty and power.
6. He was a young man of great promise.
7. He wore a turban made of gold.
8. He ran with great speed.
9. You can buy it in all places.
10. He replied in a very rude manner.
11. How does he live without any worries?

### Answers

1. He was a man **of great wealth**. (adjective phrase)
2. The principal was an old man **of friendly disposition**. (adjective phrase)
3. The workers belonged to a tribe dwelling **in the hills**. (adjective phrase)
4. There I met a boy **with red hair**. (adjective phrase)

5. Only a man **with plenty of money** can buy a car **of such beauty and power**.

(adjective phrases)

6. He was a young man **of great promise**. (adjective phrase)

7. He wore a turban **made of gold**. (adjective phrase)

8. He ran **with great speed**. (adverb phrase)

9. You can buy it **in all places**. (adverb phrase)

10. He replied **in a very rude manner**. (adverb phrase)

11. How does he live **without any worries**? (adverb phrase)

## Subordinating conjunctions

MARCH 19, 2016 -  PDF

**A conjunction** which connects a dependent clause to an independent clause is called a subordinating conjunction.

The common subordinating conjunctions are **when, while, where, though, although, till, until, before, after, if, unless, as, since, because and that**.

When it started raining they took shelter under a tree.

I was working while you were playing.

Put it where you can find it later.

Though he is rich, he is not arrogant.

Although I had invited him, he didn't turn up.

Will you wait here till I return?

I waited until 10 o'clock and then I went home.

He always feeds the dogs before he goes to work.

He went to the US after he finished his studies.

If it rains, the match will be cancelled.

Unless you achieve your targets, you will not be promoted.

As he was not there, I couldn't meet him.

Since he has apologized, we will not take any further actions against him.

My parents were happy because I had won the first prize.

I am glad that you have passed the test.

There are different kinds of subordinating conjunctions. They are:

Subordinating conjunction of time: *when, while, before, after, till, since*

Subordinating conjunction of place: *where, wherever*

Subordinating conjunction of cause or reason: *because, since, as*

Subordinating conjunction of condition: *if, unless*

Subordinating conjunction of concession: *though, although*

Subordinating conjunction of result or consequence: **so...that, that**

Subordinating conjunction of purpose: *that, lest*

Subordinating conjunction of comparison: *than*

## Compound conjunctions

Some compound expressions are used as conjunctions. These are called compound conjunctions. Common examples are given below.

### **As well as**

The doctor as well as his wife attended the party.

The manager as well as the secretary has signed the papers.

### **As soon as**

The students began to talk as soon as the teacher left the classroom.

The passengers rushed to board the train as soon as it arrived.

### **As if and as though**

Both of these expressions have the same use.

She started laughing as if she was insane. (She is not insane)

He speaks as if he is rich. (He may be rich.)

They talked as if they were scholars.

Note that the present tense is used here to suggest that the comparison is true. A past tense, on the other hand, is used in unreal comparisons.

### **Even if**

He will play even if he is unwell.

I cannot admit you even if you have a ticket.

### **In order that**

They climbed up a tree in order that they would get a better view of the procession.

**Provided that**

You can borrow my car provided that you return it before midnight.

**So that**

He started early so that he would reach early.

**On condition that**

I will lend you my camera on condition that you return it tomorrow.

## **General rules regarding prepositions**

MARCH 23, 2016 -  PDF

Use 'in' for countries and big towns.

- She was born in New Zealand.
- I live in Mumbai.

Use 'at' for addresses.

- Are you still at that address?
- We live at D 23, MG Road.

Use 'in' for position inside a three dimensional space.

- The cat is in the kitchen.

Use 'on' for position on the surface of something.

- There is something on the roof.
- Put the books on the table.

Use 'to' and 'into' to show direction.

- He went to work.
- The child fell into the well.

Use 'till' to indicate time.

- I waited till 6 o'clock.

Use 'since' to indicate the starting point of something.

- I have been waiting since morning.

Use 'for' to indicate duration.

- It rained for two hours.
- We have been living in this city for three years.

Use 'from' to indicate the source.

- She comes from a small town.

Use 'to' to indicate the destination.

- He went to America.

Use 'between' to indicate position between two or more clearly defined people or objects.

- The child sat between his father and parents.

Use 'among' to indicate position among more than two people or objects.

- She sat among the children.

Use 'with' to indicate the instrument and 'by' to indicate the agent.

- He killed the spider with a stone.
- The spider was killed by the boy.

Use 'beside' to mean 'by the side of'.

- The boy sat beside his mother.