

# Answers

for

# Grammar Workbook

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This book contains information about grammar as well as model sentences which can be paraphrased for use in IELTS writing task 2. The ideas expressed in the model sentences are not intended to influence any person's personal opinions and do not represent the opinions of the author.

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## Noun Phrases & Gerund Phrases: Answers

1

- (a) the subtlest nuances
- (b) an infinite number of solutions
- (c) children raised by a single parent
- (d) more government-funded social programmes
- (e) the dramatic rise in personal debt
- (f) the shift from print to online media
- (g) the study of children's artwork
- (h) a proper balance of school subjects
- (i) the use of performance-enhancing substances
- (j) the world's obsession with fast food

2

- 1 **The shift from print to online media** has forced traditional media to reconsider who decides which topics matter and how extensively these topics should be covered.
- 2 **Children raised by a single parent** have often been regarded as different from other children.
- 3 **The world's obsession with fast food** is damaging children's health as well as the quality of their lives.
- 4 **A proper balance of school subjects** stimulates the development of a child's mental and physical abilities.
- 5 There are **an infinite number of solutions** to the problem of poverty.
- 6 **More government-funded social programmes** are needed to help single-parent families with childcare.
- 7 The study of children's artwork can provide psychologists with invaluable insights into the working of the mind.
- 8 A baby can perceive **the subtlest nuances** in its mother's voice.
- 9 **The use of performance-enhancing substances** has become widespread among both professional and amateur athletes.
- 10 **The dramatic rise in personal debt** has been caused by the increasingly easy availability of credit cards.

3

- 1 The phenomenal speed at which a computer can process huge amounts of raw data **gives** it the edge over the human brain.
- 2 Children who are raised with both a mother and a father **grow** into more balanced individuals.
- 3 One of the many benefits citizens of all democratic countries enjoy **is** the freedom to elect their own representatives.
- 4 The vast majority of parents who have a young child **say** that a stay-at-home parent is better able to give children the attention and affection they need.
- 5 Many companies which produce hazardous waste **do not dispose of** it properly.
- 6 A manager who cannot motivate employees **is** unlikely to generate new ideas.
- 7 The number of students who opt for IT courses **is** increasing.
- 8 A huge number of college graduates **find** it difficult to get a job that matches their qualifications.
- 9 One of the best ways to deal with too many responsibilities **is** to delegate some tasks to other people.
- 10 An applicant with good communication skills **makes** a better impression in a job interview.

4

- 1 Increasing the number of online news outlets is one way to enable readers to participate in the production of news and engage more actively with it.
- 2 Making dinner with fresh ingredients is a challenge for parents who have a nine-to-five job.
- 3 Juggling work, schoolruns and a myriad other daily obligations often makes it difficult for parents to prepare a cooked meal every evening.
- 4 Introducing more sport and exercise in schools is one of the best ways for the health authorities to deal with issues surrounding obesity.
- 5 Preserving local languages and cultures should be a priority if we want to ensure a rich world heritage for future generations.
- 6 Completing university education is sometimes thought to be the best way to secure a good job.

## Noun Clauses: Answers

1

- 1 Governments seem uncertain how to deal with the refugee crisis.
- 2 Experts are wondering what to do about global warming.
- 3 Why civilised people so often resort to war is beyond comprehension.
- 4 How much money you earn should not depend on gender.
- 5 Scientists cannot explain why so many people are unhappy.

2

- 1 As serious problem for many young graduates is **how** to pay off their student loan debt.
- 2 **That** girls outperform boys in maths and science surprises some people.
- 3 It has become difficult for parents to explain to their children **why** reading real books is a source of learning and pleasure.
- 4 **What** we have to do is to improve the public transport system.
- 5 **Whether** or not animals should be used for scientific research will always remain a divisive issue.
- 6 Age and lifestyle decide **how long** we should be sleeping for.
- 7 People no longer know **what** sources of information they can trust.
- 8 We should not allow **whatever** happens at work to affect our behaviour at home.
- 9 **Whoever** we meet when we are in a foreign country can teach us something about the culture.
- 10 Not all parents understand **how** fast food impacts their children's health.

3

- 1 The corporate media do not tell us **how harmful fast food is**.
- 2 The public needs to know **whether health data are used** with or without patient consent.
- 3 Many parents wonder **why schoolchildren get** so much homework.
- 4 **How the government uses tax money** is not always explained clearly.
- 5 Even experts cannot predict with certainty **when the next financial crisis will arise**.
- 6 A large number of city children have no idea **where milk comes from**.

- 7 Several studies have tried to assess **whether offenders benefit from rehabilitation programmes**.
- 8 **That young people want to change the world** should not surprise anyone.
- 9 There are various reasons **why some people lie to their therapists**.
- 10 It is very hard to know exactly **how many species become extinct each year**.

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## Linking Words & Sentence Structures: Exercise Answer

1

- 1 Although / Despite gender equality is a fundamental human right, there are still some areas of human activity where it has not been achieved.
- 2 While / However it may be true that a lot of workers wish to take early retirement, there are many others in their mid-sixties who find it unfair to be forced to stop working.
- 3 Due to / As the world's population is aging rapidly, it would seem a good idea to encourage people to have more children.
- 4 The Earth now has fewer trees to combat CO2 emissions because / owing to wanton deforestation.
- 5 Many countries still lack basic human necessities such as clean water and shelter, hence / consequently the need for increased international aid.
- 6 In my opinion, private car ownership should be restricted in order not to / so as to exacerbate the problem of pollution and congestion in cities.
- 7 The government needs to invest massively in the public transport system therefore / so that commuters have an effective alternative to driving.
- 8 As well as / Not only being faster and more comfortable, modern trains are also much more environmentally friendly than cars and buses.
- 9 Arctic wildlife is endangered by the melting of the ice caps. Similarly / Instead, coral reefs, which are among the most biodiverse ecosystems on Earth, are at the mercy of rising ocean temperatures.
- 10 Bottled water is often touted as indisputably safe and pure. In contrast / In fact, most brands of bottled water contain tiny particles of plastic which we ingest when drinking.
- 11 In many countries, young people from rural areas continue to move to the cities even though / in spite of rising urban unemployment.
- 12 Shopping malls are often overcrowded and tend to encourage overspending. Nevertheless / Besides, they continue to be popular owing to the vast range of goods and services they offer.



2

- 1 Although as a holidaymaker one may have few opportunities to interact with the local population, learning the basics of the local language can turn out to be very useful.
- 2 Although employers often value practical experience, an academic qualification remains a considerable asset for job seekers.
- 3 Hordes of holidaymakers continue to flood cities like Venice and Barcelona although mass urban tourism has come under fierce criticism recently.
- 4 Although mass tourism continues to be hugely popular, there is a now a discernible shift towards ecotourism.
- 5 Showbiz stars often earn a fortune although it is health and education workers who contribute most to society.
- 6 Some people struggle to advance professionally although they have a formal degree.
- 7 Although work-life balance is much talked about, employees are often expected to take work home with them.
- 8 Only a minority of people seem to enjoy solo travel although it is easier to commune with nature when one is on one's own.

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3

- 1 Despite sustained aggressive marketing, some products never become popular.
- 2 Some products never become popular although they were marketed aggressively.
- 3 In spite of its harmful effects on health, fast food is still advertised on TV.
- 4 Although it has harmful effects on health, fast food is still advertised on TV.
- 5 Overall, the Internet is relatively safe in spite of the proliferation of fraudulent websites.
- 6 Although fraudulent websites are proliferating, the Internet is relatively safe overall.
- 7 Despite the fact that a crime is a crime regardless of age, in my opinion adult sentences are far too severe for youngsters.
- 8 In my opinion adult sentences are far too severe for youngsters even though a crime is a crime regardless of age.
- 9 Even though there has been remarkable progress in computer translation, learning a foreign language will never become obsolete.

**10** Learning a foreign language will never become obsolete despite remarkable progress in computer translation.

4

- 1** Young children are able to absorb information very easily, which is why it is sometimes argued that they are better language learners than adults.
- 2** TV exposes children to a lot of violence and adult content. Moreover, watching TV can easily become addictive and weaken children's interest in more creative activities.
- 3** Public libraries fulfil many different functions besides the lending of books. For example, they often host community activities and serve as a meeting place for people who share similar interests.
- 4** Privacy is both a basic human need and one of the basic human rights. For this reason, I believe that media intrusion into the private lives of politicians and celebrities should be condemned.
- 5** Our parliamentary representatives should not fear the media. Rather, they should willingly be open to media scrutiny at all times.
- 6** It takes years of language learning to become a good interpreter, whereas computers can provide almost instant translation in several languages.

## Relative Clauses: Answers

1

- 1 On average, children in the West only do sport twice a week, **which** is not enough to counter the effects of their otherwise sedentary lifestyle.
- 2 Some people fear that the spread of English, **which** is now the global lingua franca, may result in the disappearance of many other languages.
- 3 Countries **which** (or that) rely on tourism as a source of income always suffer from the effects of a recession.
- 4 A large number of offenders **who** serve their first sentence turn to crime again as soon as they leave prison.
- 5 Children **who** have the opportunity to learn art at school might become more creative and imaginative adults than those **who** do not.
- 6 Young children, **whose** astonishing ability to absorb information seems universally recognised, are not necessarily better at learning a foreign language than adults.
- 7 Social networking sites make it easy to create groups **which** (or that) enable people **who** share similar interests to meet and communicate.
- 8 The best way to deal with criminals **who** reoffend is to supervise them closely once they are back in society.
- 9 Job seekers **who** have an academic qualification can apply for more responsible roles.
- 10 Public sector doctors and teachers, **who** provide indispensable services to society, deserve to earn more than celebrities.

[NB: In Sentences 4, 5, 7, 8 and 9, *that* could be used instead of *who* in spoken English. In your essay, however, it is better to use *who* to refer to people.]

2

The following sentences in Exercise 1 contain a defining relative clause: 3, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 9.

3

- 1 Social media users now spend a considerable amount of time online with people (who) they have never met face to face and who they will probably never meet.
- 2 Children who have to work are robbed of what makes childhood unique and beautiful.
- 3 Social media users sometimes tend to forget that information and photos (that) they share with others can remain online forever.
- 4 Teenagers are not always aware that the strangers with whom they communicate online are not always well-intentioned.
- 5 The practical experience (that) students gain when doing an internship can help them land a better job later.
- 6 Promotion opportunities can have a decisive influence on the career path (which) people choose.
- 7 One of the greatest joys (that) this world has to offer is the diversity of cultures.
- 8 Sometimes, tourists who visit historical or religious buildings behave inappropriately.
- 9 A modern transport infrastructure is essential in countries that depend on tourism for their economy.
- 10 The CV is the first impression (that) an employer has of a job applicant.

4

- 1 Assertiveness is a quality that can be learned through training and practice. ✓
- 2 Assertiveness is a quality which can be learned through training and practice. ✓
- 3 People used to believe that giftedness was a quality that you inherit. ✓
- 4 People used to believe that giftedness was a quality which you inherit. ✓
- 5 People used to believe that giftedness was a quality you inherit. ✓
- 6 ~~Film and football stars are the kind of celebrities whose teenagers often like to take as role model.~~
- 7 ~~Film and football stars are the kind of celebrities which teenagers often like to take as role model.~~
- 8 Film and football stars are the kind of celebrities who teenagers often like to take as role model. ✓
- 9 Film and football stars are the kind of celebrities whom teenagers often like to take as role model. ✓

- 10 ~~I do not believe that people have inborn qualities make them successful.~~
- 11 I do not believe that people have inborn qualities that make them successful. ✓
- 12 I do not believe that people have inborn qualities which make them successful. ✓

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## Word Order: Answers

1

- 2 Consumers need to understand how buying fair trade products can bring a better standard of living for poor people in developing countries.
- 4 It is not difficult to understand why industry experience is a great asset when applying for a job.
- 7 Teachers in country schools sometimes earn much less than their counterparts in the city.
- 8 In a few years, the number of old people will exceed the number of young people.

2

- 1 Being able to express your feelings is very healthy, **especially for teenagers**.
- 2 A number of countries have **already** banned advertising targeted at young children.
- 3 Teachers want to give **their students** a positive learning experience.
- 4 Unfortunately, schools often lack the resources that would help teachers deliver quality instruction **to their students**.
- 5 Even environmentally conscious people often waste a lot of water **at home**.
- 6 Young people will continue to leave the countryside unless a lot of **exciting** new job opportunities are created in rural areas.
- 7 Fierce competition and school demands cause many **teenage** Japanese students to suffer from severe stress.
- 8 Earning a good salary, **which is not possible for many,** can help people create a stable life.
- 9 Some people still fail to understand why old buildings **should** be protected.
- 10 Tourists often need to be told explicitly how they **should** behave when visiting a foreign country.

3

**Alternative answers are given in brackets.**

- 1 Scientists can hardly explain why our climate is changing so rapidly.
- 2 Charity is not an effective way to eradicate poverty in the long term.

(In the long term, charity is not an effective way to eradicate poverty. / Charity is not, in the long term, an effective way to eradicate poverty.)

**3** In my opinion, the deterrent effect of long prison sentences is vastly overrated.

(The deterrent effect of long prison sentences is, in my opinion, vastly overrated.)

**4** Art provides children with a medium through which they can express their emotions.

**5** A lot of grown-ups do not understand how teenagers can spend so much time on the Internet.

**6** It is obvious that traditional cultures are profoundly influenced by technological developments.

**7** Firstly, almost one fifth of the world's population still live under conditions of extreme poverty.

**8** There are families where the children teach their parents how to use mobile phones or laptops.

**9** Young adolescents are not usually mature enough to be responsible for their own development.

(Usually, young adolescents are not mature enough to be responsible for their own development.)

**10** A large number of diseases can be treated more effectively if they are identified earlier on.

(If they are identified earlier on, a large number of diseases can be treated more effectively.)

## Tenses: Answers

1

- 1 An increasing number of tourists **visit** sites where catastrophes occurred.
- 2 Many people **agree** that travelling with friends **reduces** safety concerns.
- 3 Teachers working in rural schools **are** more likely to experience burnout than their counterparts in cities.
- 4 Working in rural schools **is** rightly regarded as being considerably more challenging than working in urban ones.
- 5 Reusing plastic bottles **is** not very hygienic, unless of course the bottles **are** thoroughly cleaned between uses.
- 6 It **is** often said that increasing taxes **discourages** investment and expansion.
- 7 An increase in entry fees at popular national parks **is** unlikely to boost tourism.
- 8 Not everybody **understands** how reusing plastic bags **does** any good at all.
- 9 Contrary to popular belief, most news **does not involve** celebrities or catastrophes.
- 10 A huge amount of information **is** available on the Internet, but unfortunately not all sources **are** reliable.

2

- 1 Visiting national parks is a great form of tourism and should be promoted, as long as the growing number of visitors **does not adversely impact** the animals that **live** there.
- 2 A large number of people **agree** that education in single-sex schools **is** more beneficial to students.
- 3 There **is** no conclusive evidence that paying employees higher salaries **ensures** their loyalty.
- 4 Fierce competition for jobs **means** that graduates really **need** to stand out when applying for a job.
- 5 Maintaining friendly relationships with colleagues **helps** people improve their work-life balance.
- 6 In some countries, non-compliance with traditional cultural practices **is** punishable by law.
- 7 Most news **makes** people sad.



- 8 Students who **heed** the advice of a career counsellor **tend** to be more successful than those who do not.
- 9 Most people actually **believe** that the police **do** a very good job.
- 10 Small fish **accumulate** fewer contaminants than big fish like tuna.

3

- 1 The population of the world **is rising** very fast.
- 2 I **firmly believe** that wars **do not solve** problems.
- 3 More people than ever before **are having** their DNA analysed to discover their ethnic heritage.
- 4 In general, people **emigrate** so that their children can have a brighter future.
- 5 It is often said that we should act according to what we **consider** to be right.
- 6 Most sociologists **agree** that official crime statistics **do not accurately reflect** the true level of criminal behaviour.
- 7 Polar bears are now an endangered species because the ice caps **are melting**.
- 8 People **search** the Internet to find answers to questions and to find the products and services they **need**.
- 9 One of the reasons why society **is becoming** increasingly fragmented is that people spend more and more time online.
- 10 Before applying for a job, people should make sure their skills and experience **match** what the company **is looking for**.

4

- 1 Newspapers **continued** to decline after the advent of the Internet.
- 2 I believe that people **felt** less lonely when family ties **were** stronger.
- 3 Technology **has altered** the way people interact with each other.
- 4 In my opinion, globalisation **has resulted** in the loss of local traditions.
- 5 Our grandparents **did not expect** as much out of life as we do today.
- 6 Internet addiction **has been** recognised as a mental disorder for several years.
- 7 Research **has shown** that the adult brain still produces new cells and forms new neural connections.
- 8 Before the discovery of penicillin, bacterial infections **accounted** for a large proportion of deaths.
- 9 Since Armstrong and Aldrin **walked** on the moon in 1969, man's ambition for space exploration **has reached** new heights.

- 10 Facebook, which **was** launched over a decade ago, **has had** and continues to have a dramatic effect on local communities.

5

- 1 The gap between old and young **has widened** due to technology.
- 2 Many people **have lost** trust in the business world since the global financial crisis that **broke out** in 2008.
- 3 Text messaging **has become** the preferred mode of communication for teens.
- 4 A low standard of living meant people **did not enjoy** a long lifespan.
- 5 It is obvious that social networking sites **have brought** individuals closer together.
- 6 Deforestation in the Amazon **began** many years ago, but it **has now reached** unprecedented levels.
- 7 Some women choose to delay having children until they **have climbed** the career ladder.
- 8 Once they **have been** released from prison, many first-time offenders turn to crime again.
- 9 Today, we even find it hard to imagine how people **spent** their free time before the Internet.
- 10 One of the greatest teachers I **have ever had** was when I **took** a degree course in Project Management.

6

- 1 will be following                      2 has made / do not have  
 3 forget / were already spending                      4 agree / are  
 5 will have disappeared / cooperate                      6 are choosing / is causing  
 7 helps / enter                      8 have been trying  
 9 is melting / are going to rise                      10 buy / had been used

7

- 1 Many motorists **go** over the speed limit when driving their cars in urban areas.
- 2 It is highly likely that young criminals **will reoffend** again as soon as they have served their sentence and left prison.
- 3 There did not **use** to be as many dysfunctional families fifty years ago as there are today.
- 4 Since the dawn of time, change **has been** considered unsafe.

- 5 In my opinion, extra-curricular activities should not be compulsory because students **are** already overloaded with homework.
- 6 Plastic pollution is bound to decrease when single-use plastic bags **are** banned.
- 7 Apparently, the polar ice caps **have melted** faster over the last two decades than over the last ten thousand years.
- 8 It seems that GM foods **are gradually becoming** a part of our everyday diet.
- 9 Many more people **are buying** fast foods today than ever before.
- 10 Before the 21<sup>st</sup> century, nobody **had ever heard** of 'fake news' or 'alternative facts'.
- 11 Parents **have read** stories to children for centuries and used the stories to teach them universal human values.
- 12 Reading aloud to children **stimulates** the imagination and the acquisition of literacy skills.
- 13 In 1969, some people did not believe that **Armstrong and Aldrin actually set foot** on the moon.
- 14 In many parts of the world, discrimination against women **is gradually decreasing**.
- 15 We like to think that all our ideas are our own, and we forget how much our parents' and teachers' beliefs and values **influenced** us for many years during our childhood.

## Conditional Statements: Answers

1

- 1 do not / will                      2 might / do not                      3 would be / was  
 4 spend / can enjoy                      5 did not get / would                      6 would not / reduced  
 7 had listened / could have been                      8 would / had been  
 9 is / will                      10 will not / do not pose

2

- 1 ✓                      2 unless if individuals                      3 if they ~~could~~ acquired                      4 ✓  
 5 providing so that                      6 unless they will offer                      7 will ~~not~~ decrease  
 8 children will spend                      9 ✓                      10 are ~~not~~ adopted soon

3

- 1 If medicines were **not tested** on animals, scientists **would not know** whether they are safe for human use.
- 2 An increasing number of species will **be facing** extinction unless deforestation is **brought** under control.
- 3 One problem for companies which sponsor sports is that if the team or athlete is **not** successful, sales **might** (or: **could**) decrease.
- 4 If children **were not** easily influenced by TV commercials, they would **not pester** their parents to buy junk food.
- 5 Fewer local shops **would have closed** down if global companies **had not taken over** the high street.
- 6 As long as employees **are offered** promotion opportunities, they **will** feel motivated.
- 7 If you **prepare** thoroughly before a job interview, your chances of success **will** definitely increase.
- 8 Unless they **have** (or: **get** / **are given** / etc) positive role models, young people will **not be able to** live with hope and integrity.
- 9 If the distribution of global wealth **was not** unequal, the gap between rich and poor **would** disappear.
- 10 If the infant mortality rate **had been** lower, people **would not have had** to have so many children.

## Modals: Answers

1

1 e 2 d 3 f 4 h 5 c 6 j 7 a 8 i 9 b 10 g

2

- 1 Governments **must commit** themselves to tackling global warming without further delay.
- 2 It is a fact that poor countries would like **to be able to** help themselves rather than depend on international aid.
- 3 You **should always draw up** a list of priorities if you want to manage your time more efficiently.
- 4 Very large groups of tourists **should not be allowed** into historical buildings.
- 5 Nations often unite to fight for freedom. For example, in 1989 the Germans **were able to take down** the Berlin Wall, a symbol of oppression and division.
- 6 A good number of companies have abolished their dress code, so employees **do not have to wear** formal clothes even in board meetings.
- 7 There is no guarantee that world powers **will be able to prevent** another economic crisis.
- 8 Children who watch television more than one hour per day **are more likely to get** obese.
- 9 In my opinion, the World Bank **could have done** a lot more to eliminate poverty.
- 10 Criminals **would not reoffend** if there were more rehabilitation programmes.

3

1 a 2 a 3 c 4 a 5 b

4

- 1 In some countries, children **have to** attend school until the age of 18.
- 2 As the economic situation worsens, unemployment **will** definitely increase.
- 3 You **do not always have to** have work experience when you apply for a job, but it certainly helps if you do.
- 4 Many people are worried that a new global financial crash **might** occur.
- 5 The population increase and the ensuing rise in demand for food **must** inevitably lead to food shortages.

- 6 In my opinion, all drink-drivers **should** have their licence revoked.
- 7 International aid **may** cause dependency on rich countries.
- 8 Children **would not be able** to enjoy their childhood if they had to work.
- 9 Climate change being the most crucial issue currently facing the world, all countries **might have signed** the Kyoto Protocol.
- 10 Our great-grandparents **must have held** very different social and ethical values from those we have today.
- 11 In some countries, anyone under the age of 21 **have to get** their parents' permission if they want to get married.
- 12 Nobody wants their children to fear that another world war **might** break out.

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## Passive Voice: Answers

1

- 1 With more speed cameras on major streets, more people who speed will **be** caught.
- 2 Maintaining local languages and cultures **should be prioritised** to ensure a rich world heritage for future generations.
- 3 Parents should **be** contacted immediately if their child misbehaves at school.
- 4 Students need to be **inspired** by their teachers.
- 5 The world of science **is** often depicted as a man's world.
- 6 Taxes on wealth **could be used** to fund universal health care.
- 7 Most first-time offenders commit crimes again once they **have been released** from prison.
- 8 Discrimination can easily be **avoided** if schoolchildren wear a uniform.
- 9 At present, governments are **being** fiercely criticised for their failure to deal with the issue of global warming.
- 10 Unfortunately, an efficient way of recycling plastic **has** not been found yet. (Gr.)

2

- 1 Happiness can be found through job satisfaction as well as family.
- 2 People have been brought closer together by social networking sites such as Facebook.
- 3 In my opinion, a child's potential in an examination cannot be assessed.
- 4 Art should not be taught at the expense of other subjects such as maths or foreign languages.
- 5 Many animal species are being threatened with extinction by deforestation.
- 6 The United Nations were created to promote peace and cooperation.
- 7 All motor vehicles should be banned from the city centre.
- 8 Very recently, homeless people have been offered flats by some charitable landlords.
- 9 Let's hope that very soon plastic bags will no longer be used.
- 10 English is being used as a lingua franca all over the world.

3

- 1 b    2 a    3 c    4 c    5 a    6 b    7 c    8 b

4

- 1 a) The use of children's favourite cartoon characters in advertisements is widely believed to exert a negative influence on children.
- 2 b) It is generally thought that children are much more easily influenced by commercials than adults.
- 3 a) Local communities are often said to lose their uniqueness because of the proliferation of global businesses.
- 4 b) Although it is assumed that qualifications are paramount, they often make a lesser impression on employers than experience.
- 5 a) Owing to the effects of global warming, Arctic sea ice is predicted to continue melting.

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## Verb Patterns: Answers

1

- 1 A number of politicians have claimed that climate change is a hoax.
- 2 Good teachers never forget to put themselves in their students' shoes.
- 3 I firmly believe it is morally wrong to let animals suffer in cages.
- 4 In an election campaign, candidates routinely promise citizens that things will get better.
- 5 In my opinion, young children should not be allowed to watch violent films.
- 6 Large corporations can no longer avoid dealing with social issues.
- 7 Local people expect tourists to behave decently.
- 8 Most adults remember being punished or scolded at school.
- 9 Parents should attempt to instill values such as selflessness and generosity in their children.
- 10 Understandably, young graduates would prefer to find a job that matches their qualifications.

2

- 1 We can no longer deny **having wasted** a lot of natural resources
- 2 Several scientists have already admitted **not knowing** how to solve the problem of global warming.
- 3 People find it hard to imagine **having to buy** bottled drinking water.
- 4 Juvenile delinquents often recall **being treated** badly when they were at home or at school.
- 5 Even people who know each other well rarely **mention taking** all sorts of dietary supplements and vitamins.
- 6 As a simple way of reducing our carbon footprint, I suggest **cutting down** on air travel.

3

- 1 All children should have the opportunity to practise **playing** a musical instrument.
- 2 Elderly people generally resent **being** dependent on others.
- 3 It is often believed that short prison sentences fail **to stop** offenders from returning to a life of crime.
- 4 Ministerial candidates often pretend **to show** interest in ordinary people.
- 5 People who go on a strict slimming diet often risk **endangering** their health.
- 6 Several countries have signed an agreement which aims **to reduce** carbon emissions.
- 7 The war on fake news and propaganda is one that democracies cannot afford **to lose**.
- 8 Tourists often expect **to meet** local people.
- 9 Unfortunately, too few young teachers enjoy **working** in rural areas.
- 10 World leaders should not delay **dealing** with the current environmental problems.

4

- 1 The introduction of new technology in the workplace sometimes involves **dismissing many employees**.
- 2 Several countries are considering **banning e-cigarettes** in public places.
- 3 Many people do not mind **working long hours** as long as they get proper recognition for their effort.
- 4 Great moral leaders such as Nelson Mandela never give up **fighting for human rights and dignity**.
- 5 Both young and elderly people should carry on **struggling for a fairer and more equal society**.
- 6 As the economy might go into recession, young graduates should not postpone **searching for a worthwhile job**.

5

- 1 A person should work hard because they enjoy what they do, not because they **hope to be** given a raise or a promotion.
- 2 Couples may **decide to be** childfree for a host of different reasons.

- 3 Historic buildings **deserve to be** cared for and protected.
- 4 I do not think it is wise to shirk one's responsibilities and **put off being** an adult.
- 5 If a student **keeps on being** late for school, there is usually a problem at home.
- 6 Most people need moments of solitude, but nobody **fancies being** lonely.
- 7 Overseas students often **miss being** with their families on festive occasions.
- 8 Some companies that **promise to be** ethical only do so because they think it may win them more customers.
- 9 Some people **manage to be** happy despite a life full of adversity and sorrow.
- 10 When you travel in unsafe areas, it is a good idea to **arrange to be** picked up and dropped off close to your hotel.

6

- 1 Many large cities seem **to have** a crime problem
- 2 Air pollution seems **to be getting** worse.
- 3 Vegetarianism seems **to have become** a fashion.
- 4 Governments appear **not to have listened** to the advice of climate experts.
- 5 Knife crime appears **to be increasing** among inner-city teenagers.
- 6 Social media's plans to tackle fake news appear **not to have had** much effect.
- 7 Many governments tend **to neglect** the issue of poverty.
- 8 Although we live in a more inclusive society, employers **tend not to hire** people with a mental illness or disability.

## Articles: a / an / the: Answers

1

- 1 There is often a decline in the birth rate when standards of living increase.
- 2 People need to be aware of the amount of energy they use in their homes.
- 3 With the growth of urban populations, land is becoming increasingly expensive.
- 4 As the number of cars rises, so too does the demand for more fossil fuels.
- 5 We should press the government to improve the efficiency of public transport.
- 6 Practical industry experience is generally considered an asset when applying for a job.
- 7 Financial aid to poor countries rarely has a long-term impact and may create a dependency on aid.
- 8 Over the past 50 years, there has been a huge increase in the number of people owning a private car.
- 9 Younger adolescents need a broad range of subjects to help them develop, but at the age of 18, this is no longer the case.
- 10 When a fire breaks out in a high-rise, the people who live on the top floors may easily become trapped and may be unable to escape the fire.

2

- 1 Most people will say that  $\emptyset$  health is the most important thing in  $\emptyset$  life.
- 2 I firmly believe that  $\emptyset$  exercise is essential to keep fit and have **an** alert mind.
- 3 Starting to work at **an** early age prepares you more adequately for  $\emptyset$  adult life.
- 4 Respecting the traditions and customs of the country you are visiting is **a** sign of  $\emptyset$  respect.
- 5 If  $\emptyset$  young people want to start **a** home of their own, they need to earn **a** reasonably good salary.
- 6 Having **a** booming tourist trade can have **a** catastrophic effect on the environment by increasing  $\emptyset$  pollution.
- 7 Travelling on one's own is **an** excellent opportunity to improve one's self-knowledge and to develop as **a** person.
- 8 It is **a** well-known fact that actors and pop stars exert **a** huge impact on the fashion industry.

- 9 For teenagers, Ø clothing is often a way to identify others who share their values and beliefs.
- 10 The popularity of Ø online shopping has been caused by a number of Ø factors such as Ø price and convenience.

3

We all know wealthy people who live a life of misery. On the other hand, we also know people who can barely afford the basic necessities of a life and yet seem utterly content with their lot. Surely this is proof that there is more to a personal fulfilment than the money?

People who walk a more spiritual path manage to find happiness partly by controlling the urge to possess material things. Indeed, if you have no craving for anything, you do not run the risk of being disappointed if you never get it. Such people have learnt to live in the present and to value every single moment. To them, every new day promises a new adventure, filled with the opportunities to express love and compassion, to revel in the beauty of the nature, and to experience the happiness of making another fellow human being happy.

4

- 1 Many newspapers are struggling for ✖ survival.
- 2 A balanced vegetarian diet greatly reduces ✓the risk of heart disease.
- 3 In the end, it is up to each individual to follow or ignore their doctor's advice. ✓
- 4 In a good number of countries, the music industry plays ✓a significant role in the economy.
- 5 People prefer health foods to foods that have been scientifically produced in ✖ laboratories.
- 6 It is less harmful for a child to grow up in ✓a single parent family than in a dysfunctional one.
- 7 Online learning enables students to take breaks in their study schedule whenever they want. ✓
- 8 I do not think it is a good idea for ✖ teachers to discipline disruptive students in front of others as an example.
- 9 In the past, elderly parents were more dependent on their children because of the lack of ✖ social benefits.
- 10 In the developed world, only the lucky few have the chance to eat what they can grow themselves. ✓

5

- 1 In my opinion, **the** only way to save our planet is to stop using  $\emptyset$  plastic bags.
- 2 It is becoming increasingly common to have **a** year off before starting  $\emptyset$  university.
- 3 With **the** growth of  $\emptyset$  urban populations,  $\emptyset$  land is becoming increasingly expensive.
- 4 'Younger is better' is one of **the** main subliminal messages conveyed through  $\emptyset$  advertising.
- 5 Over **the** last few decades, **the** rise in  $\emptyset$  personal debt has risen dramatically.
- 6 Very often,  $\emptyset$  child psychologists study **the** artwork of  $\emptyset$  children to gain **an** insight into their inner world.
- 7 **An** increasing number of  $\emptyset$  people believe that **a** student's ability should not be assessed through  $\emptyset$  exams.
- 8 In our cities,  $\emptyset$  environmental problems are mainly **the** result of **the** development of  $\emptyset$  modern transportation.
- 9 It is sometimes believed that  $\emptyset$  children no longer read  $\emptyset$  books, but instead spend all their leisure time on  $\emptyset$  social networking sites such as  $\emptyset$  Facebook.
- 10 Some people believe that **the** problem with  $\emptyset$  education in  $\emptyset$  poor countries is **the** teaching methodology used, but in  $\emptyset$  fact it is often **the** lack of  $\emptyset$  resources which is **the** real issue.

## Pronouns and Referencing: Answers

1

1 Obviously, **there** are some disadvantages to having only one global language.

Firstly, **it** is highly likely that many other languages would disappear.

2 In my opinion, **it** would be beneficial for the world economy if all nations spoke the same language. To begin with, **there** would no longer be any communication barriers.

3 In many ways, all cultures are unique. **They** offer diversity as well as different perspectives on the world we live in. **There** is a real risk that all this would be lost if **there** was only one global language.

4 **It** is too risky for countries to rely exclusively on tourism as a source of income. **They** would be devastated if ever **there** was a sudden decline in global travel.

2

1 it                      2 oneself                      3 they                      4 Such (or: This)                      5 This

3

1 This                      2 it                      3 others                      4 their                      5 these

4

Another reason for the popularity of finding out about one's family history is often due to curiosity about **one's** geographical origins. **That** is to say, some families moved abroad, away from **their** own country, generations ago, **which** resulted in them losing their original culture and adopting the culture of the country **they** moved to. Therefore, through research, people can learn more about their country of origin and understand more about the culture that **their** family originally came from.

5

**A. Model answer:**

Plastic bags made of polyethylene have become normal household items because of their wonderful versatility. They are lightweight, sturdy and generally extremely convenient to use. This has made plastic bags (or: *This has made them ...*) very popular with shoppers all over the world.

**B. Model answer:**

A substantial number of delinquents who serve their first prison sentence tend to reoffend soon after they have left prison. This is because they cannot find a job and consequently are unable to support themselves financially. This issue could be resolved if delinquents had more opportunities to attend rehabilitation and training programmes while in prison. Such programmes would enable them (or: ... *would enable first-time offenders* ...) to acquire specific skill sets, which in turn would ensure that they can reintegrate back into society more easily once they have served their sentence.

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## Quantifiers: Answers

1

- 1 Owing to high taxation, **very many** businesses find it difficult to survive.
- 2 In my opinion, employers should assume **some** responsibility for the health of their staff.
- 3 Company uniforms may be good advertising, but **not all** employees like wearing them.
- 4 **Too many** advertisements encourage children to eat junk food.
- 5 Not having **enough** practical experience is a serious handicap when applying for a job.
- 6 **Most**, though by no means **all**, major human epidemics seem to come from the use of animals for food.
- 7 **Much of** the entertainment we consume every day does not demand **any** intelligence.
- 8 Watching a good comedy show can offer **some** comfort when you are sad or under stress.
- 9 If **everybody** spoke the same language, countries would lose **much** of their uniqueness.
- 10 Not **all** countries have **enough** qualified language teachers.

2

- 1 **All** violent films affect our thinking and our emotions much more than we realise.
- 2 We all like nature, but **none** of us seems to genuinely care for the environment.
- 3 If **all** of the children who spend two or more hours online every day started exercising, obesity might decline.
- 4 Children in households where **neither** parent works are of course much more likely to be in poverty.
- 5 Even in households where **both** the father and the mother work full-time, it is the mother who is responsible for most of the child care.
- 6 Nobody knows what the future holds for radio and newspapers, but there is a risk that **both** of these media will disappear unless they adapt.
- 7 Radio and newspapers are becoming less popular because **neither** of these media manages to adapt adequately to the Internet era.

- 8 Although newspapers, TV and the Internet have become part of our everyday life, **none** of these media has brought about a real cultural revolution.
- 9 Music lovers often have a laptop or a smartphone at hand as **either** device can be used to listen to music online.
- 10 I believe it would also be beneficial to teach yoga or meditation at school, as **either** of these activities could improve students' motivation and concentration.

3

- 1 None of us **is** exempt from suffering and life's hardships.
- 2 Sometimes it seems that all the news we get **is** bad news.
- 3 Good teachers know that each of their students **is** an individual learner with specific skills and interests.
- 4 Every student **is** entitled to be recognized for their efforts as well as for their achievements.
- 5 A large number of tourists **are** attracted to places that are associated with famous historical figures.
- 6 When they are having an argument, some people start shouting, while some others just keep silent. Unfortunately, neither method **is** effective in resolving a disagreement.
- 7 In my opinion, both Biology and History **are** interesting to learn.
- 8 Almost every city **is** experiencing a traffic problem.
- 9 Not every tourist **is** interested in learning about local customs and traditions.
- 10 When politicians become untrustworthy, people abstain from voting or vote for someone they do not have much confidence in. Either course of action **is** unlikely to foster democracy.

4

- 1 After secondary school, a lot of young people dream of going to university or finding an interesting job, but for many of them either **of** option is simply impossible.
- 2 As all good teachers know, every **of** student in a class has some hidden talent.
- 3 Every year, **a** great number of graduates are unable to find jobs.

- 4 For a good number of years, the United States and China have been economic superpowers, and **the** both countries have been vying for supremacy.
- 5 In many countries, **a** large amount of waste from landfills and dumpsites flows into the rivers or into the sea.
- 6 In order to make sense of the present, I believe we need to have **a** little understanding of the past.
- 7 It is a pity that people seem to have **a** little understanding of the reality of global warming.
- 8 Major cities are trying to make life easier for cyclists, but there is still plenty **of** scope for improvement.
- 9 We should remain optimistic and trust that there will always be **a** few people who are ready to help in times of trouble.
- 10 The government should be worried about the fact that **a** few young people are feeling optimistic about the future.

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## Comparatives and Superlatives: Answers

1

- 1 People often leave rural areas because they hope to find a much / more better quality of life in the city.
- 2 Considering the disastrous effects of global warming, environmental laws should be more / considerably stricter.
- 3 The more cars there are on the roads, the more / most pollutants will be released into the atmosphere.
- 4 In most cities the world over, air pollution is getting bad / worse and worse.
- 5 For / In comparison with online catalogues, bookshop browsing offers much more intellectual pleasure.
- 6 In several respects, public libraries are similar to / as community centres.
- 7 What is in the public interest is not the same like / as what the public are interested in.
- 8 The standard of living in most Western countries is still much / very higher than in China.
- 9 Learning a foreign language at school is very different from / of learning it in the country where it is spoken.
- 10 I believe that young children are slightly / little more easily influenced by advertising than adults.

2

- 1 Most parents only wish that their children may live **better than** they themselves did.
- 2 Local businesses do not offer **as many** job opportunities as large, international businesses do.
- 3 Last summer, several regions across the northern hemisphere experienced **the hottest** temperatures on record.
- 4 In an increasingly material world, art classes are **more essential** than ever.
- 5 China and the United States are said to be **the biggest** producers of plastic waste in the world.
- 6 Children are much **more vulnerable than** adults to environmental risks and therefore need extra care.
- 7 Advertising in the print media is not **as effective** as advertising online.

- 8 Some economists say that the 2008 financial crisis was even **worse than** the Great Depression.
- 9 Only 60 years ago, China experienced **the worst** famine ever in human history. (*bad*)
- 10 Napoleon is one of **the most controversial** historical figures of all times.

3

- 1 It is sometimes said that humans are more dangerous **than** animals.
- 2 Deforestation in Indonesia is **the worst** on the planet.
- 3 A tenant does not have the same responsibilities **as** a landlord.
- 4 The process of looking for an internship is similar **to** searching for a job.
- 5 Private cars are not as eco-friendly **as** public transport.
- 6 Volunteering and couchsurfing are probably the **least** expensive ways to travel around the world.
- 7 Of course, cities have a **lot** more places of entertainment than rural areas.
- 8 It may be **a** little more difficult to learn another language when you are older.

4

- 3 The countryside is a better place than the city for children to be brought up in.
- 4 The age of a building is not as important as its historical or cultural value.
- 5 Open-plan offices are more conducive to communication than traditional ones.
- 6 Travelling by train is not as cheap as it used to be.
- 7 There are fewer job opportunities in rural areas than in the city.
- 8 It is now believed that children are not as good as adults at absorbing new information.

## Prepositions: Answers

1

1 of of  
2 in  
3 as  
4 of  
5 in  
6 for  
7  
8 In of  
9 to  
10 of  
11 for  
12 at  
13 In  
14  
15 from  
16 on  
17 with

2

1 at /  $\emptyset$  /  $\emptyset$   
2 into / in / in  
3  $\emptyset$  /  $\emptyset$  / of  
4 in / of / in  
5 for / at / of / to  
6 in / with / of / in  
7 from/ in (or  $\emptyset$ ) / to  
8 on / on / to  
9  $\emptyset$  / with / in  
10 of / in / of

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## Using Cautious Language: Answers

1

1 b   2 a   3 a   4 b   5 a

2

Sentences 3, 8 and 10 do not use any tentative language.

Here is how they could be rewritten in a more nuanced way.

**3** Many people argue that banning mobile phones in public areas would curtail personal freedom.

**8** There is some evidence to suggest that learning a team sport enables many children to get over their shyness.

**10** Very often, global mass tourism is likely to have a negative impact on the environment.

3

**1** A large number of people often mistake fake news websites for genuine news sources.

**2** Eating fast food often can cause health problems such as obesity.

3

**4** Traditional music is sometimes used to strengthen national unity.

**5** It could be the case that listening to music inspires some people to create music themselves.

**6** It is a widely held view that genetically modified foods have a negative effect on our health.

**7** It is often argued that a vegetarian diet may reduce the risk of heart disease.

8

**9** Sprawling suburbs often make walking impractical and so tend to increase car dependency.

10

## Paraphrasing: Answers

1

Paraphrase A:

It is not **worthwhile** trying to **preserve** a country's traditional skills and ways of life as these **disappear** as a result of technological **developments**.

Paraphrase B:

**Attempting** to maintain a nation's traditional skills and **lifestyles** is **futile** since they do not **survive** technological progress.

2

Paraphrase A:

Letter writing has been made **redundant** by new communications technology.

Paraphrase B:

As a **result** of innovative communications systems, writing letters is now unnecessary.

Paraphrase C:

New **means** of communication have **rendered** letter writing superfluous.

Paraphrase D:

Modern forms of communication have **eliminated** the need to write letters.

3

There are no spelling, vocabulary or grammar mistakes. Besides, most people would agree that the sentence expresses a truth.

However, this is a completely inaccurate paraphrase of the essay question:

- i. 'the mobile phone' cannot be used to paraphrase 'modern communications', which include many other means of communication;
- ii. 'reduced the need' cannot be used to paraphrase 'no longer necessary' as there is a big difference between *less necessary* and *not necessary at all*;
- iii. 'written communications' cannot be used to paraphrase 'letters' as letters are just one type of written communications, which also include e-mail and text messages, blogs, etc.



4

- 1 You **may** struggle to find your first job if you have not gained **practical** work experience beforehand.
- 2 First-time job seekers with no **prior** hands-on experience may **face** a lot of difficulties.
- 3 **Without** first-hand experience, **landing** your first job may prove really hard.
- 4 If you do not have previous experience, you are **likely** to have a hard time **finding** your first job.
- 5 A **lack** of previous industry experience will **probably** make it difficult for you to land your first job.

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## Punctuation: Answers

1

- 1 If you change jobs frequently, you will be able to learn new more diverse skills.
- 2 We must ensure our children get a good education if we want them to have more opportunities later in life.
- 3 Another method of dealing with criminals who reoffend is to have more supervision and checks in place when they are back in society.
- 4 As cars pollute the air with carbon emissions, it is advisable that the number of vehicles should be limited, particularly in city centres.
- 5 In my opinion, social media easily become addictive, which is why some schools do not allow students to use mobile phones or personal computers on the school premises.

2

Another way to keep young people from the countryside nearer to the place where they grew up would be to decentralise the education system. Some of the more prestigious schools and universities, or at least some of their departments and faculties, could move to a rural area. This would have the added advantage of decongesting certain parts of the city.

Finally, entrepreneurs could also be offered more incentives for relocating or for establishing a company in the countryside rather than in a city or a suburban area. With prospective employers on their doorstep, young people would then be less likely to want to move away from the countryside and from their parents.

## Spot the Mistakes - Essay no. 1: Answers

**Mistake no. 1** (Paragraph 1):

'... impose mandatory childcare training courses for all parent.'



'... impose mandatory childcare training courses for all **parents**.'

*Explanation:*

The quantifier *all* can be followed either by:

- i. a plural countable noun (*all countries / all children / all the people / etc*)
- ii. an uncountable noun (*all the money / all information / etc*).

The noun *parent* being countable means that the plural is needed here.

[Reference: Chapter 170, Vol II, Quantifiers]

**Mistake no. 2** (Paragraph 2):

'Obviously, it is crucial that parents know the basics of the childcare, ...'



'Obviously, it is crucial that parents know **the basics of childcare**, ...'

*Explanation:*

No article is used with non-specific uncountable nouns.

In this case, *childcare* does not refer to specific childcare, but to all types of childcare - it is non-specific.

Note: The noun *childcare* would be used with the definite article if it was used to refer to something specific rather than general. For example:

- Little children are rarely asked what they think of **the** childcare they receive.

In this example, *childcare* refers to the specific childcare that they received, which is why the definite article is used.

[Reference: Chapter 150, Vol II, Articles; Chapter 183, Vol II, Countable and Uncountable Nouns; Chapter 250, Vol III, Common Errors]

### Mistake no. 3 (Paragraph 2):

'Without such **knowledges**, ...'



'Without such **knowledge**, ...'

#### Explanation:

- i. Uncountable nouns (e.g. *money / water / work / etc*) do not have a plural form.
- ii. Another feature of [U] nouns is that they are not used with the indefinite article (*a / an*) → ('~~They have a great knowledge.~~' is WRONG.)
- iii. However, [U] nouns such as *knowledge / love / understanding / etc* can be used in the following patterns:
  - 1) *a / an + Noun + of* (e.g. ... *a knowledge of childcare is ...*)
  - 2) *a / an + Adj. + Noun + of* (e.g. ... *without a basic knowledge of childcare ...*)

[Reference: Chapter 183, Vol II, Countable and Uncountable Nouns; Chapter 250, Vol III, Common Errors]

### Mistake no. 4 (Paragraph 3):

'However, although childcare is important, ...'



'However, 2 although childcare is important, ...'

*Explanation:*

The linking word *however* is most frequently used at the beginning of a sentence, followed by a comma.

Alternatively, it can also be used in the middle of a sentence with a comma before and after it:

- The importance of childcare in society cannot be overemphasised. In practical terms, however, it would be impossible to have obligatory childcare training courses for all parents.

[Reference: Chapter 45, Vol I, Linking Words & Sentence Structures; Chapter 239, Vol III, Punctuation]

**Mistake no. 5** (Paragraph 3):

'... twice as **much** people ...'



'... twice as **many** people ...'

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*Explanation:*

Remember that although *people* does not end in -s, it is a plural noun.

- i. Before a plural noun, only quantifiers such as *(not) many / (a) few / several / etc* can be used.
- ii. By contrast, *(not) much / (a) little* are always followed by a [U] noun and a singular verb form (e.g. *not much experience / much effort / a little patience / etc*).

[Reference: Chapter 170, Vol II, Quantifiers]

**Mistake no. 6** (Paragraph 4):

'... decide which information **meet** their needs '



'... decide which information **meets** their needs '

*Explanation:*

The subject of the verb *meet* is the singular noun *information*.

- i. *information* is an uncountable noun, which means it is always singular.
- ii. 3rd person singular in the Present Simple requires the verb to take an -s.

If the subject was a plural noun, no ending would be required. For example:

- Parents decide which programmes meet their needs.
  - i. the subject of *decide* is *parents*, a plural noun, so *decide* is 3rd person plural.
  - ii. the subject of *meet* is *programmes*, also a plural noun, so *meet* is also 3rd person plural.

[Reference: Chapter 102 - 112, Vol II, Tenses; Chapter 250, Vol III, Common Errors]

**Mistake no. 7** (Paragraph 5):

'... courses which have to be attending in person...'

⇓

'... courses which have to be **attended** in person...'

*Explanation:*

This clause requires a passive voice.

- i. The passive voice is formed using a past participle.
- ii. The incorrect sentence above was using a present participle (-ing).
- iii. The passive is used with be in the appropriate tense + past participle.

For example:

➤ Our courses	are	attended by both teenagers and adults.
	were	
	have been	
	will be	

Passive Voice and Modals

When using modals (*can, could, might, etc*) with the passive voice:

- i. for present and future situations the verb *be* is in the infinitive.
- ii. for past situations, the perfect infinitive (*have been*) is used.

For example:

➤ Our courses	can be	attended by teenagers.
	could be	
	might be	
	should be	
	could have been	
	should have been	
	would have been	

[Reference: Chapter 127, Vol II, Passive Voice]

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## Spot the Mistakes - Essay no. 2: Answers

### Mistake no. 1 (Paragraph 1):

'... other measures could be taken before imposing a **totally** ban.'



'... other measures could be taken before imposing a **total** ban.'

### Explanation:

- i. Words such as *totally*, *beautifully*, *suddenly*, *well*, etc are adverbs and are used to modify verbs. For example: *Plastic bags are totally banned. / They painted beautifully. / It changed suddenly. / They are well.*
- ii. Words such as *total*, *beautiful*, *sudden*, *good*, etc are adjectives and are used to modify nouns. For example: *They imposed a total ban on plastic bags. / Their paintings were beautiful. / It was a sudden change. / They are in good health.*

[Reference: Chapter 250, Vol III, Common Errors]

### Mistake no. 2 (Paragraph 2):

Plastic bags are often used only once and end up polluting both soil and water, causing floods by clogging up drainage systems and also causing the death of countless land and marine animals which get entangled in them or ingest them, and besides, even when plastic does start to break down, it fragments into microplastic particles which cause even more damage to animal life, so it seems that the only way to prevent throw-away plastic items from seriously and irreversibly damaging our planet would be to prohibit them.



Plastic bags are often used only once and end up polluting both soil and water. For example, they cause floods by clogging up drainage systems and also cause the death of countless land and marine animals which get entangled in them or ingest them. Besides, even when plastic does start to break down, it fragments into microplastic particles which cause even more damage to animal life. Consequently, it seems that



the only way to prevent throw-away plastic items from seriously and irreversibly damaging our planet would be to prohibit them.

*Explanation:*

The solution provided here shows only one way of correcting this overlong sentence. There are of course many other ways of correcting it.

Very often, overlong sentences are the result of three different problems:

- i. too many different ideas packed into one single sentence;
- ii. poor use of punctuation (comma, full stop);
- iii. lack, misuse or overuse of linking words (e.g. *and* / *because* / *however* / *in spite of* / etc).

Our overlong sentence here clearly has too many different ideas, too much information:

- (1) the topic sentence is *Plastic bags are often used only once and end up polluting both soil and water*, followed by
- (2) examples of forms of pollution (clogged up drainage systems + death of animals)  
+
- (3) additional information, signalled by *and besides* +
- (4) information about the consequence of the problem (*so it seems ...*).

Keeping the beginning as it is, we can structure the rest of the information more effectively using three more sentences: (1) *Plastic bags are often used only once and end up polluting both soil and water.* (2) *For example, .....* (3) *Besides, .....* (4) *Consequently, .....*

[Reference: Chapter 45, Vol I, Linking Words & Sentence Structures; Chapter 250, Vol III, Common Errors]

**Mistake no. 3** (Paragraph 3):

' change consumer behaviour before completely **ban** plastic bags.'

↓

' change consumer behaviour before completely **banning** plastic bags.'

*Explanation:*

When a preposition is followed by a verb, the verb is normally in the *-ing* form (gerund).

In the above sentence, although the preposition *before* is not immediately in front of the verb, it still decides the form of the verb. Here is another similar example:

- We will not succeed in rapidly reducing global emissions if we do not change our lifestyle.

[Reference: Chapter 204, Vol III, Prepositions; Chapter 136, Vol II, Verb Patterns]

**Mistake no. 4** (Paragraph 3):

'... a convenience **who** shoppers appreciate ...'

↓

'... a convenience **which** shoppers appreciate ...' or '... a convenience **that** shoppers appreciate ...'

*Explanation:*

The relative pronoun *who* can only be used to refer to people (e.g. ... *shoppers who use plastic bags ...* / ... *scientists who warned us about climate change ...*)

A convenience is a thing, not a person, so *who* cannot be used; *which* or *that* has to be used instead.

[Reference: Chapter 70, Vol I, Relative Clauses; Chapter 250, Vol III, Common Errors]

**Mistake no. 5** (Paragraph 3):

'... an effective way of raising awareness of **the** plastic pollution ...'



'... an effective way of raising awareness of plastic pollution ...'

*Explanation:*

No article is used with non-specific uncountable nouns.

In this case, *plastic pollution* does not refer to specific plastic pollution, but to plastic pollution in general - it is non-specific.

Note: The noun *plastic pollution* would be used with the definite article if it was used to refer to something specific rather than general. For example:

- Both corporations and people are responsible for **the plastic pollution that is ruining our oceans.**

In this example, *plastic pollution* refers to the specific plastic pollution that is ruining the oceans, which is why the definite article is used.

[Reference: Chapter 150, Vol II, Articles; Chapter 183, Vol II, Countable and Uncountable Nouns; Chapter 250 Vol III, Common Errors]

**Mistake no. 6** (Paragraph 4):

'In conclusion, **it is firmly believed** that ...'



'In conclusion, **I firmly believe** that ...'

*Explanation:*

Although the form *it is firmly believed* is grammatically accurate, it is inappropriate in an opinion essay. In an agree/disagree essay of this kind, your conclusion should clearly express and summarise your own personal opinion. The passive voice is used to make the style impersonal and is therefore inappropriate here.

[Reference: Chapter 127, Vol II, Passive Voice]

**Mistake no. 7** (Paragraph 4):

'... an eventual blanket ban on plastic bags **are** crucial ...'



'... an eventual blanket ban on plastic bags **is** crucial ...'

*Explanation:*

The subject of the verb *to be* is the noun phrase *an eventual blanket ban on plastic bags*. The main word in this noun phrase is *ban* (*on plastic bags* is just extra information to tell us what kind of ban we are talking about).

- iii. *ban* is a countable noun, used here in the singular.
- iv. 3rd person singular Present Simple of the verb *to be* is *is*.

If the subject was a plural noun, the plural form of *to be* would be required. For example:

- In my opinion, complete bans are rarely effective.

The subject of *to be* is *bans*, a plural form, so *to be* is 3rd person plural (*are*).

[Reference: Chapter 102-112, Vol II, Tenses; Chapter 250, Vol III, Common Errors]

## Spot the Mistakes - Essay no. 3: Answers

### Mistake no. 1 (Paragraph 1):

'This shortcoming is due to a lack of life experience and limited education, and they can be overcome in two simple ways.'

↓

'This shortcoming is due to a lack of life experience and limited education, and it can be overcome in two simple ways.'

or

'This shortcoming is due to a lack of life experience and limited education, and can be overcome in two simple ways.'

### Explanation:

- i. *it* in the second clause refers to *this shortcoming*, which is singular.
- ii. There are two verbs in this sentence: *is* and *can be overcome*. Both verbs have the same subject: *this shortcoming*, which is singular.
- iii. The pronoun that stands for a singular noun is *it* (*they* can only stand for a plural noun).

Note that in this sentence, it is possible to leave out the subject pronoun because it is clear that what can be overcome is 'this shortcoming'.

[Reference: Chapter 163, Vol II, Pronouns]

### Mistake no. 2 (Paragraph 2):

'The main reason why so many school leavers are unable to handle their own finances are that they have been living with their parents for free.'

↓

'The main reason why so many school leavers are unable to handle their own finances is that they have been living with their parents for free.'

*Explanation:*

The subject of the verb *to be* is the whole clause *The main reason why so many school leavers are unable to handle their own finances.*

subject	The main reason why so many school leavers are unable to handle their own finances	Noun Phrase
verb	Is	
object	that they have been living with their parents for free.	Noun Phrase

The main word in this clause is *the main reason*.

- v. *the main reason* is a countable noun, used here in the singular.

The main reason [why so many school leavers are unable to handle their own finances] is..

- vi. 3rd person singular Present Simple of the verb *to be* is *is*.

If the subject was a plural noun, the plural form of *to be* would be required. For example:

- **The main reasons** for divorce **are** lack of communication and domestic violence.

The subject of *to be* is *the main reasons*, a plural form, so *to be* is 3rd person plural (*are*).

[Reference: Chapter 102-112, Vol II, Tenses; Chapter 250, Vol III, Common Errors]

**Mistake no. 3** (Paragraph 2):

'Schools focus instead **over** classical subjects, . . .'



'Schools focus instead **on** classical subjects, . . .'

*Explanation:*

Some verbs can be followed by different prepositions and when this happens, the meaning changes because of the preposition (e.g. *look for* = try to find something you have lost; *look up to* = respect or admire someone; *look up* = try to find information in a book; etc).

Many other verbs are always used with the same preposition (e.g. ***focus on*** / ***depend on*** / ***insist on*** / ***participate in*** / ***belong to*** / etc).

Note that *focus* can also be used as a noun:

- In my opinion, life skills should be the focus of education.
- The main focus of education should be **on** helping young people acquire life skills.

[Reference: Chapter 204, Vol III, Prepositions; Chapter 250, Vol III, Common Errors]

**Mistake no. 4** (Paragraph 3):

'... solving young peoples' inability to plan personal finances.'



'... solving young **people's** inability to plan personal finances.'

*Explanation:*

To mark possession (= to show that something belongs to somebody / that something is meant for somebody / etc), we use apostrophe + s (.....'s) with:

- i. singular nouns (e.g. *a teacher's salary* / *an employee's motivation* / etc)
- ii. plural nouns that do not end in -s (e.g. *a women's magazine* / *the samurai's code of honour* / **people's inability** etc).

However, we use only an apostrophe (....') when:

- iii. the noun is a plural ending in -s (e.g. *our parents' responsibilities / a boys' school / etc*).

Although it does not end in -s, the noun *people* is always plural. Therefore, to show possession, an apostrophe + s is required (see ii.).

[Reference: Chapter 239, Vol III, Punctuation]

**Mistake no. 5** (Paragraph 3):

'Firstly parents should spend time with their children . . . '



'Firstly, parents should spend time with their children . . . '

*Explanation:*

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When linking words (e.g. *However, / Consequently, / Therefore, / etc*) are used at the beginning of a sentence, they are always followed by a comma.

[Reference: Chapter 239, Vol III, Punctuation; Chapter 45, Vol I, Linking Words & Sentence Structures]

**Mistake no. 6** (Paragraph 3):

'... spend time with their children teaching them how is money earned ...'



'... spend time with their children teaching them **how money is earned** ...'

*Explanation:*

In direct questions the subject comes *after* the auxiliary / verb:



- When will all people be truly equal?
- Why were plastic bags still allowed?
- How is money earned and budgeted?

In indirect questions, however, the subject comes *before* the auxiliary / verb:

- I wonder when all people will be truly equal.
- Environmentalists enquired why plastic bags were still allowed.
- Parents should teach their children how money is earned and budgeted.

[Reference: Chapter 83, Vol I, Word Order; Chapter 250, Vol III, Common Errors]

### Mistake no. 7 (Paragraph 3):

'... expand into a more serious household expenses.'



'... expand into more serious household expenses.'

IELTS Liz

#### Explanation:

The indefinite article (*a / an*) can only be used before a singular noun or noun phrase (e.g. *a laptop / a good student / a great American invention / etc*).

In the noun phrase *more serious household expenses*, the main noun is *expenses*, i.e. a plural noun. The final *-s* in *household expenses* shows that the noun is plural. This means that *expenses* cannot take the article *a*, which is only used for singular nouns.

Indeed, the noun *expenses* is always plural in expressions such as *medical expenses / legal expenses / living expenses / travel expenses / hotel expenses / etc*).

Therefore, the indefinite article should not be used.

- Old age pensioners often do not have enough money to pay for all their living expenses.
- The taxpayer should not have to pay for government officials' travel and accommodation expenses.

[Reference: Chapter 150, Vol II, Articles]

**Mistake no. 8** (Paragraph 3):

' Secondly, **the** schools should incorporate life skills into their final year curriculum.'



' Secondly, schools should incorporate life skills into their final year curriculum.'

*Explanation:*

Remember that no article is used with non-specific plural nouns.

In this case, *schools* does not refer to specific *schools*, but to all types of schools - it is non-specific. We are talking about schools in general.

Note: The noun *schools* would be used with the definite article if it was used to refer to something specific rather than general. For example:

- The schools our grandparents attended differed from those children attend today in some important ways.

In this example, the word *schools* refers to the specific schools that our grandparents attended, which is why the definite article is used.

[Reference: Chapter 150, Vol II, Articles; Chapter 183,, Vol II, Countable and Uncountable Nouns; Chapter 250, Vol III, Common Errors]

**Mistake no. 9** (Paragraph 3):

'... children will be able to **learn in supportive environment** ...'



'... children will be able to learn in **a** supportive environment ...'

*Explanation:*

Remember that we use the indefinite article when referring to a singular noun which is not specified.

- I. In the above sentence, the noun *environment* is clearly singular as there is no -s plural at the end.
- II. The noun *environment* is also unspecific, general: it is "any kind of supportive environment".
- III. For these two reasons, the indefinite article *a* has to be used.

[Reference: Chapter 150, Vol II, Articles; Chapter 183, Vol II, Countable and Uncountable Nouns]

### Mistake no. 10 (Paragraph 4):

'... young people lack of financial management skills due to the negligence of parents and schools ...'



'... young people lack financial management skills due to the negligence of parents and schools ...'

### Explanation:

IELTS Liz

The sentence in the essay above used *lack* as a verb, not as a noun. The word *lack* can be used as a verb or as a noun.

### Verb

When *lack* is used as a verb, it does not need a preposition:

- Young people lack financial management skills.
- Schools in rural areas often lack specialised equipment and libraries.

### Noun

When *lack* is used as a noun, it needs the preposition *of*:

- Young people have a lack of financial management skills.
- There is a serious lack of equipment and libraries in rural schools.

The sentence in the essay above could be paraphrased as follows using *lack* as a noun:

- Young people's lack of financial management skills is due to the negligence of parents and schools.

Note the related expression *to be lacking in something* (= not to have any of it / not to have enough of it). In this expression, *lacking* is an adjective and is used with the preposition *in*.

- Schools in rural areas are seriously lacking in specialised equipment and libraries.
- Young people are completely lacking in financial management skills due to the negligence of parents and schools

[Reference: Chapter 250, Vol III, Common Errors]

#### Mistake no. 11 (Paragraph 4):

'... young people lack of financial management skills due to the negligence of parents and schools, **what** can only be solved if both take more responsibility ...'

⇓

'... young people lack financial management skills due to the negligence of parents and schools, **which** can only be solved if both take more responsibility ...'

#### Explanation:

Very often, especially in written English, *which* is used to refer to the whole clause or sentence before it.

In the above sentence, *which* does not relate to the word *schools* or to the noun phrase *the negligence of parents and schools*. The word *which* relates to the whole clause before it: *young people lack financial management skills due to the negligence of parents and schools*. The sentence could be paraphrased as:

**The fact that** young people lack financial management skills due to the negligence of parents and schools can only be solved if both take more responsibility for equipping school leavers with the right skills.

or

Young people lack financial management skills due to the negligence of parents and schools. **This problem** can only be solved if both take more responsibility for equipping school leavers with the right skills.

Here is another example:

- Young people are not taught how to manage their personal finances, **which** often results in them spending money unwisely.

In this sentence, *which* does not relate to the word *finances*, but to the whole clause before it. We can see that the subject of *results* cannot be the plural noun *finances*. The subject of *results* is the whole clause *Young people are not taught how to manage their personal finances*. The sentence could be paraphrased as:

**The fact that** young people are not taught how to manage their personal finances often results in them spending money unwisely.

or

Young people are not taught how to manage their personal finances.  
**This** often results in them spending money unwisely

[Reference: Chapter 70, Vol I, Relative Clauses]

**Mistake no. 12** (Paragraph 4):

'... if both take more responsibility to equip school leavers with the right skills.'

↓

'... if both take more responsibility **for equipping** school leavers with the right skills.'

*Explanation:*

- i. Some nouns are used with a specific preposition (e.g. *the reason for something / an increase in something / etc*).
- ii. The noun *responsibility* is used with the preposition *for*:
  - People should take more responsibility for their own health.
- iii. After a preposition, we can have a noun or an *-ing* form of a verb (a gerund):
  - People should take more responsibility for looking after their own health.

[Reference: Chapter 204, Vol III, Prepositions; Chapter 250, Vol III, Common Errors]