



ENGLISH

as a Foreign Language

NIVEL B2 · AVANZADO / VANTAGE

Marco Común Europeo de Referencia para las Lenguas (MCER)

Recursos de preparación para el examen de inglés como lengua extranjera, Nivel B2

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Introduction

This text is part of a series of six English-as-a-Foreign-Language teaching materials, developed by UIIX (Universidad de Investigación e Innovación de México) for levels A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). This volume corresponds to level B2 (Vantage / Upper-Intermediate) and serves as a preparation resource for UIIX's English-as-a-Foreign-Language competency exam, available in the virtual classrooms of its online courses.

The text is designed for adult students who have completed level B1 or have equivalent intermediate knowledge of English. Each of the ten units combines a contextualized reading, practice with high-frequency vocabulary, an English Usage section with practical communication expressions and its own practice exercise, an explanation of grammar structures with examples and figures, and a multiple-choice practice quiz in the style of the of international exams, designed to prepare students for UIIX's competency exams.

This book was developed with structural reference to well-established English-as-a-Foreign-Language publishers as well as the official Council of Europe descriptors ("can-do statements") for level B2. The vocabulary in each unit (40 words and expressions) was selected from validated linguistic frequency lists (Oxford 3000, New General Service List and Brown Corpus), filtered by thematic relevance and level appropriateness; word meanings are provided, in Spanish, in the Dictionary at the end of the book.

CEFR Structure for Level B2

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) describes level B2 as "Vantage", the fourth level of the communicative-competence scale and the second of the "independent user" levels. Below are the official Council of Europe descriptors that this book aims to develop, organized by skill, quoted verbatim from the CEFR Self-Assessment Grid, Table 3 (qualitative aspects of spoken language use) and the CEFR Companion Volume illustrative scales.

Listening

"I can understand extended speech and lectures and follow even complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar."

Reading

"I can read articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular attitudes or viewpoints."

Vocabulary

"Has a good range of vocabulary for matters connected to their field and most general topics. Can vary formulation to avoid frequent repetition, but lexical gaps can still cause hesitation and circumlocution."
(Vocabulary range, CEFR Companion Volume)

Speaking

"I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible... I can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to my field of interest."

Range: "Has a sufficient range of language to be able to give clear descriptions, express viewpoints on most general topics, without much conspicuous searching for words, using some complex sentence forms to do so."

Accuracy: "Shows a relatively high degree of grammatical control. Does not make errors which cause misunderstanding, and can correct most of his/her mistakes."

Fluency: "Can produce stretches of language with a fairly even tempo; although he/she can be hesitant as he or she searches for patterns and expressions, there are few noticeably long pauses."

Coherence: "Can use a limited number of cohesive devices to link his/her utterances into clear, coherent discourse, though there may be some 'jumpiness' in a long contribution."

Writing

"I can write clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to my interests. I can write an essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view."

Grammar

"Good grammatical control; occasional 'slips' or non-systematic errors and minor flaws in sentence structure may still occur, but they are rare and can often be corrected in retrospect." (Grammatical accuracy, CEFR Companion Volume)

Course Overview – Ten Units

Each unit develops, in an integrated way, vocabulary, practical language use (English Usage), reading comprehension and grammar.

#	Topic	Vocabulary	English Usage	Reading	Grammar
1	Behind the Scenes	event logistics and behind-the-scenes production	describing processes and how things are organized	Lights, Camera, Action: How a Blockbuster Film Is Made	passive voice in all tenses and with modals
2	He Told Me Not To...	journalism, investigation, and interview terms	reporting and attributing what sources said	The Whistleblower Who Wouldn't Stay Silent	reported speech with modal and tense shifts
3	What If...?	life decisions and their consequences	speculating about hypothetical past and present	Between Two Kitchens: A Food Writer's Reflections on the Road Not Taken	mixed conditionals for past-present links
4	If Only...	regret, reflection, and personal growth	expressing regret and offering reassurance	The Weight of What Ifs	wish and if only for past and present regret
5	Walking Down the Street, She Noticed...	vivid vocabulary for describing scenes and atmosphere	functional phrases for vivid scene description	The Woman in the Green Coat	forming and using participle clauses accurately
6	What I Mean Is...	opinion, argument, and persuasion vocabulary	expressing and clarifying opinions emphatically	It's Not the Office That Makes Us Productive	cleft sentences for emphasis and focus
7	Give It Up, Break It Down	habits, projects, and personal change vocabulary	functional phrases for habits and problem-solving	Turning It Around: How Our Team Broke Down a Failing Project	advanced multi-word and three-part phrasal verbs
8	Never Have I Ever Seen Such a Thing	Vocabulary of extreme, dramatic experiences	Expressing astonishment and dramatic storytelling	Alone Against the Atlantic	Inversion after negative adverbials for emphasis
9	By This Time Next Year	future planning, goals, and predictions	expressing future plans and timelines	The Shape of Things to Come	future perfect and future continuous tenses
10	It Is Essential That...	corporate crisis, governance, and compliance terms	proposing and urging formal courses of action	The Memo That Saved the Company	the mandative subjunctive in formal recommendations

UNIT 1

Behind the Scenes

Objective (CEFR B2): to understand and use expressions related to describing how large-scale events and productions are organized and run behind the scenes, and to interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity, presenting clear, detailed descriptions and viewpoints on a wide range of subjects.

Reading: Lights, Camera, Action: How a Blockbuster Film Is Made

Every summer, millions of people flock to cinemas to watch the latest blockbuster, yet very few of them ever stop to consider how much work is hidden behind those two hours of entertainment. A modern action film is not simply written, shot, and released; it is planned, built, tested, and refined by thousands of specialists over several years. To understand how a mega-production truly comes together, it helps to follow the process from the very first idea to the night of the premiere.

The journey begins long before a single scene is filmed, in a phase known as development. At this stage, a screenplay is written and rewritten many times until the story is considered strong enough to justify the enormous budget that will eventually be required. Once a script has been approved by a studio, a director is hired and a production designer is brought on board to decide what the world of the film will look like. Locations are scouted, concept art is produced, and a detailed budget is drawn up. Nothing can be greenlit until financing has been secured, because a single blockbuster can cost well over two hundred million dollars. During this period, casting decisions are also made. Lead actors are usually chosen months in advance, and contracts are negotiated carefully, since a star's schedule must be coordinated with dozens of other commitments.

Once development is complete, the film moves into pre-production, when the practical groundwork is laid. Sets are designed and constructed, costumes are created, and complex stunts are choreographed and rehearsed until they can be performed safely. Storyboards are drawn for almost every shot so that the director and the cinematographer can plan camera angles in advance. Special permits must be obtained before certain locations can be used, and insurance must be arranged in case something goes wrong during filming. It is often said within the industry that a film is truly made twice: once on paper, during pre-production, and once again on set.

Production, the phase most people imagine when they think of filmmaking, is where the story is finally captured on camera. Scenes are rarely shot in the order in which they appear in the finished film; instead, they are filmed according to location and actor availability, which is far more efficient. While one scene is being shot on a soundstage, another may already be in preparation on location halfway across the world. Every day, dozens of technicians are needed: lighting is adjusted, microphones are positioned, and safety checks are carried out before any stunt is attempted. Footage is reviewed by the director at the end of each day to make sure that no scene will need to be filmed again later, since reshoots are extremely expensive. If a performance is not considered convincing, another take is requested immediately, before the set is dismantled and the cast and crew move elsewhere.

After filming has finished, the project enters post-production, a stage that can take longer than the shoot itself. Thousands of hours of raw footage are examined, and the best takes are selected and assembled into a coherent story by an editor. Meanwhile, visual effects are being created by specialists who may work on a single sequence for months. A single shot showing a collapsing building, for example, might be built almost entirely by computer, layer by layer, until it looks completely real. Sound design is another crucial part of this process: dialogue is cleaned up, sound effects are added, and an original score is composed and recorded by a full orchestra. Every element must be balanced with extraordinary care, because if the music is too loud, dialogue can be lost, and if effects are exaggerated, a scene can lose its emotional impact. Test screenings are then organized so that ordinary audiences can watch an early version of the film. Their reactions are noted carefully, and if a particular scene is not well received, it may be re-edited or even cut completely. Nothing should be finalized until this feedback has been considered.

Marketing begins long before the film is finished, often more than a year in advance. Trailers are produced and released in stages to build anticipation gradually, and posters are designed to be instantly recognizable. Interviews with the cast are scheduled, and social media campaigns are launched to keep audiences engaged. By the time the film is finally released, a considerable portion of the total budget will already have been spent on advertising rather than production itself, which shows just how important promotion is considered to be in the modern film industry.

Because a blockbuster is usually intended for cinemas around the world, an entire additional stage of work is required before it can reach international audiences. Once the final cut has been approved, the film is sent to specialized studios, where it is dubbed into dozens of languages and subtitles are prepared for markets where dubbing is not the norm. Voice actors are carefully selected so that each performance still feels natural once it has been translated, and lip-sync accuracy is checked line by line before a dubbed version is considered acceptable. At the same time, promotional material is being adapted for different regions: posters are redesigned, titles are sometimes changed completely, and release dates are coordinated so that piracy risks are minimized. In some countries, additional scenes are trimmed or adjusted so that the film complies with local content regulations, and these versions must be approved separately by regional censors before they can be shown in theaters. Coordinating a simultaneous worldwide release, sometimes called a "day-and-date" release, is considered a logistical achievement in itself, since prints and digital files have to be delivered securely to thousands of cinemas within a very narrow window of time.

Even after release, the work is not entirely finished. Box office results are analyzed closely, audience feedback is studied, and, if the film performs well, plans for a sequel might already be discussed within weeks. In recent years, some studios have even begun testing extended or alternate versions of their films for streaming platforms, and additional scenes are sometimes filmed specifically for these releases. It could be argued that a blockbuster is never truly finished; it is simply released, and improvements can always be made afterward for future formats.

What is perhaps most remarkable is how invisible this entire process is meant to be. When a film succeeds, audiences rarely think about the thousands of decisions that were made, the risks that had to be managed, or the countless problems that must have been solved along the way. A convincing illusion is created precisely because so much effort is dedicated to making the process disappear. Every department, from

costume design to sound engineering, must be coordinated so precisely that the audience never notices the seams between them. The next time a blockbuster is watched in a crowded cinema, it is worth remembering that behind every polished frame, an enormous, largely invisible team has been working for years to make two hours of magic possible.

Reading Comprehension – True or False

Read the text again and decide if each statement is true (T) or false (F).

1. A screenplay is usually approved before a director is hired. ____ (T / F)
2. Blockbuster films are always shot in the exact order in which the scenes appear on screen. ____ (T / F)
3. Visual effects can take specialists several months to complete for a single sequence. ____ (T / F)
4. Marketing for a blockbuster typically only begins after the film has been released. ____ (T / F)
5. Test screenings allow studios to gather audience feedback before a film is finalized. ____ (T / F)

Reading Comprehension – Multiple Choice

Read each question and choose the correct answer.

1. According to the text, what must happen before a film project can be greenlit?

- A) A trailer must be released
- B) Financing must be secured
- C) A sequel must be planned
- D) A test screening must be organized

2. Why are scenes usually filmed out of story order?

- A) Because actors prefer it that way
- B) Because it makes editing easier
- C) Because it is more efficient in terms of location and actor availability
- D) Because directors are required to do so by law

3. What is one reason reshoots are avoided whenever possible?

- A) They are extremely expensive
- B) They are prohibited by studios
- C) They make actors nervous
- D) They damage film equipment

4. What happens during test screenings?

- A) Special effects are filmed for the first time
- B) Ordinary audiences watch an early version and their reactions are noted
- C) The final score is composed
- D) Costumes are designed for the first time

5. According to the final paragraph, what is considered the goal of the entire filmmaking process?

- A) To make the process as visible as possible to audiences
- B) To reduce the number of people involved
- C) To create a convincing illusion by making the process seem invisible
- D) To finish the film as quickly as possible

Key Vocabulary

High-frequency words and expressions (Oxford 3000, New General Service List and Brown Corpus), filtered by topic relevance and B2 level. Meanings are in the Dictionary at the end of the book.

1–10	11–20	21–30	31–40
1. to coordinate	11. infrastructure	21. to synchronize	31. task force
2. logistics	12. to allocate	22. milestone	32. to delegate
3. venue	13. budget	23. workflow	33. setup
4. to assemble	14. contractor	24. to streamline	34. to inspect
5. crew	15. to dismantle	25. subcontractor	35. compliance
6. to oversee	16. security detail	26. permit	36. turnaround time
7. deadline	17. stagehand	27. to troubleshoot	37. liaison
8. to schedule	18. production team	28. supply chain	38. contingency plan
9. rehearsal	19. to fine-tune	29. volunteer	39. to roll out
10. to broadcast	20. backstage	30. to mobilize	40. teardown

Vocabulary Practice

Choose the correct option to complete each sentence.

1. What does "blockbuster" mean in the text?

- A) A highly successful and popular film that earns a lot of money
- B) A small independent film with a tiny budget
- C) A type of film camera used for wide shots
- D) A film that is never released in cinemas

2. In the text, "greenlit" means:

- A) Painted a green color
- B) Officially approved to proceed
- C) Cancelled permanently
- D) Filmed outdoors at night

3. What does "scouted" mean in "Locations are scouted"?

- A) Cleaned thoroughly
- B) Rebuilt from scratch

- C) Searched for and examined to see if they are suitable
- D) Photographed for a magazine

4. The word "choreographed" (used with stunts) means:

- A) Filmed with multiple cameras
- B) Cancelled at the last minute
- C) Performed without any preparation
- D) Carefully planned and organized in terms of movement

5. What is the meaning of "cinematographer" as used in the text?

- A) A person responsible for the camera work and visual style of a film
- B) A person who sells tickets at the cinema
- C) A person who writes film reviews
- D) A person who edits sound effects

6. In the text, "footage" refers to:

- A) The measurements of the set
- B) The recorded film material captured by the cameras
- C) The list of actors in a film
- D) The soundtrack of a film

7. What does "convincing" mean in "If a performance is not considered convincing"?

- A) Extremely expensive
- B) Loud and dramatic
- C) Believable and persuasive
- D) Poorly lit

8. The word "anticipation" in the marketing paragraph is closest in meaning to:

- A) Disappointment
- B) Confusion
- C) Criticism
- D) Excited expectation about something that will happen

9. What does "dismantled" mean in "before the set is dismantled"?

- A) Taken apart or disassembled
- B) Painted a new color
- C) Sold to another studio
- D) Photographed for the final time

10. In the final paragraph, "invisible" is used to describe:

- A) A special effect that cannot be filmed
- B) A process that is deliberately not noticeable to the audience
- C) A team that refuses to be photographed
- D) A camera that works in the dark

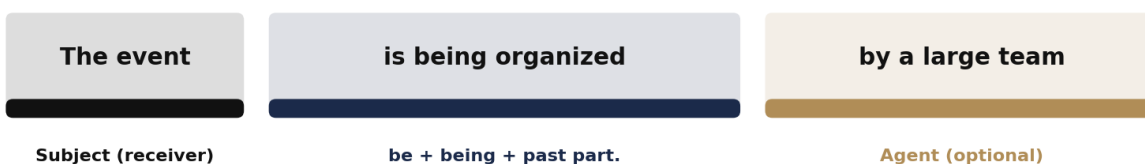
Grammar Focus: Passive Voice Across Tenses and with Modals

The passive voice is formed with the appropriate tense of the verb "to be" plus the past participle of the main verb (be + past participle). Unlike the active voice, which focuses on who performs an action (The studio approved the script), the passive voice shifts the focus onto the action itself or onto the person or thing that receives it (The script was approved). This structure exists across all the main tenses: present simple (is filmed), past simple (was directed), present perfect (has been edited), future simple (will be released), and continuous forms such as the present continuous passive (is being tested). The agent — the person or thing performing the action — can be included with "by" (The film was directed by a well-known director), but in most cases it is omitted altogether.

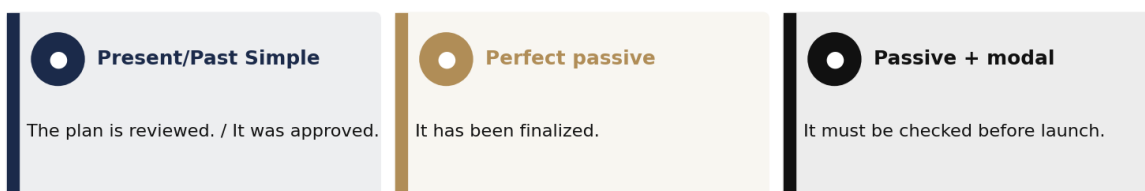
The passive voice is especially common in formal, technical, and journalistic English, precisely the kind of language used to describe processes such as filmmaking, manufacturing, or scientific research. It is preferred when the agent is unknown, unimportant, or obvious from context, and when the writer wants to emphasize the process or result rather than the person responsible. The passive voice also combines naturally with modal verbs to express obligation, permission, deduction, or advice about an action: must be approved (obligation in the present or future), should have been checked (criticism about the past), can be seen (ability or possibility), and could be improved (possibility or suggestion). The structure for modal passives is modal + be + past participle for present or future reference, and modal + have been + past participle for reference to the past.

Figure 1

1. Sentence structure



2. Forms and examples



Reference Table: Passive Voice Across Tenses

Present Simple Passive	am/is/are + past participle	The script is approved by the studio.
Past Simple Passive	was/were + past participle	The set was built in only three weeks.
Present Perfect Passive	has/have been + past participle	The trailer has been released online.
Future Simple Passive	will be + past participle	The film will be launched next year.
Present Continuous Passive	am/is/are being + past participle	The final scene is being edited right now.
Modal Passive	modal + be / have been + past participle	The footage must be approved before it can be used.

Examples

1. A screenplay is written and rewritten many times before it is approved.
2. The set was constructed by a large team of carpenters and designers.
3. Thousands of hours of footage have been reviewed by the editor this month.
4. The sequel will be released in cinemas worldwide next summer.
5. While the final scene is being filmed, the visual effects team is already preparing the next sequence.
6. All safety procedures must be followed, and any risky stunt should have been rehearsed thoroughly before it is performed.

English Usage

Learn and practice these useful expressions.

- The process is broken down into...
introducing the stages of a process
 - What happens behind the scenes is...
revealing hidden or unseen work
 - Everything has to be coordinated with...
stressing the need for coordination
 - It all comes down to...
summarizing the key factor behind success
 - A lot of planning goes into...
emphasizing the effort behind an outcome
 - Things are handled by...
explaining who is responsible for a task
 - On top of that,...
 - It's a matter of making sure that...
- adding an extra point to a process description*
stressing a condition for success

Sample Dialogue

A: I still can't believe how smoothly that opening ceremony was run last night.

B: I know. What happens behind the scenes is incredible, actually. Thousands of hours are put into a show like that.

A: So how is it all coordinated? It must be a nightmare to organize.

B: Well, the process is broken down into several stages. First, the venue is inspected and the stage is assembled weeks in advance.

A: And who handles the technical side, like the lighting and sound?

B: Things are handled by separate production teams. Everything has to be coordinated with the broadcast crew too, so the timing is perfect.

A: I imagine a lot of planning goes into the rehearsals as well.

B: Definitely. Each segment is rehearsed dozens of times, and the schedule is constantly fine-tuned right up until the last minute.

A: What about emergencies? Things must go wrong sometimes.

B: They do, but a contingency plan is always drawn up beforehand. On top of that, a task force is kept on standby in case anything needs to be fixed quickly.

A: It's a matter of making sure that nothing is left to chance, then.

B: Exactly. When you see the final result, it all comes down to communication — if every team isn't kept in the loop, the whole thing could fall apart.

A: That really changes how I'll watch these events from now on.

B: Same here. Once you know how much is organized behind the scenes, you appreciate it so much more.

Practice

Choose the best expression for each situation.

1. Which phrase is best used to introduce the different stages of an organizational process?

- A) It's a matter of making sure that...
- B) The process is broken down into...
- C) On top of that,...
- D) It all comes down to...

2. If you want to reveal information about hidden or unseen work, which expression fits best?

- A) What happens behind the scenes is...
- B) Things are handled by...
- C) A lot of planning goes into...
- D) Everything has to be coordinated with...

3. Complete the sentence naturally: "___ the security team and the venue managers to avoid any confusion on the day."

- A) It's a matter of making sure that

- B) Everything has to be coordinated with
- C) What happens behind the scenes is
- D) On top of that,

4. Which phrase is used to summarize the single most important factor behind an outcome?

- A) Things are handled by...
- B) A lot of planning goes into...
- C) The process is broken down into...
- D) It all comes down to...

5. You want to explain who is responsible for a particular task in a project. Which phrase should you use?

- A) Things are handled by...
- B) It's a matter of making sure that...
- C) It all comes down to...
- D) What happens behind the scenes is...

Practice Quiz (25 Questions)

Choose the only correct answer for each question, based on international exams. Answers are in the Answer Key at the end of the book.

1. The screenplay _____ by three different writers before it was finally approved.

- A) was written
- B) wrote
- C) is writing
- D) has write

2. According to industry regulations, all stunts _____ by a safety coordinator before they are performed.

- A) must approve
- B) must be approved
- C) must approving
- D) must approved

3. Choose the correct passive form: "The final cut of the film _____ by the director."

- A) has approved
- B) was approve
- C) has been approved
- D) is approve

4. Right now, the visual effects team is working hard because the last sequence _____.

- A) is finished
- B) was finishing
- C) has finish
- D) is being finished

5. By next month, the entire marketing campaign _____.
A) will be completed
B) will complete
C) is completed
D) was completed
6. The set design _____ by an award-winning production designer last year.
A) is created
B) was created
C) has created
D) creates
7. Critics agree that the trailer _____ months ago, but the studio delayed it deliberately.
A) should release
B) should have released
C) should have been released
D) should be released
8. The soundtrack for the film _____ by a full orchestra at the moment.
A) is recording
B) has recorded
C) recorded
D) is being recorded
9. Every costume in the film _____ specifically for this production.
A) was designed
B) designed
C) is designing
D) has design
10. It is essential that every stunt _____ carefully before filming begins.
A) rehearses
B) is rehearsed
C) is rehearsing
D) rehearsed
11. The film's budget _____ significantly since pre-production began.
A) has increased
B) is increasing
C) has been increased
D) increases
12. Which sentence is correctly written in the passive voice?

- A) The editor has assembled the footage into a coherent story.
- B) The editor assembling the footage.
- C) The footage assembles the editor.
- D) The footage has been assembled into a coherent story by the editor.

13. The sequel _____ next summer, according to the studio's official announcement.

- A) will be launched
- B) will launch
- C) is launched
- D) was launched

14. All safety equipment _____ thoroughly before the crew arrives on set each morning.

- A) checks
- B) is checked
- C) checked
- D) has check

15. The word "convincing" in "a convincing illusion" is closest in meaning to:

- A) expensive
- B) confusing
- C) believable
- D) temporary

16. Test screenings _____ regularly to gather audience feedback before a film's release.

- A) organize
- B) organized
- C) has organized
- D) are organized

17. Which sentence correctly uses a modal passive to describe a past mistake?

- A) The scene should have been reshot.
- B) The scene must be reshot.
- C) The scene should reshot.
- D) The scene has should been reshot.

18. A director's chair _____ next to the main camera for as long as anyone can remember.

- A) has always placed
- B) has always been placed
- C) always places
- D) always placed

19. The word "anticipation" most nearly means:

- A) disappointment
- B) confusion

- C) eager expectation
- D) delay

20. Right now, thousands of theaters around the world _____ for the midnight premiere.

- A) are preparing
- B) prepare
- C) have prepared
- D) are being prepared

21. The special effects budget _____ dramatically over the last two decades.

- A) has grown
- B) has been grown
- C) grows
- D) is growing

22. Choose the sentence with a correct passive modal referring to obligation.

- A) The final script must approve by the producers.
- B) The final script must be approved by the producers.
- C) The final script must approved by the producers.
- D) The final script must approving by the producers.

23. A "cinematographer" is best described as someone who _____.

- A) sells cinema tickets
- B) writes music for films
- C) is responsible for the camera work and visual style
- D) manages actors' schedules

24. By the time the film premieres, the marketing team _____ dozens of interviews and trailers.

- A) will release
- B) will be releasing
- C) releases
- D) will have released

25. Which of the following best replaces "dismantled" in "before the set is dismantled"?

- A) taken apart
- B) repainted
- C) sold
- D) photographed

UNIT 2

He Told Me Not To...

Objective (CEFR B2): to understand and use expressions related to reporting news, describing investigations, and recounting witness testimony, and to interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity, presenting clear, detailed descriptions and viewpoints on a wide range of subjects.

Reading: The Whistleblower Who Wouldn't Stay Silent

When my editor first handed me the file, she told me it was probably nothing. A former employee at Calderon Chemical had written to the newspaper claiming that safety inspections at the company's riverside plant had been falsified for years. She said that I should look into it quietly, and she warned me not to mention the tip to anyone outside the investigative team. I had no idea, at that point, how far the story would eventually go.

The whistleblower, a soft-spoken engineer named Daniel Reyes, agreed to meet me in a nearly empty diner on the edge of town. He seemed nervous, glancing at the door every few minutes. When I asked him why he had decided to come forward, he told me that he could no longer stay quiet about what he had witnessed. He said that he had worked at the plant for eleven years and that he had never seen anything as troubling as what had happened that spring.

Daniel explained that his supervisor had told him not to record certain readings from the pressure valves. He said that his supervisor had insisted that the readings be entered manually instead of through the automated system, because, according to Daniel, the automated logs "couldn't be edited afterward." When I asked whether he had ever questioned the instruction, Daniel admitted that he had, but that his supervisor had simply told him to do his job and stop asking questions. He recalled that his supervisor had warned him that if he refused, he would be transferred to a different, less desirable position.

I wanted to understand the full sequence of events, so I asked Daniel what exactly his supervisor had said during their final confrontation. Daniel told me that his supervisor had said the valves were fine and that there was nothing to worry about. He also revealed that his supervisor had claimed the company would fix the problem eventually, though he never explained when or how. Daniel said that he had asked his supervisor directly whether the plant was safe, and his supervisor had replied that it was, though Daniel didn't believe him for a second.

According to Daniel, the situation grew worse the following month. He said that an inspector from a regional safety board had visited the plant and had asked several pointed questions. The inspector wanted to know how often the valves were checked and who was responsible for recording the data. Daniel told me that he had wanted to explain everything to the inspector right there, but his supervisor was standing close by, so he said only that the readings were checked regularly.

Daniel wasn't the only one who had noticed something wrong. Later that week, I met a former colleague of his, a technician named Marisol Ibarra, who agreed to speak with me only if I promised not to use her real name in the article. She told me that she had once asked her supervisor directly whether the valves were

being inspected properly, and he had told her that it wasn't her concern. She said that another manager had warned her not to bring up the subject again in meetings, adding that questions like that could make people "look for trouble where there wasn't any." Marisol admitted that she had wondered, at the time, whether she should report what she had seen to a regulator, but she said she hadn't known whom she could trust.

Two days later, Daniel received a phone call from a company lawyer. He told me that the lawyer had asked him not to speak with anyone about the inspection and had reminded him that his contract included a confidentiality clause. The lawyer allegedly said that if Daniel spoke to a journalist, he could lose his job and possibly face legal consequences. Daniel said the lawyer had told him to think carefully before doing anything he might regret. It was, he admitted, the moment he decided he had to act, rather than the moment that silenced him.

When I contacted the company for comment, a spokesperson named Ms. Alvarado agreed to answer a few questions over the phone. I asked her whether the company had ever manipulated safety data, and she said that it had not. She insisted that all inspections were carried out according to strict regulatory standards. When I asked her whether any employee had ever raised concerns about the valves, she said she wasn't aware of any such complaints, though she promised she would look into it and get back to me. She also insisted that the company would never ask an employee to falsify a safety record, and when I asked her what would happen if an employee refused to follow an unsafe instruction, she said that no one had ever been punished for raising a safety concern.

She never did call back. Instead, three weeks later, the company issued a brief statement announcing that it would conduct an internal review "as a precaution." The statement said that the company took safety extremely seriously and that it would cooperate fully with any external investigation. It also noted that employees who had concerns should report them through the proper internal channels — a comment Daniel found almost laughable, given what he had already told the lawyer.

By then, I had spoken with four other former employees. Each one told a similar story. One woman said that a manager had once ordered her to stay late and rewrite an incident report so that it appeared less serious than it actually was. Another man told me that he had asked his supervisor what would happen if the valves failed, and his supervisor had simply shrugged and said that it probably wouldn't happen on his shift. A third former worker told me that his supervisor had warned him that he might be fired if he ever discussed the valves with anyone outside the company, while a fourth admitted that she had simply been too afraid to ask any questions at all.

When the regional safety board finally released its findings, the report confirmed nearly everything Daniel had described. Investigators stated that several valves had not met minimum safety standards for over two years and that internal logs appeared to have been altered. The board announced that it would impose a substantial fine and that the plant would have to suspend certain operations until repairs were completed.

Daniel called me the evening the report came out. He told me that he finally felt he could breathe again. He said that he had never wanted to become a public figure; he had only wanted someone to listen. When I asked him whether he regretted speaking to me, he said that he didn't, not for a moment, even though the past year had cost him his job and, for a while, his peace of mind.

Looking back, I think about how easily this story could have disappeared. If Daniel had listened when the lawyer told him to stay quiet, if my editor had decided the tip wasn't worth pursuing, none of it would ever have come to light. Sometimes the truth only survives because someone, somewhere, refuses to do what he is told.

Reading Comprehension – True or False

Read the text again and decide if each statement is true (T) or false (F).

1. Daniel Reyes worked at Calderon Chemical for over a decade before coming forward. ____ (T / F)
2. Daniel's supervisor encouraged him to record the pressure valve readings through the automated system. ____ (T / F)
3. A company lawyer contacted Daniel and warned him about his confidentiality clause. ____ (T / F)
4. Ms. Alvarado admitted during the phone interview that the company had manipulated safety data. ____ (T / F)
5. The regional safety board's report confirmed that several valves had not met minimum safety standards. ____ (T / F)

Reading Comprehension – Multiple Choice

Read each question and choose the correct answer.

1. Why did the editor first ask the journalist to investigate Calderon Chemical?

- A) A former employee had written claiming safety inspections were falsified
- B) A government agency had requested an official inquiry
- C) A rival newspaper had already published the story
- D) Daniel Reyes had contacted the editor directly

2. What did Daniel say his supervisor told him to do with certain valve readings?

- A) Report them to the regional safety board immediately
- B) Enter them manually instead of through the automated system
- C) Delete them completely from company records
- D) Share them with the company lawyer

3. What did the supervisor allegedly threaten if Daniel refused to follow instructions?

- A) That he would lose his job immediately
- B) That he would be reported to the police
- C) That he would be transferred to a different position
- D) That his salary would be reduced

4. What did the company lawyer ask Daniel to do?

- A) Speak only to the regional safety board
- B) Resign from his position immediately
- C) Provide a written statement to the press
- D) Not speak with anyone about the inspection

5. What did the regional safety board's report ultimately confirm?

- A) That the plant's safety record was excellent
- B) That valves had failed to meet safety standards and logs had been altered
- C) That employees had exaggerated the problems
- D) That Daniel had fabricated the entire story

Key Vocabulary

High-frequency words and expressions (Oxford 3000, New General Service List and Brown Corpus), filtered by topic relevance and B2 level. Meanings are in the Dictionary at the end of the book.

1–10	11–20	21–30	31–40
1. journalist	11. article	21. corruption	31. editor
2. investigation	12. leak	22. cover-up	32. draft
3. testimony	13. confidential	23. whistleblower	33. fact-check
4. witness	14. anonymous	24. statement	34. bias
5. source	15. claim	25. press conference	35. credible
6. allegation	16. deny	26. quote	36. rumor
7. evidence	17. admit	27. off the record	37. disclose
8. interview	18. confirm	28. on the record	38. subpoena
9. reporter	19. investigate	29. broadcast	39. testify
10. headline	20. scandal	30. publish	40. transcript

Vocabulary Practice

Choose the correct option to complete each sentence.

1. What does "whistleblower" mean as used in the reading?

- A) A person who reveals wrongdoing within an organization
- B) A person who repairs industrial equipment
- C) A referee at a sporting event
- D) A government safety inspector

2. In the text, "falsified" most nearly means:

- A) confirmed as accurate
- B) deliberately made false or altered
- C) recorded automatically
- D) published publicly

3. The word "troubling" in the reading is closest in meaning to:

- A) reassuring

- B) entertaining
- C) causing worry or concern
- D) confusing to read

4. What does "confrontation" mean in the context of Daniel and his supervisor?

- A) A friendly conversation
- B) A written agreement
- C) A scheduled meeting with no conflict
- D) A tense, direct disagreement or clash

5. "Allegedly" is used in the reading to indicate that:

- A) something is claimed but not officially proven
- B) something is definitely true
- C) something happened in the past perfect
- D) something was recorded on video

6. In the sentence about the lawyer, "confidentiality clause" refers to:

- A) a bonus payment described in a contract
- B) a section of a contract requiring secrecy
- C) a public announcement
- D) a legal penalty for lateness

7. The word "manipulated" as used about safety data means:

- A) collected honestly
- B) stored securely
- C) dishonestly altered or controlled
- D) shared publicly

8. "Cooperate" in the company's statement most nearly means:

- A) refuse to participate
- B) compete against a rival
- C) delay a process indefinitely
- D) work together with someone

9. What does "suspend" mean in "the plant would have to suspend certain operations"?

- A) temporarily stop
- B) permanently end
- C) speed up
- D) expand significantly

10. In the final paragraph, "disappeared" is used to suggest that the story:

- A) became extremely popular
- B) could have been forgotten or never published
- C) was translated into another language

D) was proven completely false

Grammar Focus: Reported Speech: Statements, Questions, Imperatives, and Modal Shifts

Reported speech (also called indirect speech) is used to tell someone what another person said, asked, or wanted, without quoting their exact words. When the reporting verb is in the past (said, told, asked), the verb tense in the reported clause usually shifts back one step — this is called backshift: present simple becomes past simple, present continuous becomes past continuous, present perfect becomes past perfect, past simple becomes past perfect, and will becomes would. Pronouns, time expressions, and place references also change to fit the new speaker and context (I becomes he/she, tomorrow becomes the next day, here becomes there). Modal verbs shift in predictable ways too: can becomes could, may becomes might, must (obligation) becomes had to or stays must, and will becomes would. Reporting verbs such as say, tell, explain, admit, claim, insist, and reveal allow writers to show not just what was said but how it was said, which adds nuance to a narrative.

Reported questions follow different word order rules than direct questions: the subject comes before the verb, and no auxiliary do/does/did is used, since the sentence is no longer a question grammatically, even though it reports one. For yes/no questions, the reporting clause uses if or whether ("She asked whether the plant was safe"). For wh-questions, the question word itself introduces the clause ("He asked what had happened"). Reported imperatives and requests use a reporting verb such as told, asked, warned, or ordered, followed by an object and a to-infinitive ("She told him not to mention it"; "He asked her to wait"); the negative is formed by placing not before the infinitive. Mastering these patterns allows writers and speakers to summarize conversations, interviews, and instructions accurately and naturally — an essential skill for journalism, storytelling, and everyday communication about what other people have said.

Figure 2

1. Sentence structure



2. Forms and examples

 Reported questions "Are you ready?" → He asked if I was ready."	 Reported imperatives "Wait here." → She told him to wait there.	 Modal shifts can→could, will→would, must→had to
---	---	---

Reference Table: Reported Speech — Statements, Questions, and Imperatives

Reported statement	"I have worked here for eleven years."	He said that he had worked there for eleven years.
Reported yes/no question	"Is the plant safe?"	She asked whether the plant was safe.
Reported wh-question	"Who is responsible for the data?"	The inspector asked who was responsible for the data.
Reported imperative (positive)	"Wait outside."	He told her to wait outside.
Reported imperative (negative)	"Don't mention the tip."	She warned me not to mention the tip.
Modal shift	"I can help you tomorrow."	He said he could help me the next day.

Examples

1. Daniel told me that he could no longer stay quiet about what he had witnessed. (reported statement, backshift + can → could)
2. His supervisor had told him not to record certain readings from the pressure valves. (reported imperative, negative to-infinitive)
3. I asked Daniel whether he had ever questioned the instruction. (reported yes/no question)
4. The inspector wanted to know how often the valves were checked. (reported wh-question)
5. The lawyer said that if Daniel spoke to a journalist, he could lose his job. (reported statement with modal)
6. The board announced that it would impose a substantial fine and that the plant would have to suspend operations. (reported statement, will → would, must → would have to)

English Usage

Learn and practice these useful expressions.

- According to...
introducing a claim from a named source
- Sources say that...
reporting information without naming the source
- She claimed that...
reporting a statement whose truth is uncertain
- He was quoted as saying...
attributing an exact statement to someone
- It is alleged that...
reporting an unproven accusation formally
- Reportedly, ...
signaling secondhand, unverified information
- She went on to say that...
introducing a further point in reported speech
- He insisted that...
reporting a statement repeated firmly, despite doubt

Sample Dialogue

A: Did you read the piece about the city council investigation?

B: Yes, the journalist interviewed the whistleblower yesterday. According to her report, the mayor's office knew about the missing funds for months.

A: Really? What did the whistleblower actually say?

B: She claimed that officials had ordered her to alter the records before the audit.

A: That's a serious allegation. Did she give any evidence?

B: Reportedly, she handed over several documents to the reporter, but they haven't been verified yet.

A: What about the mayor? Did anyone ask him to comment?

B: He was quoted as saying that he had never seen those documents before.

A: Do people believe him?

B: Not really. Sources say that two other employees confirmed the whistleblower's story.

A: Did she mention anything else?

B: She went on to say that she had reported the problem internally last year, but nobody responded.

A: So it's alleged that the cover-up started even earlier than we thought.

B: Exactly. And he insisted that the investigation was politically motivated, but the evidence doesn't seem to support that.

Practice

Choose the best expression for each situation.

1. Which phrase introduces information from an unnamed source?

- A) Sources say that
- B) He was quoted as saying
- C) According to the mayor
- D) She went on to say that

2. "It is alleged that the funds were misused." This sentence tells us that the claim...

- A) has been proven true in court
- B) was confirmed by the mayor himself
- C) has not yet been proven
- D) is common knowledge among staff

3. Which phrase signals that a report is secondhand and unverified?

- A) He was quoted as saying
- B) Reportedly
- C) He insisted that
- D) According to the report

4. A journalist writes: "He was quoted as saying he had never seen the documents." This means the words are...

- A) an anonymous rumor
- B) a summary written by the journalist
- C) an exact statement attributed to him
- D) an unproven accusation

5. Which phrase best reports a statement the speaker repeated firmly, despite doubts about it?

- A) She claimed that
- B) Sources say that
- C) It is alleged that
- D) He insisted that

Practice Quiz (25 Questions)

Choose the only correct answer for each question, based on international exams. Answers are in the Answer Key at the end of the book.

1. Direct: "I am tired." Reported: She said that she ____ tired.

- A) was
- B) is
- C) has been
- D) be

2. Direct: "Can you help me?" Reported: He asked if I ____ help him.

- A) will
- B) could

- C) may
- D) can

3. Direct: "Where do you live?" Reported: She asked me where I ____.

- A) do live
- B) live
- C) lived
- D) am living

4. Direct: "Don't touch that machine." Reported: The supervisor told him ____ touch the machine.

- A) don't
- B) to not
- C) no to
- D) not to

5. Direct: "I will call you tomorrow." Reported: He said he ____ call me the next day.

- A) would
- B) will
- C) can
- D) shall

6. Choose the correct reported yes/no question.

- A) She asked did he understand the instructions.
- B) She asked if he understood the instructions.
- C) She asked he understood the instructions.
- D) She asked whether did he understand.

7. Direct: "You must submit the report by Friday." Reported: The manager said that I ____ submit the report by Friday.

- A) must
- B) should to
- C) had to
- D) may

8. Direct: "Please wait here." Reported: The receptionist asked us ____ there.

- A) wait
- B) waited
- C) waiting
- D) to wait

9. Direct: "What time does the meeting start?" Reported: He wanted to know what time the meeting ____.

- A) started
- B) starts
- C) start

D) did start

10. Choose the correctly reported imperative.

- A) He told me stop talking.
- B) He told me to stop talking.
- C) He told me that stop talking.
- D) He told to me stop talking.

11. Direct: "I may be late." Reported: She said she ____ be late.

- A) may
- B) can
- C) might
- D) must

12. Direct: "Have you finished the project?" Reported: He asked whether I ____ the project.

- A) have finished
- B) finished
- C) finish
- D) had finished

13. A "whistleblower" is best defined as someone who:

- A) reports wrongdoing inside an organization
- B) enforces workplace rules strictly
- C) trains new employees
- D) manages a company's finances

14. Direct: "Why did you leave early?" Reported: She asked me why I ____ early.

- A) leave
- B) had left
- C) left
- D) have left

15. Direct: "I can't attend the meeting." Reported: He explained that he ____ attend the meeting.

- A) can't
- B) won't
- C) couldn't
- D) mustn't

16. Choose the sentence with correct reported speech word order.

- A) I don't know where does he live.
- B) I don't know where lives he.
- C) I don't know where he does live.
- D) I don't know where he lives.

17. Something "falsified" has been:

- A) deliberately made false
- B) proven completely accurate
- C) submitted on time
- D) publicly praised

18. Direct: "Sign the form now." Reported: The officer ordered him ____ the form immediately.

- A) sign
- B) to sign
- C) signing
- D) signed

19. Direct: "We must fix the valve." Reported: They admitted that they ____ fix the valve.

- A) must
- B) may
- C) had to
- D) would to

20. Direct: "Is the report ready?" Reported: The editor asked whether the report ____ ready.

- A) is
- B) has been
- C) be
- D) was

21. A "confidentiality clause" in a contract requires an employee to:

- A) keep certain information secret
- B) work longer hours
- C) attend regular training
- D) report directly to a lawyer

22. Direct: "Don't call me after 9 pm." Reported: She asked him ____ her after 9 pm.

- A) not call
- B) not to call
- C) to not call
- D) don't calling

23. Direct: "I will finish it tomorrow." Reported: He promised he ____ finish it the next day.

- A) will
- B) can
- C) would
- D) may

24. To "cooperate" with an investigation means to:

- A) resist and delay it

- B) ignore it completely
- C) publicly criticize it
- D) work together and assist it

25. Direct: "Can I leave early today?" Reported: She asked if she ____ leave early that day.

- A) could
- B) will
- C) shall
- D) can

UNIT 3

What If...?

Objective (CEFR B2): to understand and use expressions related to speculating about past decisions and their impact on present life, and to interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity, presenting clear, detailed descriptions and viewpoints on a wide range of subjects.

Reading: Between Two Kitchens: A Food Writer's Reflections on the Road Not Taken

At forty-five, Clara Bennett spends her mornings walking through the Mercado da Ribeira in Lisbon, notebook in hand, searching for the ingredients that will fill her next newspaper column. She is one of Portugal's most widely read food writers, though she was born in Manchester and did not set foot in Lisbon until she was thirty-two. If you ask her how she ended up here, she will laugh and tell you it all comes down to a single decision she made at eighteen, one she has spent the better part of three decades unpacking.

Clara was a gifted student. Her chemistry teacher called her "the best mind I've taught in twenty years," and by the time she sat her final exams, she had already been offered a place to study medicine at a respected university. Her parents were thrilled; her grandmother, a woman who had survived the war on very little, wept with pride. Everyone assumed Clara would accept. Instead, she deferred the offer for a year, took a summer job in a small restaurant kitchen in Cornwall, and never went back. If she had studied medicine as everyone expected, she would almost certainly be a consultant now, perhaps running a department in some regional hospital, comfortable and respected. She is neither of those things. She is, by her own admission, a woman who spends her days tasting sardines and writing about the particular sourness of a Douro wine.

"People think I regret it," she says, "but I don't think regret is quite the right word. If I hadn't spent that summer peeling potatoes in a kitchen that smelled of butter and salt, I wouldn't understand food the way I do now. Everything I've built rests on that one summer." It is a classic example of how a past decision continues to shape a present reality: had she chosen differently, her present life would look entirely different.

Yet Clara is quick to point out that not every choice in her life has been so deliberate. Ask her about her failed engagement to a violinist named Tom, and her tone changes. They met in her late twenties, when she was still an assistant editor at a small food magazine in London, and Tom was touring with a string quartet. For two years they wrote each other long letters between cities, and for two years Clara said almost nothing about how she truly felt. She is, by nature, a deeply private and cautious person, someone who has never found it easy to say what she wants out loud. If she weren't so guarded about her own feelings, she would have told Tom she loved him before he moved to Vienna permanently. Instead, she said nothing, assumed he already knew, and watched him leave. It is a mixed conditional of a different shape: a present character trait, one she still recognizes in herself today, explaining why a particular chance in the past slipped away unclaimed.

Clara's caution shows up again and again when she talks about her career. In her early thirties, an editor at a major broadsheet offered her the chance to become the paper's Tokyo correspondent, covering food and

culture across East Asia. It was, by any measure, the opportunity of a lifetime. She turned it down within a week, telling herself she wasn't ready, that her Portuguese was better than her Japanese would ever be, that she preferred the food she already understood. "If I weren't such a careful, risk-averse person," she admits now, "I would have taken that job without a second thought. I think about it more than almost anything else I've turned down." The trait that stopped her then is, by her own account, the same trait that still governs how she makes decisions today, which is precisely what makes it a present condition with a past consequence, rather than a simple regret confined to history.

Clara often measures her own choices against those of David Okafor, her closest friend from secondary school, who accepted the very kind of offer she turned down. David did go on to study medicine, and today he is a respected cardiologist in Manchester, with a house in the suburbs, two children, and a schedule built around hospital shifts rather than market mornings. Clara insists she does not envy him, exactly, though she admits the comparison is never far from her mind. "If I had made the choice David made, I would probably be exactly where he is now," she says, "and I don't think that life is wrong. It's just not mine." What strikes her most, when the two of them meet for dinner once a year, is how differently their present lives read as a consequence of what was, in the end, a single overlapping decision made at eighteen, in the same classroom, under the same chemistry teacher's watchful eye.

Not every one of Clara's mixed conditionals points backward with regret, however. Some point forward with quiet gratitude. Had she accepted the medical school offer, she would never have met Sofia, the Portuguese chef who eventually became her closest friend and business partner, and who convinced her, over a bottle of vinho verde, to move to Lisbon permanently. If Clara had become a doctor, she would be living a life built around hospital shifts and clinical rounds now, not one built around markets, deadlines, and long lunches that stretch into the evening. She would, she suspects, be a very different person, perhaps more secure, perhaps wealthier, but not, she insists, happier.

Her cautious nature has not entirely disappeared, though age has softened it. Two years ago, when a publisher approached her about writing a memoir, Clara nearly said no out of old habit. This time, however, something shifted. If she were still the same twenty-eight-year-old who let Tom walk away without a word, she would have refused the offer outright, buried it under a dozen reasonable-sounding excuses. Instead, she said yes. The book, a collection of essays about food, choice, and the cities that shaped her, is due out next spring.

Clara is careful not to romanticize the road she took, or to pretend the road not taken would have been worse. "If I had studied medicine, I would be treating patients right now instead of writing about them," she says, "and there's a version of me in some parallel life who is glad of that. I don't think she's wrong to be glad. I just don't think I'm her." What she has come to believe, after decades of turning the question over, is that mixed conditionals are not really about right and wrong choices at all. They are simply the shape memory takes when a person tries to hold the past and the present in the same sentence, one clause reaching backward, the other standing firmly in the here and now.

These days, when younger writers ask Clara for advice, she tells them almost the same thing every time: pay attention to the small, ordinary decisions, because those are the ones that quietly determine who you will

become. "If I hadn't peeled those potatoes in Cornwall," she says, closing her notebook as the market begins to empty for the afternoon, "I wouldn't be standing here right now, and neither would this conversation." She smiles, orders one more coffee, and goes back to work.

Reading Comprehension – True or False

Read the text again and decide if each statement is true (T) or false (F).

1. Clara Bennett was born in Lisbon. ____ (T / F)
2. Clara received an offer to study medicine before she left school. ____ (T / F)
3. Clara accepted the position as the newspaper's Tokyo correspondent. ____ (T / F)
4. Clara told Tom she loved him before he moved to Vienna. ____ (T / F)
5. Sofia convinced Clara to move to Lisbon permanently. ____ (T / F)

Reading Comprehension – Multiple Choice

Read each question and choose the correct answer.

1. What did Clara study instead of medicine?

- A) Chemistry
- B) Journalism
- C) Law
- D) Music

2. Why did Clara turn down the Tokyo correspondent position?

- A) She didn't get along with the editor
- B) A senior hospital doctor
- C) She considered herself too cautious to accept it
- D) She had already accepted another job

3. What is Tom's profession?

- A) Editor
- B) Chef
- C) Doctor
- D) Violinist

4. According to the text, what convinced Clara to move to Lisbon permanently?

- A) Her friendship with Sofia
- B) A magazine assignment
- C) A hospital job offer
- D) Her grandmother's advice

5. What did Clara nearly do when the publisher approached her about a memoir?

- A) Accept immediately

- B) Refuse out of old habit
- C) Ask for more money
- D) Suggest someone else write it

Key Vocabulary

High-frequency words and expressions (Oxford 3000, New General Service List and Brown Corpus), filtered by topic relevance and B2 level. Meanings are in the Dictionary at the end of the book.

1–10	11–20	21–30	31–40
1. crossroads	11. to take a chance	21. to gamble on	31. self-doubt
2. turning point	12. to settle for	22. aspiration	32. to hold back
3. to reflect on	13. fulfillment	23. to drift apart	33. breakthrough
4. hindsight	14. what-if scenario	24. milestone	34. comfort zone
5. regret	15. speculation	25. to second-guess	35. to venture into
6. to weigh up	16. outcome	26. leap of faith	36. hypothetical
7. consequence	17. to shape	27. trade-off	37. to fall into place
8. career path	18. life-changing	28. to look back on	38. long-term impact
9. to pursue	19. to reconsider	29. path not taken	39. to make peace with
10. opportunity	20. dilemma	30. contentment	40. unforeseen

Vocabulary Practice

Choose the correct option to complete each sentence.

1. In the text, "deferred" the offer means she...

- A) rejected it completely
- B) accepted it immediately
- C) postponed accepting it
- D) forgot about it

2. A "consultant" (as used in the text) is...

- A) a restaurant owner
- B) a senior hospital doctor
- C) a magazine editor
- D) a music teacher

3. Describing Clara as a "private" person suggests she...

- A) shares her feelings openly
- B) works for a private company
- C) keeps her feelings to herself

D) prefers to live alone

4. To be "guarded" about one's feelings means to be...

- A) protected by security
- B) confident and open
- C) angry and defensive
- D) cautious about revealing them

5. A "broadsheet" is a type of...

- A) large-format newspaper
- B) restaurant menu
- C) academic journal
- D) kitchen tool

6. Someone who is "risk-averse" tends to...

- A) enjoy taking chances
- B) work in finance
- C) travel frequently
- D) avoid uncertainty and danger

7. A "correspondent" is a person who...

- A) writes letters only
- B) edits other people's writing
- C) reports news from a particular place
- D) translates documents

8. To "romanticize" something means to...

- A) criticize it harshly
- B) make it seem more appealing than it really was
- C) forget about it entirely
- D) analyze it scientifically

9. An opportunity that remains "unclaimed" is one that...

- A) was never accepted or used
- B) has been taken by someone else
- C) is still being advertised
- D) has expired officially

10. A "memoir" is best described as...

- A) a work of pure fiction
- B) an academic textbook
- C) a collection of recipes
- D) a personal account of one's own life

Grammar Focus: Mixed Conditionals

Mixed conditionals allow speakers to connect two different time frames within a single sentence, something the standard second and third conditionals cannot do. The first type of mixed conditional links an unreal past condition to a hypothetical present result: If + subject + past perfect (had + past participle), ... subject + would + base form. We use this structure when a decision, action, or event that did or did not happen in the past continues to determine someone's present circumstances. Compare it with the standard third conditional, which keeps both clauses firmly in the past (If + past perfect, ... would have + past participle, as in "If I had left earlier, I would have caught the train"): the mixed form deliberately breaks that symmetry, moving the result clause into the present tense precisely because the consequence of the past choice is still being felt today, not confined to a single completed moment.

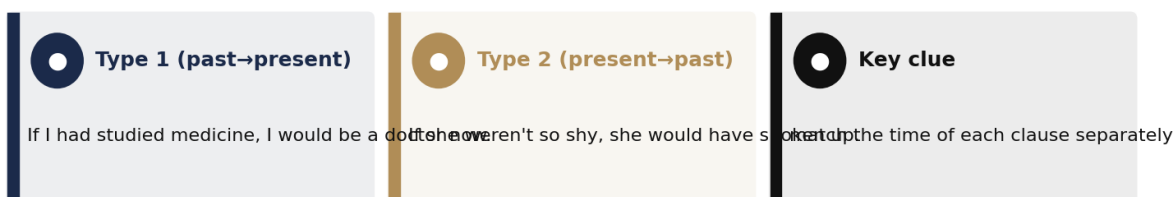
The second type of mixed conditional works in the opposite direction, linking an unreal present condition to a hypothetical past result: If + subject + past simple (often "were" for all persons in formal or careful usage), ... subject + would have + past participle. This form is used when a person's ongoing character trait, belief, or circumstance explains why something did or did not happen at some point in the past. It should be contrasted with the standard second conditional, which keeps both clauses in an unreal present or future frame (If + past simple, ... would + base form, as in "If I had more time, I would travel more"): here, instead, the present condition reaches backward to reinterpret a specific past event. Together, the two mixed forms let a writer or speaker explain the present by referring to the past, and explain the past by referring to the present, which is exactly the kind of reflective, layered reasoning that appears throughout narratives about how a life took the shape it did.

Figure 3

1. Sentence structure



2. Forms and examples



Reference Table: Mixed Conditionals

Type 1: Past condition, present result	If + past perfect, ... would + base form	If I had studied medicine, I would be a doctor now.
Type 2: Present condition, past result	If + past simple, ... would have + past participle	If she weren't so shy, she would have spoken up.
Standard 2nd Conditional (for contrast)	If + past simple, ... would + base form	If I had more time, I would travel more.
Standard 3rd Conditional (for contrast)	If + past perfect, ... would have + past participle	If I had left earlier, I would have caught the train.
Type 1, negative form	If + hadn't + past participle, ... wouldn't + base form	If she hadn't studied abroad, she wouldn't speak French so well now.

Examples

1. If Clara had studied medicine, she would be a consultant now, not a food writer. (past condition, present result)
2. If she hadn't spent that summer in a Cornwall kitchen, she wouldn't understand food so deeply today. (past condition, present result)
3. If Clara had accepted the medical school offer, she wouldn't be living in Lisbon now. (past condition, present result)
4. If Clara weren't so cautious, she would have accepted the Tokyo correspondent job. (present condition, past result)
5. If she weren't such a private person, she would have told Tom she loved him. (present condition, past result)
6. If Clara were still the cautious twenty-eight-year-old she once was, she would have refused the publisher's offer. (present condition, past result)

English Usage

Learn and practice these useful expressions.

- Looking back, ...
used to reflect on a past decision from the present
- In hindsight, ...
used to admit what one only realizes after the fact
- It's hard to say what would have happened if...
used to speculate about an uncertain past outcome
- If I had done things differently, I would be...
used to link a hypothetical past action to a present result
- What if I had...?
used to introduce a hypothetical alternative past scenario
- On reflection, ...
used to introduce a reconsidered opinion or judgment
- I sometimes wonder how things would have turned out if...
used to speculate about an alternative past and its present effect
- All things considered, ...

used to sum up a balanced judgment after weighing pros and cons

Sample Dialogue

- A: Do you ever think about how different your life would be if you'd taken that job in Berlin?
- B: All the time. Looking back, I think I made the safe choice, not necessarily the right one.
- A: In hindsight, do you regret turning it down?
- B: Honestly, yes. If I had accepted that offer, I would probably be running my own design studio by now.
- A: It's hard to say what would have happened if you'd gone, though. You might have hated it.
- B: True. What if I had failed completely and had to come back home broke?
- A: Exactly. On reflection, maybe staying gave you the stability you needed to build what you have now.
- B: I sometimes wonder how things would have turned out if I'd taken the risk anyway.
- A: If you hadn't stayed here, you wouldn't have met Sarah, and you two are so happy together.
- B: That's a good point. All things considered, I suppose I can't complain about where I ended up.
- A: Exactly, every decision closes one door but opens another.
- B: True. If I hadn't chosen this path, I wouldn't be the person I am today.

Practice

Choose the best expression for each situation.

1. Which phrase is best used to admit something you only realized after the event took place?
 - A) In hindsight
 - B) All things considered
 - C) What if I had...?
 - D) Looking back
2. "It's hard to say what would have happened if I had studied law instead" is mainly used to express...
 - A) a certain fact about the past
 - B) speculation about an uncertain past outcome
 - C) a plan for the future
 - D) a present habit
3. Which phrase typically introduces a summary after weighing several factors?
 - A) On reflection
 - B) What if I had...?
 - C) All things considered
 - D) In hindsight
4. "I sometimes wonder how things would have turned out if I had moved abroad" is closest in function to...
 - A) giving an order
 - B) stating a fact

- C) making a promise
- D) speculating about an alternative past

5. Which phrase most naturally opens a sentence that reconsiders an earlier opinion?

- A) It's hard to say
- B) On reflection
- C) All things considered
- D) Looking back

Practice Quiz (25 Questions)

Choose the only correct answer for each question, based on international exams. Answers are in the Answer Key at the end of the book.

1. If Clara ____ medicine, she would be a doctor now.

- A) had studied
- B) studied
- C) studies
- D) would study

2. If she weren't so cautious, she ____ the job in Tokyo.

- A) would accept
- B) would have accepted
- C) accepted
- D) accepts

3. If I had known about the traffic, I ____ earlier.

- A) would leave
- B) left
- C) would have left
- D) leave

4. If he weren't so lazy, he ____ the exam last year.

- A) would pass
- B) passed
- C) passes
- D) would have passed

5. Which sentence correctly expresses a mixed conditional (past condition, present result)?

- A) If I had taken that job, I would be living in Paris now.
- B) If it rains tomorrow, we will stay home.
- C) If I take that job, I will live in Paris.
- D) If I took that job, I would live in Paris.

6. If she ____ so shy, she would have spoken up at the meeting.

- A) isn't
- B) weren't
- C) wasn't been
- D) hadn't been

7. "Deferred," as used in the reading, most nearly means...

- A) rejected
- B) forgot
- C) postponed
- D) celebrated

8. If they had saved more money when they were young, they ____ more comfortable now.

- A) will be
- B) would have been
- C) were
- D) would be

9. Which sentence is a correct example of the "present condition, past result" mixed conditional?

- A) If I were taller, I would have played basketball professionally.
- B) If I am taller, I will play basketball.
- C) If I had been taller, I would play basketball.
- D) If I were taller, I would play basketball.

10. If Clara ____ the Tokyo job, her career would look very different today.

- A) accepted
- B) had accepted
- C) accepts
- D) would accept

11. A "risk-averse" person is someone who...

- A) loves adventure
- B) works in insurance
- C) avoids taking chances
- D) is very brave

12. If I weren't afraid of flying, I ____ to Australia last year.

- A) would travel
- B) traveled
- C) travel
- D) would have traveled

13. Complete the sentence correctly: If she hadn't missed the flight, she ____ at the conference now.

- A) would be

- B) would have been
- C) is
- D) will be

14. The standard, non-mixed Third Conditional describes...

- A) a hypothetical present result of an unreal present condition
- B) a hypothetical past result of an unreal past condition
- C) a real future possibility
- D) a habitual past action

15. If he weren't so stubborn, he ____ his mistake years ago.

- A) would admit
- B) admitted
- C) would have admitted
- D) admits

16. A "correspondent" most likely works in the field of...

- A) medicine
- B) architecture
- C) finance
- D) journalism

17. If they had invested in the company early, they ____ wealthy now.

- A) would be
- B) would have been
- C) are
- D) were

18. Which sentence best illustrates a mixed conditional linking a past cause to a present state?

- A) If she studies hard, she will pass.
- B) If she had studied harder, she would be at a better university now.
- C) If she studied harder, she would pass.
- D) If she had studied harder, she would have passed.

19. To "romanticize" a decision means to...

- A) regret it deeply
- B) forget about it
- C) present it as more positive than it really was
- D) analyze it logically

20. If I weren't so tired, I ____ the report last night.

- A) would finish
- B) finished
- C) finish

D) would have finished

21. In the reading, Sofia is best described as...

- A) Clara's close friend who convinced her to move to Lisbon
- B) Clara's editor
- C) a doctor Clara once dated
- D) a violinist

22. If we hadn't missed the connection, we ____ home by now.

- A) would have been
- B) would be
- C) are
- D) will be

23. A "memoir" is a type of writing that...

- A) is entirely invented
- B) explains scientific theories
- C) describes the author's own life
- D) reports current news

24. If she weren't such a private person, she ____ her feelings more openly in the past.

- A) would express
- B) expressed
- C) expresses
- D) would have expressed

25. Which statement best distinguishes a mixed conditional from a standard second conditional?

- A) A mixed conditional combines two different time frames in one sentence.
- B) A mixed conditional always refers to the future.
- C) A mixed conditional never uses "if."
- D) A mixed conditional is only used in formal writing.

UNIT 4

If Only...

Objective (CEFR B2): to understand and use expressions related to expressing regret and reflecting on missed opportunities and past decisions, and to interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity, presenting clear, detailed descriptions and viewpoints on a wide range of subjects.

Reading: The Weight of What Ifs

I am thirty-four years old, and lately I have caught myself doing something I never used to do: staring out of train windows, lost in thought, feeling oddly nostalgic, replaying decisions I made a decade ago as though rewinding a film I could somehow edit. I wish I had paid more attention when my grandmother tried to teach me Italian in her cramped kitchen, the smell of basil and garlic thick in the air. If only I had listened instead of rushing off to meet friends, I would be able to speak to my cousins in Sicily without an interpreter today. Instead, when I visit, I stand at the edges of conversations, nodding at words I only half understand, feeling like a guest in my own family.

Regret, I have learned, is a strange and persistent companion. It does not announce itself loudly; it creeps in during quiet moments — on a train, in a queue, in the seconds before sleep — and asks the same question over and over: what if you had chosen differently? I wish I knew how to switch it off, but I suspect that would mean switching off memory itself, and I am not sure I want that either.

Let me be candid about where this all began. At eighteen, I was accepted onto two university courses: a highly regarded engineering programme in another city, and a smaller, less prestigious art and design course closer to home. My parents, who had never had the chance to study beyond secondary school, were desperate for me to choose engineering. It seemed, at the time, the sensible option — stable, respectable, financially secure. So I packed my bags and left for a life I did not particularly want, out of a mixture of duty and fear of disappointing people I loved. If only I had had the courage to have a proper conversation with them about what I actually wanted, rather than simply going along with their plan, things might have turned out very differently. I sometimes wonder what kind of designer I might have become, and whether that version of me is happier than the one writing this now.

I graduated, found a job in a firm that manufactures industrial machinery, and have worked there for eleven years. It pays well. My colleagues are pleasant enough. But most days I feel curiously disconnected from the work, as though I am watching someone else do my job while I sit somewhere just behind my own eyes. I wish I had the resilience to simply walk away and retrain, the way a friend of mine did last year when she left banking to become a physiotherapist. She says it was terrifying and exhausting, but that she has never once regretted it. I underestimated, back then, how much unhappiness in one part of life quietly seeps into every other part — sleep, friendships, even the small daily pleasures that used to matter to me.

Not all of my regrets are so weighty, though. Some are smaller, more ordinary, the sort that make me laugh at myself even as they sting a little. I wish I had kept in touch with Marcus, my closest friend throughout school, who moved abroad after graduation. We were meticulous about writing to each other for the first

year — long letters, actual paper and ink — and then, gradually, without either of us really noticing, the letters became emails, the emails became occasional messages, and the messages simply stopped. If only I had made more of an effort to visit him just once, to reconcile whatever silent drift had grown between us before it hardened into permanent distance, we might still be friends today. I found his profile online recently. He looked happy, settled, surrounded by people I did not recognise. I have been meaning to write to him properly for months now, but I keep finding new ways to procrastinate. Once, late at night, I typed a message on impulse, deleted it, typed it again, and ultimately never sent it. It was an oddly impulsive thing for someone as cautious as me to do, and I regretted the deleting far more than I ever regretted the writing. I wish I were braver about these small, awkward reunions.

There is also a category of regret that has nothing to do with the past at all, but rather with the present moment, repeated endlessly: the wish that other people, or circumstances, would simply change. My younger brother, for instance, is a wonderful person in almost every respect, but he has one habit that drives me to distraction. He constantly checks his phone mid-conversation, glancing down every few seconds as though something more important than the person in front of him might be happening elsewhere. I wish he would just put it away for an hour, look up, and actually listen. I have mentioned it to him more than once, gently at first and then, admittedly, less gently, but nothing changes. I wish people would sometimes just do the considerate thing without needing to be asked twice.

My upstairs neighbour is another case entirely. Every single evening, without fail, at around eleven o'clock, he begins moving furniture, or so it sounds — dragging chairs, dropping something heavy, pacing back and forth across bare floorboards directly above my bedroom. I have knocked on his door twice to ask, as politely as I could manage, whether he might do it earlier in the evening. He apologised both times and nothing improved. I wish he would just be a little more considerate of the fact that sound travels through floors. If only buildings from this era had been constructed with better insulation, none of us upstairs or downstairs would have to negotiate our evenings around each other's footsteps.

I do not want to give the impression that my life is one long catalogue of disappointment; that would be dishonest, and frankly a little self-indulgent. I have a job that pays the bills, a partner who is endlessly patient with my overwhelmed Sunday-evening moods, and two nieces who make me laugh until my sides hurt. But I have come to believe that a certain amount of wishing — for a past done differently, for a present slightly improved, for people to behave just a touch better — is simply part of being a thoughtful adult. The trick, I think, is not to eliminate regret entirely, which is probably impossible anyway, but to stop letting it become the loudest voice in the room.

These days, when I notice myself slipping into that familiar spiral — if only I had studied art, if only I had visited Marcus, if only my brother would look up from his phone — I try to ask a more useful question instead: what, right now, today, is still within my control? I cannot undo the choice I made at eighteen, but I can enrol in an evening drawing class, which I did last month, somewhat nervously, notebook in hand, feeling faintly ridiculous among students a decade younger than me. I cannot rewrite the silence between Marcus and myself, but I can, at last, stop procrastinating and send that message I keep deleting. Wishing, it turns out, is only the beginning of the sentence. What comes after "I wish" is the interesting part, because sometimes, if you are lucky and a little brave, it can still become "and so I will."

Reading Comprehension – True or False

Read the text again and decide if each statement is true (T) or false (F).

1. The narrator regrets not paying attention when her grandmother tried to teach her Italian. ____ (T / F)
2. The narrator chose the art and design course instead of engineering at eighteen. ____ (T / F)
3. Marcus was the narrator's closest friend at school and later moved abroad. ____ (T / F)
4. The narrator's brother stopped checking his phone during conversations after she spoke to him about it. ____ (T / F)
5. By the end of the essay, the narrator has already sent a message to Marcus. ____ (T / F)

Reading Comprehension – Multiple Choice

Read each question and choose the correct answer.

1. Why did the narrator choose engineering instead of art and design at eighteen?

- A) Her parents wanted her to choose the more stable, respectable option
- B) She thought art was too difficult
- C) The art course was too expensive
- D) Her grandmother advised her to

2. What does the narrator say about her friend who left banking to become a physiotherapist?

- A) She regretted the decision immediately
- B) She found it frightening but has never regretted it
- C) She found the change easy and stress-free
- D) She returned to banking after six months

3. What eventually happened to the narrator's correspondence with Marcus?

- A) It ended abruptly after an argument
- B) It continued steadily for many years
- C) It gradually faded from letters to nothing at all
- D) It moved entirely to phone calls

4. What does the narrator's upstairs neighbour do every evening?

- A) He plays loud music every night
- B) He argues loudly with visitors
- C) He invites guests over late at night
- D) He makes noise that sounds like moving furniture

5. According to the final paragraph, what does the narrator try to focus on now?

- A) What is still within her control in the present
- B) Forgetting the past entirely
- C) Convincing her brother to change
- D) Moving to a new apartment

Key Vocabulary

High-frequency words and expressions (Oxford 3000, New General Service List and Brown Corpus), filtered by topic relevance and B2 level. Meanings are in the Dictionary at the end of the book.

1–10	11–20	21–30	31–40
1. regret	11. to hold back	21. soul-searching	31. setback
2. to look back on	12. comfort zone	22. to reflect on	32. to acknowledge
3. missed opportunity	13. to pursue	23. bittersweet	33. personal growth
4. hindsight	14. unfulfilled	24. to let an opportunity slip	34. to take stock of
5. to dwell on	15. to come to terms with	25. wisdom	35. what could have been
6. turning point	16. self-doubt	26. to reconsider	36. resilience
7. to take a chance	17. to take for granted	27. detour	37. to make peace with
8. to second-guess	18. closure	28. to reinvent oneself	38. outlook
9. what if	19. path not taken	29. lingering doubt	39. to seize the moment
10. crossroads	20. to make amends	30. to move on	40. introspective

Vocabulary Practice

Choose the correct option to complete each sentence.

1. In the text, "nostalgic" is closest in meaning to:

- A) angry about the past
- B) longing for the past
- C) confused about the future
- D) indifferent to memories

2. "Persistent" (used to describe regret) means:

- A) occurring only once
- B) easily forgotten
- C) extremely painful
- D) continuing to exist or happen over a long period

3. If someone is "candid," they are:

- A) honest and straightforward
- B) secretive and evasive
- C) nervous and hesitant
- D) formal and distant

4. "Resilience" refers to:

- A) the ability to avoid difficult situations altogether
- B) the ability to remember things in great detail
- C) the ability to recover quickly from difficulties
- D) the ability to plan carefully in advance

5. To "underestimate" something means:

- A) to exaggerate its size or importance
- B) to judge it to be smaller or less important than it really is
- C) to ignore it completely
- D) to measure it precisely

6. Someone who is "meticulous" is:

- A) careless and disorganised
- B) impatient and quick
- C) generous with their time
- D) very careful and paying great attention to detail

7. To "reconcile" a friendship that has drifted apart means:

- A) to restore harmony and closeness to it
- B) to end it permanently
- C) to analyse why it failed
- D) to replace it with a new friendship

8. To "procrastinate" means:

- A) to complete a task early
- B) to finish something quickly
- C) to delay or postpone doing something
- D) to forget about a task entirely

9. An "impulsive" action is one that is:

- A) carefully planned over time
- B) done suddenly, without much thought
- C) required by law
- D) repeated regularly

10. To feel "overwhelmed" means to feel:

- A) completely unaffected by a situation
- B) mildly interested in something
- C) confident and fully in control
- D) unable to cope because of too much pressure or emotion

Grammar Focus: Wish / If Only

We use "wish" to talk about things we would like to be different from how they actually are. When the regret concerns the present or a general situation, "wish" is followed by a verb in the past simple (or "were" instead of "was" in formal style): I wish I spoke Italian fluently; I wish I had more free time. This does not refer to the past at all — it describes an unreal, wished-for present. When the regret concerns something that already happened, and cannot now be changed, "wish" is followed by the past perfect: I wish I had listened to my grandmother. Here the structure looks back at a completed action and expresses sorrow that it happened, or did not happen, differently. "If only" works in exactly the same way as "wish" with both structures — if only + past simple for the present, if only + past perfect for the past — but it is generally felt to be more emphatic and more emotional, often used to express a stronger sense of longing or frustration than a plain "wish" sentence would.

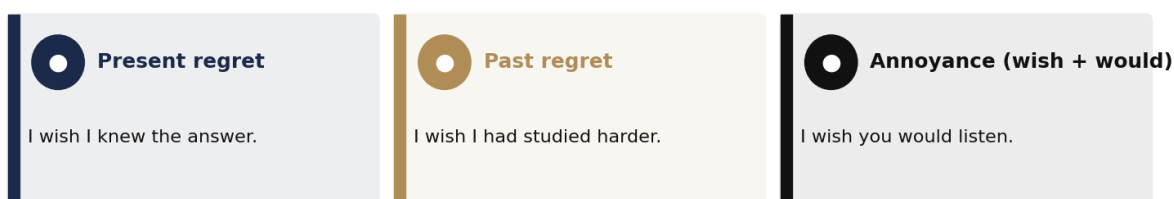
A third pattern, "wish" + subject + "would" + base verb, is used specifically to complain about a habit, a behaviour, or a situation that annoys the speaker and that they want to change, usually involving another person or a repeated, irritating circumstance rather than the speaker's own state. I wish he would stop checking his phone; I wish the neighbours would be quieter. Crucially, "wish + would" is not normally used about the speaker's own actions or about permanent facts and states (we do not say "I wish I would be taller"; instead we say "I wish I were taller," using the past simple pattern). It is reserved for changeable, repeated, and usually irritating behaviour, which is why it so often carries a tone of complaint or exasperation rather than simple longing. Recognising which of the three structures fits a given regret — an unreal present, an unchangeable past, or an ongoing annoyance — is the key to using "wish" and "if only" correctly and naturally.

Figure 4

1. Sentence structure



2. Forms and examples



Reference Table: Wish / If Only

Present regret (an unreal present situation)	wish + past simple	I wish I had more free time.
Past regret (an unchangeable completed action)	wish + past perfect	I wish I had studied harder at school.
Complaint about a habit or annoying situation	wish + subject + would + base verb	I wish you would stop interrupting me.
Emphatic present regret	if only + past simple	If only I lived closer to my family.
Emphatic past regret	if only + past perfect	If only I had listened to her advice.

Examples

1. I wish I spoke Italian fluently, the way my cousins in Sicily do.
2. If only I had had more courage at eighteen, I might have chosen the art course instead.
3. I wish I hadn't left things unfinished with my grandmother before it was too late.
4. If only I had visited Marcus just once before we completely lost touch.
5. I wish my brother would put his phone away and actually listen during a conversation.
6. I wish my upstairs neighbour would stop moving furniture so late at night.

English Usage

Learn and practice these useful expressions.

- There's no use dwelling on it.
telling someone not to keep worrying about the past
- Hindsight is 20/20.
acknowledging that things are clearer looking back
- What's done is done.
accepting that a past event cannot be changed
- You did the best you could with what you knew.
reassuring someone their past decision was reasonable
- It's easy to say that now.
pointing out that judgment is easier in retrospect
- Everything happens for a reason.
offering comfort about an unwanted outcome
- You can't change the past, but you can shape the future.
encouraging someone to focus forward
- Try not to be too hard on yourself.
asking someone to stop self-criticism

Sample Dialogue

A: I keep thinking about that job offer I turned down years ago. I wish I had taken it.

B: There's no use dwelling on it, though. You made the choice that felt right at the time.

- A: I know, but if only I'd known how things would turn out, I would have said yes.
- B: Hindsight is 20/20. None of us can predict the future.
- A: Sometimes I wonder what my life would look like now if I'd been braver.
- B: You did the best you could with what you knew back then. That has to count for something.
- A: It's easy to say that now, though, isn't it? Looking back, the choice seems so obvious.
- B: Maybe, but at the time it wasn't obvious at all. What's done is done.
- A: I suppose I just wish I hadn't let fear make the decision for me.
- B: Try not to be too hard on yourself. Everyone has a "what if" moment somewhere.
- A: True. I guess I should focus on the opportunities in front of me instead.
- B: Exactly. You can't change the past, but you can shape the future.
- A: Thanks for listening. I do feel a bit better about it now.
- B: Anytime. Just remember that regret only helps if it teaches you something.

Practice

Choose the best expression for each situation.

1. Your friend keeps blaming herself for a decision she made years ago. Which phrase best reassures her?

- A) Hindsight is 20/20.
- B) What if you had known?
- C) It's easy to say that now.
- D) There's no use dwelling on it.

2. Someone says, "Looking back, the answer seems so obvious." Which expression are they essentially using?

- A) What's done is done.
- B) Hindsight is 20/20.
- C) You can't change the past.
- D) Try not to be too hard on yourself.

3. A colleague made a reasonable decision with the information available at the time. Which phrase best supports that view?

- A) It's easy to say that now.
- B) Everything happens for a reason.
- C) You did the best you could with what you knew.
- D) What's done is done.

4. Which phrase most directly tells someone to stop criticizing themselves?

- A) Try not to be too hard on yourself.
- B) What's done is done.
- C) Hindsight is 20/20.
- D) There's no use dwelling on it.

5. Which phrase encourages someone to accept the past and focus ahead?

- A) It's easy to say that now.
- B) You can't change the past, but you can shape the future.
- C) Hindsight is 20/20.
- D) You did the best you could with what you knew.

Practice Quiz (25 Questions)

Choose the only correct answer for each question, based on international exams. Answers are in the Answer Key at the end of the book.

1. I ____ I spoke French fluently.

- A) wish
- B) hope
- C) want
- D) will

2. If only she ____ harder for the exam last year.

- A) studied
- B) had studied
- C) studies
- D) would study

3. I wish it ____ raining; I want to go for a walk.

- A) stops
- B) stopped
- C) would stop
- D) has stopped

4. He wishes he ____ taller.

- A) is
- B) will be
- C) has been
- D) were

5. I wish I ____ so much money on that car; it broke down within a week.

- A) hadn't spent
- B) didn't spend
- C) don't spend
- D) wouldn't spend

6. If only they ____ to the meeting on time yesterday, we wouldn't have lost the contract.

- A) came
- B) had come

- C) come
- D) would come

7. My sister wishes she ____ up so early every morning; she hates mornings.

- A) hadn't had to get
- B) doesn't have to get
- C) didn't have to get
- D) won't have to get

8. I wish you ____ interrupting me when I'm speaking. It's very rude.

- A) stop
- B) stopped
- C) had stopped
- D) would stop

9. We wish we ____ more time to finish the project before the deadline.

- A) had
- B) have had
- C) would have
- D) will have

10. If only I ____ his advice, I wouldn't be in this mess now.

- A) listened to
- B) had listened to
- C) would listen to
- D) listen to

11. Which sentence correctly expresses a complaint about someone's current annoying habit?

- A) I wish he cleaned his room.
- B) I wish he had cleaned his room.
- C) I wish he would clean his room.
- D) I wish he cleans his room.

12. Which sentence expresses regret about something that happened in the past?

- A) I wish I knew the answer.
- B) I wish I would know the answer.
- C) I wish I know the answer.
- D) I wish I had known the answer.

13. "If only" is generally considered ____ than a plain sentence with "wish."

- A) more emphatic
- B) less formal
- C) grammatically incorrect
- D) only used in writing

14. I wish my neighbours ____ so much noise late at night; it never stops.

- A) didn't make
- B) wouldn't make
- C) hadn't made
- D) don't make

15. Select the correct sentence.

- A) I wish I am rich.
- B) I wish I will be rich.
- C) I wish I were rich.
- D) I wish I have been rich.

16. The word "resilience" in the reading is closest in meaning to:

- A) weakness
- B) intelligence
- C) shyness
- D) toughness and the ability to recover

17. I wish I ____ him the truth instead of lying about it.

- A) had told
- B) told
- C) tell
- D) would tell

18. Complete the sentence: "If only ____."

- A) I would be more patient
- B) I were more patient
- C) I am more patient
- D) I have been more patient

19. Which structure follows "wish" when you want someone else's habit or a situation to change?

- A) base form
- B) past simple
- C) would + base form
- D) past perfect

20. "Underestimate" most nearly means:

- A) to overvalue something
- B) to measure exactly
- C) to ignore completely
- D) to judge something as less important than it really is

21. I wish I ____ how difficult the exam would be; I would have prepared differently.

- A) had known
- B) knew
- C) know
- D) would know

22. Which sentence is grammatically INCORRECT?

- A) I wish I had more free time.
- B) I wish I would have more free time.
- C) I wish I had had more free time yesterday.
- D) I wish you would be quieter.

23. A word that means "to restore friendly relations" is:

- A) procrastinate
- B) underestimate
- C) reconcile
- D) overwhelm

24. I wish she ____ so impulsive when she makes big decisions.

- A) isn't
- B) wasn't
- C) hadn't been
- D) weren't

25. Choose the best paraphrase of: "If only I hadn't quit my job."

- A) I regret quitting my job.
- B) I'm glad I quit my job.
- C) I wish I would quit my job.
- D) I hope to quit my job.

UNIT 5

Walking Down the Street, She Noticed...

Objective (CEFR B2): to understand and use expressions related to describing scenes, settings, and atmosphere using vivid, precise language, and to interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity, presenting clear, detailed descriptions and viewpoints on a wide range of subjects.

Reading: The Woman in the Green Coat

Elena stepped out of the office at half past five, grateful for the unexpected sunshine breaking through the clouds after a week of steady rain. Having spent the entire afternoon staring at spreadsheets, she felt a sudden, almost childish urge to walk home instead of catching the crowded bus that rattled along Mercer Street every evening. It was only forty minutes on foot, and the late September light, golden and unhurried, made the whole city look softer than usual, its grey buildings briefly warmed into something gentler.

Turning off the main road, she found herself on a quieter street lined with plane trees, their leaves just beginning to turn from green to amber. A group of schoolchildren ran past her, laughing loudly and swinging their bags, followed closely by a harassed-looking teacher trying to keep count of them. Elena smiled, remembering her own walks home at that age, and quickened her pace slightly, enjoying the rare freedom of having nowhere urgent to be. Further along, a small street market was slowly closing for the day, stallholders packing crates of fruit and calling out final prices to passers-by hurrying home before dark. A young musician sat cross-legged near the corner, playing a battered guitar and singing softly to nobody in particular, his open case scattered with a few coins tossed by generous strangers. Elena dropped a coin into the case without breaking her stride, smiling at him briefly, grateful for the small, ordinary kindness of a street that seemed, that evening, to be showing her something worth noticing.

Halfway down the block, she noticed an elderly man sitting on a bench, wrapped in a coat far too heavy for the mild afternoon. He was feeding pigeons, scattering breadcrumbs from a paper bag balanced carefully on his knee, and muttering something to the birds as though continuing a conversation begun years earlier. Elena slowed her steps, watching him for a moment. There was something in his posture, hunched and patient, that reminded her of her own grandfather, long since passed away but never quite forgotten.

She continued walking, passing a small bookshop she had never noticed before, its window crowded with faded paperbacks and hand-written price tags curling at the corners. Feeling curious about the dusty display, and having twenty minutes to spare before she needed to be anywhere, she pushed open the door. A bell rang softly above her head, announcing her arrival to nobody in particular; the shop appeared empty at first, lit only by a single lamp glowing at the back among the shadows.

Books lined every wall, stacked in uneven towers that reached almost to the ceiling, some clearly untouched for years, judging by the dust settled thickly across their spines. The air smelled faintly of old paper and candle wax, a smell Elena associated, without quite knowing why, with her childhood, spent surrounded by her grandmother's crowded bookshelves. Somewhere further back, a radio murmured quietly, tuned to a station playing music from decades earlier. Elena wandered slowly between the shelves, drawn toward an

unmarked cardboard box left carelessly on the floor near the counter. Inside, half buried beneath a pile of old magazines, lay a stack of photographs, yellowed with age and curling slightly at the edges, as though they had waited there for someone to find them.

She knelt down and began sorting through them one by one. Most showed unfamiliar faces, smiling stiffly at cameras from decades past, but one photograph stopped her completely. It showed a young woman standing outside a café, wearing a green coat remarkably similar to the one Elena had inherited from her own grandmother years before. Written in ink faded almost to nothing on the back of the photograph were the words: "Rosa, 1962, before everything changed." Elena's hands trembled slightly. Rosa had been her grandmother's name.

Startled by a voice behind her, she turned to find an old woman emerging from a doorway hidden behind the counter, moving slowly and leaning heavily on a wooden cane. "Can I help you, dear?" the woman asked, peering at Elena over a pair of glasses balanced precariously on the end of her nose. Elena, still holding the photograph, explained what she had found, her voice barely above a whisper, half expecting to be told it was nothing at all.

Surprised by the coincidence, the shopkeeper took the photograph carefully and examined it beneath the lamp. "This box came from a house clearance," she said, "left to me by a family closing down their mother's flat after she passed away. I never got around to sorting it properly." She looked up at Elena, her expression softening noticeably. "Rosa, you said?"

Having listened to Elena's brief explanation of her grandmother's life, the woman disappeared into the back room, returning several minutes later with an entire shoebox filled with similar photographs, letters, and a small leather diary tied shut with string. "Take it," she said simply, refusing any payment offered. "Some things belong with family, not gathering dust on a shelf."

Overwhelmed, Elena thanked her repeatedly, promising to return once she had read everything inside. Walking back out onto the street, clutching the box tightly against her chest, she felt the city around her shift somehow, transformed entirely by what she now carried. The schoolchildren had long since disappeared, replaced by tired commuters hurrying home, their faces lit briefly by the low evening sun sinking behind the rooftops.

Passing the elderly man again, still seated on his bench and now surrounded by a small, hopeful crowd of pigeons, Elena paused. "Excuse me," she said gently, "did you know a woman named Rosa? She used to live near here, I think, a long time ago." The man looked up, startled at first, then smiling slowly, recognition softening the lines etched deeply into his weathered face.

"Rosa," he repeated quietly, as though tasting the name after years of silence. "I haven't heard that name spoken aloud in a very long time." He gestured to the empty space beside him, inviting her to sit. Hesitating only briefly, Elena lowered herself onto the bench, the box balanced carefully on her lap, ready to listen to whatever came next.

For the following hour, sitting beside a stranger who had somehow known her grandmother decades before Elena herself was born, she listened to stories she had never imagined existed: dances held in halls long since

demolished, a wartime engagement broken off suddenly, a friendship interrupted by circumstances neither of them had ever chosen. Fascinated, Elena barely noticed the sky slowly deepening from gold to violet above the rooftops.

Eventually, having promised to visit again the following week, bringing the diary so they might read it together, Elena rose from the bench, thanked the old man warmly, and continued her walk home. The street, quiet now, felt entirely different from the one she had left the office onto barely two hours earlier. Carrying a piece of history she hadn't even known was missing, she smiled, thinking of all the stories still waiting, hidden in ordinary streets, for someone curious enough to notice them.

Reading Comprehension – True or False

Read the text again and decide if each statement is true (T) or false (F).

1. Elena decided to walk home instead of taking the bus because the weather had turned pleasant. ____ (T / F)
2. The elderly man on the bench was feeding stray cats. ____ (T / F)
3. Elena found a box of old photographs inside the bookshop. ____ (T / F)
4. The shopkeeper asked Elena to pay a large sum for the box of Rosa's belongings. ____ (T / F)
5. Elena discovered that the elderly man on the bench had once known her grandmother. ____ (T / F)

Reading Comprehension – Multiple Choice

Read each question and choose the correct answer.

1. Why did Elena decide to walk home?

- A) She wanted to enjoy the sudden sunshine after a week of rain
- B) She missed her bus
- C) Her office closed early
- D) She was meeting a friend

2. What was the elderly man doing on the bench?

- A) Reading a newspaper
- B) Feeding pigeons
- C) Selling flowers
- D) Waiting for a friend

3. What did Elena find inside the unmarked box in the bookshop?

- A) A diary written by the shopkeeper
- B) A collection of maps
- C) A stack of old photographs
- D) Old letters from her mother

4. How did the shopkeeper react when she learned about the connection to Rosa?

- A) She sold the box to Elena at a high price
- B) She asked Elena to leave immediately

- C) She refused to give Elena anything
D) She gave Elena the box of Rosa's belongings without charge

5. What did Elena learn from the elderly man at the end of the story?

- A) That he owned the bookshop
B) That he had once known her grandmother, Rosa
C) That he was moving away the next day
D) That he did not remember anyone named Rosa

Key Vocabulary

High-frequency words and expressions (Oxford 3000, New General Service List and Brown Corpus), filtered by topic relevance and B2 level. Meanings are in the Dictionary at the end of the book.

1–10	11–20	21–30	31–40
1. glimpse	11. glow	21. silhouette	31. muffled
2. glance	12. shadowy	22. contour	32. distant
3. gaze	13. dim	23. texture	33. echo
4. peer	14. faint	24. hue	34. aroma
5. bustling	15. blur	25. vivid	35. scent
6. hustle and bustle	16. linger	26. striking	36. drift
7. murmur	17. evoke	27. faded	37. sprawling
8. hush	18. ambience	28. weathered	38. quaint
9. flicker	19. backdrop	29. crumbling	39. nondescript
10. gleam	20. atmosphere	30. vibrant	40. unassuming

Vocabulary Practice

Choose the correct option to complete each sentence.

1. In the text, "a harassed-looking teacher" most nearly describes a teacher who looked...

- A) feeling strained and worried because of pressure
B) feeling relaxed and cheerful
C) feeling proud and satisfied
D) feeling sleepy and bored

2. The word "hunched" (as in "hunched and patient") describes someone who is...

- A) standing perfectly straight
B) with the back and shoulders bent forward
C) walking with quick, light steps
D) sitting cross-legged

3. "Curious" in the text is closest in meaning to...

- A) afraid of something new
- B) annoyed by something
- C) eager to know or learn something
- D) indifferent to something

4. "Faded" (as in "faded paperbacks") describes something that has...

- A) newly printed and bright pages
- B) been torn into small pieces
- C) been written in bold letters
- D) lost brightness or color over time

5. "Precariously" (as in glasses balanced precariously) means...

- A) in an unstable, insecure way, likely to fall
- B) in a firm and secure way
- C) in a slow and careful way
- D) in a loud and noticeable way

6. A "coincidence" is best defined as...

- A) a carefully arranged plan
- B) a remarkable, unplanned occurrence of related events
- C) a serious disagreement
- D) a formal introduction

7. "Overwhelmed" in the text describes someone who is...

- A) completely uninterested
- B) mildly amused
- C) affected by a very strong feeling, almost too much to handle
- D) slightly confused

8. "Demolished" (as in "halls long since demolished") means...

- A) rebuilt and improved
- B) painted a new color
- C) sold to a new owner
- D) destroyed or knocked down completely

9. "Fascinated" is closest in meaning to...

- A) extremely interested and captivated
- B) extremely bored
- C) mildly annoyed
- D) completely unaware

10. "Etched" (as in "lines etched deeply into his face") means...

- A) washed away completely
- B) marked or cut deeply into a surface
- C) covered with makeup
- D) painted a bright color

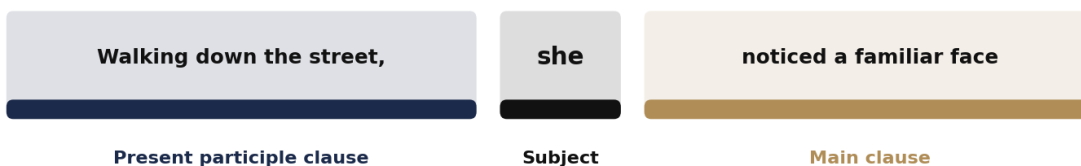
Grammar Focus: Participle Clauses

Participle clauses are a hallmark of natural, economical English at B2 level and above: they let a writer combine two related ideas into one elegant sentence without repeating the subject or reaching for a full relative or adverbial clause. A present participle clause is formed with the -ing form of the verb and is used when the action it describes happens at the same time as the action in the main clause, or when it gives the reason for that action. It typically replaces a clause introduced by while, as, or because, and it always shares the same subject as the main clause it is attached to. For example, "Turning off the main road, she found herself on a quieter street" means exactly the same as "As she turned off the main road, she found herself on a quieter street." Likewise, "Feeling curious about the box, she opened it immediately" replaces "Because she felt curious about the box, she opened it immediately." The participle clause can be placed before or after the main clause, and a comma normally separates the two.

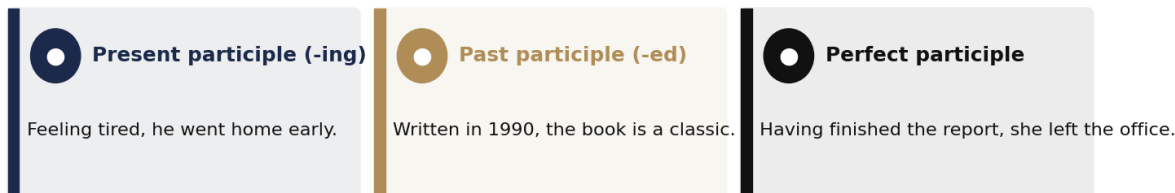
Past participle clauses, formed with the -ed ending of regular verbs or the third form of irregular verbs, carry a passive meaning: the subject of the clause is not performing the action but receiving it. They typically replace a relative clause containing "which was/were" or "who was/were" followed by a passive verb. "Written in faded ink, the words revealed a hidden name" means "The words, which had been written in faded ink, revealed a hidden name." A third, closely related structure is the perfect participle clause, formed with having plus a past participle (having + past participle, or, in its passive form, having been + past participle). It stresses that one action was completed before a second action took place, and it is especially useful when the sequence of events needs to be unmistakably clear, since a simple present participle can sometimes suggest that two actions happened simultaneously rather than one after the other. "Having spent the whole afternoon at her desk, Elena decided to walk home" makes it clear that the desk work finished before the decision was made. Like present and past participle clauses, perfect participle clauses share their subject with the main clause and are usually set off by a comma.

Figure 5

1. Sentence structure



2. Forms and examples



Reference Table: Participle Clauses

Type	Structure	Example
Present Participle Clause	verb + -ing (replaces while/as/because + subject + verb)	Turning off the main road, she found herself on a quiet street.
Past Participle Clause	-ed / irregular past participle, passive meaning (replaces which was/were + verb)	Written in faded ink, the words revealed a hidden name.
Perfect Participle Clause	having + past participle (action completed before another)	Having spent the afternoon at her desk, she decided to walk home.
Perfect Participle Clause (passive)	having been + past participle	Having been given the box for free, Elena thanked the shopkeeper warmly.
Present Participle Clause (reason)	verb + -ing at the start of a sentence, replacing because/since	Feeling curious about the box, she opened it at once.

Examples

1. Turning off the main road, she found herself on a quieter street lined with plane trees. (present participle – simultaneous action)
2. Feeling curious about the dusty box, Elena pushed open the bookshop door. (present participle – reason)
3. Written in faded ink, the words on the back of the photograph revealed her grandmother's name. (past participle – passive meaning)
4. Surrounded by pigeons, the old man barely noticed Elena approaching. (past participle – passive meaning)
5. Having spent the whole afternoon staring at spreadsheets, Elena decided to walk home instead of taking the bus. (perfect participle – completed prior action)
6. Having listened to Elena's story, the shopkeeper disappeared into the back room to find more photographs. (perfect participle – completed prior action)

English Usage

Learn and practice these useful expressions.

- At first glance, ...
describing an initial impression
- There was something about it that...
expressing a vague, hard-to-explain feeling
- As I looked closer, ...
introducing a detail noticed on closer inspection
- The whole place seemed to...
giving a general impression of a place
- What struck me most was...
highlighting the most noticeable feature
- It felt as though...
describing an atmosphere or sensation
- Everywhere you looked, ...
describing something present throughout a scene
- Little by little, ...
describing a gradual change or realization

Sample Dialogue

A: You'll never guess where I went yesterday — that old market on Baker Street.

B: Oh, the one that's supposed to be reopening? What was it like?

A: At first glance, it looked completely abandoned, with weeds growing through the cobblestones.

B: Really? I thought they'd started renovating it.

A: They have, but walking through the gates, I could see how much work still needs doing.

B: What struck me most was probably the smell, right? That place always had a strange mix of spices and dust.

A: Exactly! There was something about it that reminded me of being a kid, actually.

B: I know what you mean. Everywhere you looked, there were faded signs still hanging from the stalls.

A: As I looked closer, I noticed someone had started painting one of the walls a bright blue.

B: Interesting. It felt as though the whole place was caught between the past and the future.

A: That's a great way to put it. Little by little, though, you could tell it was coming back to life.

B: I'd love to see it myself. Maybe we could go together next weekend?

A: Definitely. Seen in the evening light, it might look even more atmospheric.

B: Perfect, let's plan for Saturday then.

Practice

Choose the best expression for each situation.

1. Which phrase is best for describing your very first impression of a place?

- A) At first glance, ...
- B) Little by little, ...
- C) It felt as though...
- D) As I looked closer, ...

2. Which phrase introduces a detail you notice only after looking more carefully?

- A) Everywhere you looked, ...
- B) As I looked closer, ...
- C) What struck me most was...
- D) There was something about it that...

3. Which phrase best expresses a vague, hard-to-define feeling about somewhere?

- A) Little by little, ...
- B) The whole place seemed to...
- C) There was something about it that...
- D) Everywhere you looked, ...

4. Which phrase describes something happening or changing gradually?

- A) It felt as though...
- B) At first glance, ...
- C) What struck me most was...
- D) Little by little, ...

5. Which phrase highlights the single most noticeable feature of a scene?

- A) What struck me most was...
- B) The whole place seemed to...
- C) Everywhere you looked, ...
- D) It felt as though...

Practice Quiz (25 Questions)

Choose the only correct answer for each question, based on international exams. Answers are in the Answer Key at the end of the book.

1. ____ down the street, she noticed a man feeding pigeons.

- A) Walking
- B) Walk
- C) Walked
- D) To walk

2. ____ in a heavy coat, the old man sat quietly on the bench.

- A) Wrapping
- B) Wrapped

- C) Wrap
- D) To wrap

3. ____ spent the whole afternoon at her desk, Elena decided to walk home.

- A) Have
- B) Had
- C) Having
- D) To have

4. Choose the sentence with a correctly formed present participle clause.

- A) Felt curious, she opened the box.
- B) Feel curious, she opened the box.
- C) To feel curious, she opened the box.
- D) Feeling curious, she opened the box.

5. Choose the sentence with a correctly formed past participle clause.

- A) Surprised by the news, she sat down.
- B) Surprising by the news, she sat down.
- C) Surprise by the news, she sat down.
- D) To surprise by the news, she sat down.

6. Which sentence uses a perfect participle clause correctly?

- A) Having finish her work, she left the office.
- B) Having finished her work, she left the office.
- C) Have finished her work, she left the office.
- D) Finish her work, she left the office.

7. "As she turned off the main road, she found a quieter street." Which sentence has the same meaning using a participle clause?

- A) Turned off the main road, she found a quieter street.
- B) Having turn off the main road, she found a quieter street.
- C) Turning off the main road, she found a quieter street.
- D) To turn off the main road, she found a quieter street.

8. "The photograph, which was written on in faded ink, revealed a name." Rewrite using a participle clause.

- A) Writing on in faded ink, the photograph revealed a name.
- B) Having written on in faded ink, the photograph revealed a name.
- C) To write on in faded ink, the photograph revealed a name.
- D) Written on in faded ink, the photograph revealed a name.

9. "Because she had listened to the whole story, the shopkeeper understood Elena's excitement." Rewrite using a perfect participle clause.

- A) Having listened to the whole story, the shopkeeper understood Elena's excitement.
- B) Listening to the whole story, the shopkeeper understood Elena's excitement.

- C) Listened to the whole story, the shopkeeper understood Elena's excitement.
- D) To listen to the whole story, the shopkeeper understood Elena's excitement.

10. Choose the correct participle clause: "___ by pigeons, the old man smiled at Elena."

- A) Surrounding
- B) Surrounded
- C) Having surrounded
- D) Surround

11. Choose the correct participle clause: "___ home from work, Elena decided to take a different route."

- A) Walk
- B) Walked
- C) Walking
- D) Having walk

12. "After she had read the diary, Elena finally understood her grandmother's past." Best participle clause rewrite:

- A) Reading the diary, Elena finally understood her grandmother's past.
- B) Read the diary, Elena finally understood her grandmother's past.
- C) To read the diary, Elena finally understood her grandmother's past.
- D) Having read the diary, Elena finally understood her grandmother's past.

13. Which word best completes: "The box, ___ carelessly on the floor, contained old photographs."

- A) left
- B) leave
- C) leaving
- D) to leave

14. What is the function of the participle clause in: "Curious about the box, she opened it immediately"?

- A) It shows a result.
- B) It gives a reason (= because she was curious).
- C) It shows contrast.
- D) It shows a condition.

15. Which sentence contains a perfect participle clause?

- A) Feeling tired, she sat down.
- B) Tired by the long walk, she sat down.
- C) Having walked for hours, she sat down.
- D) Walking slowly, she sat down.

16. Complete: "___ the news, the old man fell silent for a moment."

- A) Hear
- B) Heard
- C) To hear

D) Hearing

17. Which sentence is grammatically INCORRECT?

- A) Turned the corner, she saw the bookshop.
- B) Turning the corner, she saw the bookshop.
- C) Having turned the corner, she saw the bookshop.
- D) Curious, she turned the corner.

18. Choose the past participle form of "write."

- A) Writing
- B) Written
- C) Wrote
- D) Writes

19. Vocabulary: In "the lines etched deeply into his face," "etched" is closest in meaning to:

- A) washed
- B) painted
- C) carved
- D) hidden

20. Vocabulary: "precariously" in the text describes glasses that were:

- A) firmly fixed in place
- B) brand new
- C) brightly colored
- D) unstable and likely to fall

21. Choose the sentence that correctly uses a participle clause to replace "Because she felt overwhelmed, Elena thanked the shopkeeper repeatedly."

- A) Feeling overwhelmed, Elena thanked the shopkeeper repeatedly.
- B) Felt overwhelmed, Elena thanked the shopkeeper repeatedly.
- C) Having overwhelmed, Elena thanked the shopkeeper repeatedly.
- D) To feel overwhelmed, Elena thanked the shopkeeper repeatedly.

22. Complete: "___ by the coincidence, Elena could barely speak."

- A) Stun
- B) Stunned
- C) Stunning
- D) To stun

23. Which sentence best combines these two ideas using a perfect participle clause: "She had promised to return. She left the bookshop."

- A) Promising to return, she left the bookshop.
- B) Promised to return, she left the bookshop.
- C) Having promised to return, she left the bookshop.

D) To promise to return, she left the bookshop.

24. Vocabulary: "demolished" (as in "halls long since demolished") means:

- A) rebuilt
- B) painted
- C) sold
- D) destroyed

25. Which participle clause type expresses an action completed before another past action?

- A) Perfect participle clause
- B) Present participle clause
- C) Past participle clause
- D) Infinitive clause

UNIT 6

What I Mean Is...

Objective (CEFR B2): to understand and use expressions related to expressing and defending opinions persuasively in written argument, and to interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity, presenting clear, detailed descriptions and viewpoints on a wide range of subjects.

Reading: It's Not the Office That Makes Us Productive

For decades, offices were considered indispensable. It was the physical workplace that supposedly held companies together—the shared desks, the coffee machine conversations, the manager's watchful eye. What the pandemic proved, however, was that this assumption was largely a myth. It was not the office itself that made employees productive; it was trust, clear communication, and meaningful work that did. As millions of professionals shifted to remote work almost overnight, a quiet revolution began, and what emerged from it should reshape how we think about the modern workplace for good.

Critics of remote work often argue that collaboration suffers when teams are scattered across different cities or even continents. It is true that spontaneous conversations by the water cooler can spark creative ideas. Yet what the critics tend to overlook is that most of the daily interruptions in a traditional office are precisely what prevents deep, focused work from happening. Studies conducted by organizations such as Stanford University have found that employees working from home report higher output per hour than their office-based counterparts. It was Nicholas Bloom, a Stanford economist, who led one of the most cited studies on this subject, tracking a Chinese travel company's call centre staff over nine months. What his research revealed was striking: performance increased by thirteen percent when employees worked remotely, largely because they took fewer breaks and used less sick leave.

Opponents of remote work also insist that company culture erodes without daily face-to-face contact. This is a fair concern, and it would be dishonest to pretend that video calls can fully replace the warmth of an in-person conversation. However, what is often missed in this debate is that culture was never solely a product of physical proximity. It is shared values, consistent leadership, and genuine recognition that build a strong culture—not simply occupying the same building for eight hours a day. Indeed, it was poor management, not physical distance, that caused most of the so-called "culture breakdowns" reported during the shift to remote work. Companies that invested in regular check-ins, transparent communication, and employee wellbeing largely managed to preserve—and in some cases strengthen—their culture, regardless of where their staff sat.

Another argument frequently raised against remote work concerns mentorship and the professional development of younger employees. It is undeniable that junior staff benefit from observing experienced colleagues at close range. What surprised many researchers, though, was that structured virtual mentorship programmes were often just as effective, provided that senior employees committed real time to them. It was not the physical setting that mattered most for skill transfer; it was the quality and consistency of the guidance offered. Organisations that formalised mentorship—through scheduled calls, shared

documentation, and clear feedback loops—found that remote junior employees developed at rates comparable to their office-based peers.

There is also a strategic advantage to remote work that many companies underestimate: access to talent. It is geography, more than anything else, that has traditionally limited who a company can hire, forcing employers to choose from whichever candidates happen to live within commuting distance of a single office. What remote work allows organisations to do is recruit the best person for a role, regardless of postcode or time zone. It was precisely this shift that enabled a wave of small and mid-sized companies to compete for talent that had previously been reserved for large corporations with offices in major cities. Employees, too, benefit from this wider market: it is workers in smaller towns and rural areas, often overlooked by traditional employers, who have gained the most from the expansion of remote opportunities, since they can now access salaries and career paths that were once available only to those willing to relocate.

None of this is to suggest that remote work is without drawbacks. Isolation remains a genuine risk, particularly for employees living alone or new to a company. What companies must do, therefore, is design intentional opportunities for connection: occasional in-person gatherings, virtual social events, and clear boundaries between work and personal time. It is this deliberate effort—not a return to mandatory office attendance—that addresses loneliness most effectively. Forcing everyone back to a cubicle five days a week does little to solve a problem that is, at its root, about relationships rather than location.

Health outcomes tell a similar story. It is reduced stress, more time for exercise, and greater control over one's daily schedule that employees most frequently cite when asked why they prefer working remotely, according to surveys conducted across multiple sectors. What many managers fail to appreciate is that a healthier, less stressed workforce is also a more reliable one: fewer sick days, lower turnover, and higher long-term engagement. It was not chance that led companies offering remote or hybrid arrangements to report lower burnout rates in recent years; it was the additional autonomy those employees had over how they structured their working day.

There is also the matter of the environment and quality of life, which is rarely given the weight it deserves in this debate. What remote work eliminates, for millions of people, is a daily commute that can consume upwards of two hours. It is this reclaimed time that employees consistently cite as the single greatest benefit of working from home, using it for exercise, family, or simply rest. Furthermore, it is the reduction in commuter traffic and office energy consumption that has led several environmental studies to credit remote work with measurable drops in carbon emissions in major cities during periods of widespread adoption.

Ultimately, what this debate really comes down to is not whether employees should work from an office or a spare bedroom, but what conditions allow people to do their best work. It is flexibility, autonomy, and trust that consistently emerge as the strongest predictors of both productivity and job satisfaction, according to research spanning multiple industries and countries. Companies that cling rigidly to the nine-to-five office model, insisting that presence equals performance, risk losing talented employees to competitors who understand that what matters is output, not attendance.

None of this means offices should disappear entirely. There will always be a place for shared physical spaces—for brainstorming sessions, for onboarding new hires, for celebrating milestones together. What is

changing, and what should change, is the assumption that the office must be the default setting for all work, all the time. It was rigid thinking, not genuine business necessity, that kept so many companies wedded to an outdated model long after the tools to work differently had become widely available.

The future of work, then, is not about choosing between the office and the home; it is about designing systems flexible enough to let each team, and each individual, find what genuinely helps them thrive. What companies that succeed in the coming decade will have in common is not the address on their letterhead, but their willingness to trust employees with the autonomy to decide, within reasonable limits, how and where their best work gets done. It is this trust, more than any policy or mandate, that will define the workplaces people actually want to be part of.

Reading Comprehension – True or False

Read the text again and decide if each statement is true (T) or false (F).

1. According to Nicholas Bloom's study, remote employees at the Chinese travel company took more sick leave than office workers. ____ (T / F)
2. The article argues that company culture depends mainly on physical proximity rather than on shared values and leadership. ____ (T / F)
3. Structured virtual mentorship programmes were found to be nearly as effective as in-person mentorship, according to the article. ____ (T / F)
4. The author believes offices should disappear completely in the future. ____ (T / F)
5. The article suggests that eliminating commuting time is one of the most valued benefits of remote work. ____ (T / F)

Reading Comprehension – Multiple Choice

Read each question and choose the correct answer.

1. What point does the writer make about Nicholas Bloom's study?

- A) It proved office workers are more productive than remote workers.
- B) It found remote employees' performance increased due to fewer breaks and less sick leave.
- C) It showed remote workers had lower productivity because of isolation.
- D) It focused exclusively on employees in the finance industry.

2. According to the article, what does the writer identify as the true cause of "culture breakdowns" during the shift to remote work?

- A) The physical distance between employees
- B) The lack of a shared office building
- C) Poor management practices
- D) The absence of daily video calls

3. What does the writer say about mentorship in a remote environment?

- A) Virtual mentorship can be as effective as in-person mentorship if senior staff commit real time to it.
- B) It is impossible to mentor employees remotely.

- C) Junior employees always develop faster in an office.
- D) Mentorship is not important for skill development.

4. What solution does the writer propose for the risk of isolation among remote workers?

- A) Mandatory five-day office attendance
- B) Banning virtual social events
- C) Ignoring the issue, since it is not significant
- D) Intentional opportunities for connection, such as gatherings and clear work-life boundaries

5. According to the final paragraphs, what will define successful companies in the future?

- A) Their willingness to trust employees with autonomy over how and where they work
- B) The address of their corporate headquarters
- C) Strict enforcement of a nine-to-five schedule
- D) The size of their office building

Key Vocabulary

High-frequency words and expressions (Oxford 3000, New General Service List and Brown Corpus), filtered by topic relevance and B2 level. Meanings are in the Dictionary at the end of the book.

1–10	11–20	21–30	31–40
1. persuasive	11. subjective	21. fallacy	31. elaborate on
2. argument	12. evidence	22. exaggeration	32. counterpoint
3. counterargument	13. rationale	23. advocate for	33. justify
4. rebuttal	14. substantiate	24. proponent	34. sway
5. claim	15. undermine	25. opponent	35. credibility
6. assertion	16. compelling	26. skeptic	36. dispute
7. viewpoint	17. persuade	27. consensus	37. validate
8. standpoint	18. concede	28. controversial	38. underlying assumption
9. bias	19. concession	29. contend	39. reinforce
10. impartial	20. refute	30. stance	40. one-sided

Vocabulary Practice

Choose the correct option to complete each sentence.

1. In the reading, "indispensable" (paragraph 1) most nearly means:

- A) unnecessary
- B) essential
- C) temporary
- D) expensive

2. "Spontaneous" (as in "spontaneous conversations") means:

- A) unplanned and natural
- B) carefully organized in advance
- C) rare and unusual
- D) boring and repetitive

3. "Erode" (as in "company culture erodes") means:

- A) to strengthen gradually
- B) to celebrate publicly
- C) to gradually wear away or weaken
- D) to repair quickly

4. "Proximity" (as in "physical proximity") means:

- A) distance
- B) similarity
- C) difference
- D) nearness or closeness

5. "Mentorship" refers to:

- A) guidance and support from an experienced person
- B) punishment for professional mistakes
- C) a type of monthly salary
- D) a formal legal contract

6. "Isolation" (as in "isolation remains a genuine risk") means:

- A) excitement about a new project
- B) the state of being alone or separated from others
- C) a type of teamwork
- D) financial loss

7. "Deliberate" (as in "this deliberate effort") means:

- A) accidental
- B) careless
- C) intentional and carefully considered
- D) urgent

8. "Autonomy" (as in "the autonomy to decide") means:

- A) strict supervision
- B) financial reward
- C) forced teamwork
- D) the freedom to act independently

9. "Commute" (as in "a daily commute") refers to:

- A) the regular journey between home and work
- B) a type of paid vacation
- C) an informal office meeting
- D) a flexible work schedule

10. "Wedded to" (as in "wedded to an outdated model") means:

- A) opposed to
- B) strongly attached to or committed to
- C) unaware of
- D) confused by

Grammar Focus: Cleft Sentences for Emphasis

Cleft sentences are used to give special emphasis to a particular piece of information, often to correct a misunderstanding, contrast one element with another, or highlight what the speaker or writer considers most important. The it-cleft follows the pattern It + be (was/is) + the emphasized element + who/that + the rest of the sentence. The element placed immediately after it + be receives the main stress and becomes the focus of the sentence. In the ordinary sentence "The manager called the meeting," any part of the sentence could theoretically be the most important piece of information. By transforming it into "It was the manager who called the meeting," the writer makes absolutely clear that the identity of the person who called the meeting—the manager, not someone else—is the key point being emphasized. It-clefts can emphasize subjects, objects, time expressions, or place expressions, and "who" is generally reserved for people while "that" is used for things, times, and places, although "that" is also commonly accepted for people in less formal usage.

What-clefts, sometimes called pseudo-clefts, work differently: a clause beginning with "what" is placed before the verb be, and the emphasized information—usually an action, an idea, or an entire situation rather than a single noun—follows the verb be. The structure is What + subject + verb + be + the emphasized information, as in "What surprised me was the response" or "What I mean is that flexibility matters more than location." This structure is especially common in formal and persuasive writing, such as opinion articles and academic essays, because it allows a writer to build up to a main point gradually, creating suspense and drawing the reader's attention before revealing the key idea. Expressions like "What I mean is...", "What matters most is...", and "What this shows is..." are particularly useful for signalling opinions, clarifying statements, and summarizing conclusions in a way that sounds confident and authoritative without appearing overly aggressive.

Figure 6

1. Sentence structure



2. Forms and examples



Reference Table: Cleft Sentences

Type	Structure	Example
It-cleft (emphasizing the subject)	It + be + noun/pronoun + who/that + clause	It was Nicholas Bloom who led the study.
It-cleft (emphasizing the object)	It + be + noun + that + clause	It was trust, not the office, that made employees productive.
What-cleft (emphasizing an action or idea)	What + subject + verb + be + noun/clause	What surprised researchers was the programme's success.
What-cleft (giving an opinion)	What + I + mean/think + is + (that) + clause	What I mean is that flexibility matters more than location.
It-cleft (emphasizing time or place)	It + be + time/place expression + that + clause	It was during the pandemic that remote work became normal.

Examples

1. It was Nicholas Bloom who led one of the most cited studies on remote work productivity.
2. It was not the office itself that made employees productive; it was trust and clear communication that did.
3. What surprised many researchers was that virtual mentorship programmes were often just as effective as in-person guidance.
4. What companies must do, therefore, is design intentional opportunities for connection.
5. It is flexibility, autonomy, and trust that consistently emerge as the strongest predictors of job satisfaction.
6. What this debate really comes down to is not the location of work, but the conditions that allow people to thrive.

English Usage

Learn and practice these useful expressions.

- What I mean is...
used to clarify or rephrase a point
- The point is...
used to emphasize the main idea
- What I'm trying to say is...
used to clarify when a listener seems confused
- As far as I'm concerned...
used to introduce a personal opinion
- I couldn't agree more.
used to express strong agreement
- I see your point, but...
used to acknowledge an opinion before disagreeing
- That's not entirely true.
used to disagree politely
- What really matters here is...
used to emphasize the most important factor

Sample Dialogue

- A: I just read that op-ed about social media, and honestly, I couldn't agree more with the writer's argument.
- B: Really? I see your point, but I think the article exaggerates the negative effects.
- A: What I mean is, social media has completely changed the way young people communicate, and not always for the better.
- B: That's not entirely true. It's also connected people across the world who would never have met otherwise.
- A: Sure, but what really matters here is how it affects mental health, especially among teenagers.
- B: As far as I'm concerned, it's not the technology itself that's the problem, it's how people use it.
- A: What I'm trying to say is that it's the platforms themselves that are designed to be addictive.
- B: I see your point, but what you're forgetting is personal responsibility.
- A: The point is, it's the algorithm that keeps people scrolling for hours without realizing it.
- B: That's fair. Still, I couldn't agree more that what schools should teach is healthy digital habits.
- A: Exactly. What really matters here is teaching young people to use these tools wisely.
- B: Agreed. What worries me most is that so few people even question how much time they lose.
- A: That's not entirely true for everyone, but it's certainly true for most teenagers today.
- B: Fair enough. I see your point.

Practice

Choose the best expression for each situation.

1. You want to rephrase an idea because your friend looks confused. Which phrase fits best?

- A) I couldn't agree more.
- B) What I mean is...
- C) That's not entirely true.
- D) I see your point, but...

2. Your friend makes a claim you disagree with. Which phrase politely signals disagreement?

- A) The point is...
- B) As far as I'm concerned...
- C) That's not entirely true.
- D) What I'm trying to say is...

3. You want to acknowledge someone's opinion before giving a different view of your own. Which phrase is most appropriate?

- A) I see your point, but...
- B) I couldn't agree more.
- C) What really matters here is...
- D) The point is...

4. Which phrase is used to express strong agreement with someone's opinion?

- A) As far as I'm concerned...
- B) What I'm trying to say is...
- C) What really matters here is...
- D) I couldn't agree more.

5. You want to emphasize the main idea of your argument. Which phrase fits best?

- A) What really matters here is...
- B) The point is...
- C) That's not entirely true.
- D) I see your point, but...

Practice Quiz (25 Questions)

Choose the only correct answer for each question, based on international exams. Answers are in the Answer Key at the end of the book.

1. _____ Nicholas Bloom who led the influential remote-work study.

- A) It was
- B) There was
- C) What was
- D) It is

2. What the pandemic proved was that offices _____ essential for productivity.

- A) was not
- B) were not

- C) is not
- D) are not being

3. It was trust and clear communication, not the office itself, _____ made employees productive.

- A) who
- B) which
- C) that
- D) what

4. _____ surprised many researchers was that virtual mentorship proved just as effective as face-to-face guidance.

- A) It
- B) There
- C) That
- D) What

5. It was during the pandemic _____ remote work became mainstream.

- A) that
- B) which
- C) who
- D) what

6. _____ I mean is that flexibility matters more than location.

- A) It
- B) What
- C) That
- D) Which

7. Original: "Nicholas Bloom led the study, not his colleagues." Which is the best cleft rewrite?

- A) It were Nicholas Bloom, not his colleagues, whom led the study.
- B) There was Nicholas Bloom, not his colleagues, who led the study.
- C) It was Nicholas Bloom, not his colleagues, who led the study.
- D) What was Nicholas Bloom, not his colleagues, who led the study.

8. Which sentence correctly uses an it-cleft to emphasize "the manager"?

- A) What was the manager who called the meeting.
- B) It is the manager whom called the meeting.
- C) The manager it was who called the meeting.
- D) It was the manager who called the meeting.

9. Which sentence correctly uses a what-cleft?

- A) What surprised me was the response.
- B) What surprised was the response me.
- C) It surprised me was the response.

D) The response was what surprised.

10. It is flexibility, autonomy, and trust _____ consistently emerge as the strongest predictors of job satisfaction.

- A) who
- B) that
- C) what
- D) which one

11. Identify the error: "What companies must do it is design intentional opportunities for connection."

- A) "What" should be "It"
- B) "must" should be "should"
- C) "it is" should be removed
- D) "design" should be "designing"

12. _____ this deliberate effort, not a return to mandatory attendance, that addresses loneliness most effectively.

- A) What is
- B) There is
- C) This is
- D) It is

13. Choose the best what-cleft rewrite of: "The company needs more transparency."

- A) What the company needs is more transparency.
- B) It is more transparency that the company needs.
- C) What needs the company is more transparency.
- D) More transparency what the company needs.

14. It was rigid thinking, not genuine necessity, _____ kept companies wedded to an outdated model.

- A) what
- B) that
- C) who
- D) which

15. In the reading, "isolation" is closest in meaning to:

- A) teamwork
- B) celebration
- C) loneliness; being separated from others
- D) promotion

16. "Erode" as used in the text means:

- A) to strengthen
- B) to celebrate
- C) to expand quickly

D) to wear away or weaken gradually

17. "Autonomy" most nearly means:

- A) independence; self-governance
- B) supervision
- C) punishment
- D) salary

18. "Commute" refers to:

- A) a business meeting
- B) the regular journey between home and work
- C) a type of contract
- D) a holiday

19. "Wedded to" (as in "wedded to an outdated model") means:

- A) married legally
- B) opposed to
- C) strongly attached to or committed to
- D) unaware of

20. Which cleft sentence is grammatically correct?

- A) It were the deadline that worried the team.
- B) It was the deadline who worried the team.
- C) What was the deadline that worried the team.
- D) It was the deadline that worried the team.

21. _____ many companies fail to understand is that output matters more than attendance.

- A) What
- B) It
- C) There
- D) That

22. Original: "Remote work became widespread in 2020." Choose the correct it-cleft emphasizing "in 2020."

- A) It was in 2020 who remote work became widespread.
- B) It was in 2020 that remote work became widespread.
- C) What was in 2020 that remote work became widespread.
- D) In 2020 it was that remote work became widespread.

23. What the article really argues _____ that trust matters more than location.

- A) are
- B) were
- C) is
- D) being

24. It is not attendance _____ defines performance, but genuine output.

- A) what
- B) which
- C) who
- D) that

25. "Deliberate" (as in "deliberate effort") means:

- A) intentional; carefully considered
- B) accidental
- C) urgent
- D) careless

UNIT 7

Give It Up, Break It Down

Objective (CEFR B2): to understand and use expressions related to breaking habits and pushing through difficult workplace changes, and to interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity, presenting clear, detailed descriptions and viewpoints on a wide range of subjects.

Reading: Turning It Around: How Our Team Broke Down a Failing Project

When Priya Anand took over as project manager at Halden Logistics, the company's new delivery-tracking app was already three months behind schedule. The developers were exhausted, the client was losing patience, and morale had hit rock bottom. Priya's boss gave her a blunt choice: turn the project around within six weeks, or the whole thing would be shut down and the contract handed to a competitor. She could easily have given up right then. Instead, she decided to break the problem down into pieces she could actually manage.

Her first move was to look into what had gone wrong. She spent two days interviewing every member of the team, reading old status reports, and going through the original project plan line by line. It didn't take long to figure out the core issue: nobody had ever agreed on a single, clear set of priorities. Different developers were carrying out different tasks based on their own guesses about what mattered most, and no one was checking their work against a shared plan. Meetings were called, then put off, then called again. Deadlines were set, then quietly dropped when nobody wanted to bring up the fact that they'd been missed.

Priya called the whole team together on a Monday morning. She didn't sugarcoat anything. "We've fallen behind because we never agreed on what 'finished' actually looks like," she told them. "That ends today." She asked everyone to come up with a short list of the three features the client cared about most. When the lists came in, the pattern was obvious: notifications, live tracking, and route optimization. Everything else could wait.

Next, she set up a new system for tracking progress: a shared board where every task had an owner, a deadline, and a status that had to be updated daily. At first, a few of the more senior developers grumbled that they didn't need to be micromanaged, and one, a man named Callum, simply stopped updating his tasks altogether, apparently hoping he could get away with coasting while everyone else scrambled. Priya didn't let it slide. She sat down with him privately, pointed out that the whole team was depending on accurate information, and asked him directly what was holding him back. It turned out Callum had quietly taken on far more work than he could handle because he hadn't wanted to admit he was struggling. Once that was out in the open, they were able to redistribute the load and sort out a schedule he could actually keep to.

Not everyone welcomed the changes right away. A few developers were used to working independently and resented having to check in with Priya every morning. One engineer, clearly annoyed, asked why they couldn't just be left alone to get on with the coding. Priya explained patiently that the daily check-ins weren't about distrust; they were about catching small problems before they turned into disasters. Within a week, most of the team had come around, largely because the check-ins genuinely saved them from repeating each

other's mistakes. Two developers who had barely spoken before began pairing up to iron out a tricky bug in the notification system, and by Thursday they had wrapped up a fix that had been stuck on the backlog for a month.

The team also had to deal with a serious technical problem: the app's servers kept breaking down under heavy testing traffic, crashing two or three times a day. Priya asked the infrastructure team to look into the root cause rather than just restarting the servers every time they failed, which had become an exhausting daily routine. After a week of digging, they worked out that a memory leak in an old piece of code was to blame. Fixing it took real effort, but once it was carried out properly, the crashes stopped almost entirely.

Money was tight too. By the fourth week, the project had nearly run out of budget for outside contractors, so Priya had to cut back on non-essential spending and negotiate with a freelance designer to finish the interface for a reduced fee. She also held off on a planned marketing push until the product was actually stable, arguing that there was no point promoting something that might still fall apart in front of users.

Communication with the client mattered just as much as the technical fixes. Rather than disappearing for weeks and then delivering bad news, Priya began sending a short update every Friday, however small the progress. She would follow up personally on any concern the client raised within twenty-four hours instead of letting emails pile up. This simple habit did more to rebuild trust than any single feature ever could; the client later admitted that the weekly updates were what convinced them to give the team more time rather than cancelling the contract outright.

Slowly, the project started to catch up. Notifications went live in week five. Live tracking followed two days later, buggy at first but stable within another day of frantic debugging. By the end of the sixth week, the core features the client had asked for were all working, tested, and ready to launch. Priya presented the finished product to the client herself, walking them through every feature and answering every question without a single evasive answer.

Looking back, Priya says the biggest lesson wasn't really about the technology at all. "Any team can carry out a plan once it exists," she explains. "What was missing before was that nobody had actually made the hard decisions, so everyone was quietly doing their own thing and hoping it would somehow work out. Once we broke everything down into clear pieces, agreed on what mattered, and dealt with problems as soon as they came up instead of putting them off, the rest was just discipline."

The wider culture of the team shifted too. Where colleagues had once avoided bringing up bad news for fear of being blamed, people began to speak up the moment something looked wrong, trusting that Priya would help them sort it out rather than punish them for it. Junior developers who had previously hesitated to question senior colleagues started to step up and suggest better approaches, and nobody accused them of overstepping. By the final week, the team wasn't just racing to hit a deadline; they had genuinely started to enjoy working together again, something almost everyone said they had given up hoping for months earlier.

Callum, for his part, became one of the project's strongest advocates. He later told colleagues that being honest about struggling was harder than any line of code he'd ever written, but that giving up his pride turned out to be the thing that saved his job. The app launched on schedule, the client renewed their contract for a second year, and Halden Logistics used Priya's approach as a model for two other struggling

projects the following year. Sometimes, it turns out, the hardest part of fixing something broken is simply being willing to look honestly at what broke it in the first place.

Reading Comprehension – True or False

Read the text again and decide if each statement is true (T) or false (F).

1. Priya's boss warned her that the contract could be lost if the project didn't improve within six weeks. ____ (T / F)
2. Priya decided to give up as soon as she realized how serious the problems were. ____ (T / F)
3. Callum had quietly taken on more work than he could manage and didn't want to admit it. ____ (T / F)
4. The recurring server crashes were eventually traced back to a memory leak in old code. ____ (T / F)
5. The client cancelled the contract before the project could be finished. ____ (T / F)

Reading Comprehension – Multiple Choice

Read each question and choose the correct answer.

1. What was the main reason the project had fallen behind schedule?

- A) The client kept changing the requirements
- B) The team had never agreed on a single set of priorities
- C) The company had completely run out of money
- D) The servers were too old to run any software

2. How did Priya first respond to the crisis when she took over the project?

- A) She immediately dismissed several team members
- B) She asked her boss for a six-month extension
- C) She interviewed the team and reviewed the project plan
- D) She hired an entirely new team of contractors

3. Why had Callum stopped updating his tasks on the tracking board?

- A) He disagreed with the company's new strategy
- B) He didn't understand how to use the new system
- C) He was already planning to leave the company
- D) He had taken on too much work and didn't want to admit it

4. What eventually caused the servers to keep crashing?

- A) A memory leak in an old piece of code
- B) Too many developers logging in at the same time
- C) A virus in the tracking software
- D) An error in the client's own systems

5. According to Priya, what was the real lesson from the project's turnaround?

- A) Technology problems are always harder to fix than people problems
- B) Hiring more contractors solves most project delays

- C) Making clear decisions and facing problems early made the difference
 D) Weekly client updates are unnecessary once a product works

Key Vocabulary

High-frequency words and expressions (Oxford 3000, New General Service List and Brown Corpus), filtered by topic relevance and B2 level. Meanings are in the Dictionary at the end of the book.

1–10	11–20	21–30	31–40
1. give up	11. keep up with	21. sort out	31. phase in
2. break down	12. fall back into	22. figure out	32. scale back
3. cut down on	13. slip back into	23. come up with	33. streamline
4. cut back on	14. wean oneself off	24. get around to	34. get bogged down in
5. do away with	15. kick the habit	25. push through	35. stick to
6. get rid of	16. take up	26. break into	36. stick with
7. put off	17. give in to	27. break away from	37. ease into
8. carry on	18. hold off on	28. bounce back from	38. ease off
9. carry out	19. work through	29. build up	39. tackle head-on
10. follow through on	20. iron out	30. phase out	40. see through

Vocabulary Practice

Choose the correct option to complete each sentence.

1. In the reading, "give up" (as in "given up hoping") most nearly means...

- A) succeed at something
- B) start something new
- C) stop trying or doing something
- D) postpone something

2. "The servers kept breaking down" means the servers...

- A) kept failing or stopped working
- B) were repaired quickly
- C) worked perfectly
- D) were replaced with new ones

3. "Come up with" a list means to...

- A) reject an idea completely
- B) copy an idea from someone else
- C) delay making a decision
- D) produce or think of an idea

4. If a meeting is "put off," it is...

- A) cancelled permanently
- B) postponed to a later time
- C) held earlier than planned
- D) shortened significantly

5. To "get away with" something dishonest means to...

- A) avoid punishment or consequences for something wrong
- B) confess to something openly
- C) get caught and punished for it
- D) apologize for it immediately

6. "Look into" a problem means to...

- A) ignore it completely
- B) create it from nothing
- C) investigate or examine it
- D) solve it instantly without effort

7. To "carry out" a plan means to...

- A) abandon the plan
- B) criticize the plan
- C) write the plan down
- D) perform or execute the plan

8. If a project has "run out of" budget, it means the budget...

- A) has increased significantly
- B) has been completely used up
- C) was never approved
- D) was reduced by half

9. To "deal with" a problem means to...

- A) avoid or ignore the problem
- B) blame someone for the problem
- C) handle or address the problem
- D) create a new problem

10. If a team began to "catch up," it means they were...

- A) reaching the level or progress they were expected to be at
- B) falling further behind
- C) starting the project again from zero
- D) stopping work altogether

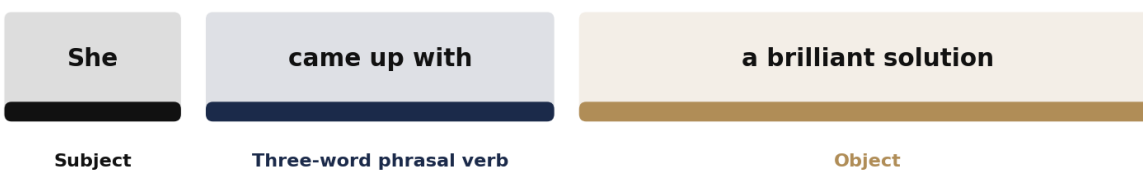
Grammar Focus: Advanced Phrasal Verbs

A phrasal verb combines a verb with one or two particles (adverbs or prepositions, such as up, out, down, into, or with) to create a meaning that is often quite different from the individual words. Some phrasal verbs are intransitive, meaning they take no object at all: "The servers kept breaking down" describes something happening to the servers themselves, with no object following. Others are transitive and take an object, and these divide into two important types. Separable phrasal verbs allow the object to go either after the whole verb ("She broke the problem down") or between the verb and the particle ("She broke it down"). Crucially, when the object is a pronoun (it, them, him, her), the pronoun **MUST** go between the verb and the particle — "She broke it down" is correct, while "She broke down it" is not. Inseparable phrasal verbs, by contrast, never allow anything between the verb and its particle: with "look into," you can say "look into the problem" or "look into it," but never "look the problem into" or "look it into."

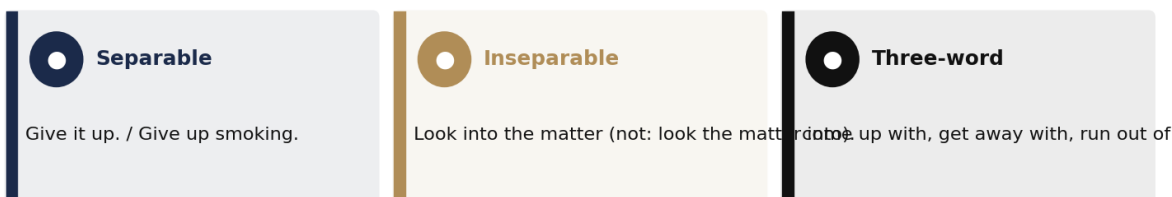
Three-word phrasal verbs, such as come up with, get away with, run out of, put up with, and look forward to, are always inseparable — the object, whether a noun or a pronoun, always follows the complete three-part unit ("She came up with a plan" / "She came up with it," never "come it up with"). In terms of register, phrasal verbs are extremely common in everyday spoken English and in informal or semi-formal writing, including workplace emails and casual reports, because native speakers use them constantly and naturally. However, in formal academic writing, official reports, or very formal business documents, a single-word equivalent — often of Latin or French origin — is frequently preferred: give up becomes abandon or quit, come up with becomes devise or generate, look into becomes investigate, carry out becomes conduct or perform, deal with becomes address, put off becomes postpone, run out of becomes exhaust, and get away with becomes evade the consequences of. A confident B2 speaker should recognize both options and choose according to context: phrasal verbs for natural, conversational fluency, and their formal equivalents when writing needs to sound more official.

Figure 7

1. Sentence structure



2. Forms and examples



Reference Table: Phrasal Verbs — Patterns and Examples

Intransitive (no object)	break down	The old server broke down again this morning.
Transitive, separable	give up	She gave up smoking. / She gave it up.
Transitive, inseparable (prepositional verb)	look into	The manager looked into the complaint. / She looked into it.
Three-word, always inseparable	come up with	The team came up with a new plan.
Three-word, always inseparable	run out of	We ran out of time before the deadline.
Transitive, separable	sort out	They sorted the schedule out. / They sorted it out.

Examples

- Priya broke the problem down into smaller pieces. → She broke it down into smaller pieces. (separable; the pronoun must split the verb and particle)
- The team looked into the cause of the crashes. → They looked into it immediately. (inseparable; you cannot say "looked it into")
- Callum had taken on too much work. → He had taken it on without telling anyone. (separable; pronoun goes between verb and particle)
- Priya would not let Callum get away with ignoring the system. (three-word, always inseparable — the object always follows the whole unit)
- The Monday meeting was put off until the following week. → It was put off. (separable, shown here with the object as subject of a passive sentence)
- By the fourth week, the project had almost run out of budget. (three-word, inseparable — "budget" cannot be placed inside the phrase)

English Usage

Learn and practice these useful expressions.

- I'm trying to cut down on...
announcing an effort to reduce a habit
- I've finally kicked the habit of...
describing a habit fully overcome
- Let's figure out a way to...
proposing a solution to a problem
- We need to iron out a few details before...
flagging remaining issues to resolve
- I keep putting off...
admitting habitual procrastination
- Don't give in to the urge to...
encouraging resistance to temptation
- We're finally getting around to...
starting a long-delayed task
- Let's see this through to the end
committing to finish a project

Sample Dialogue

A: You look stressed. What's going on?

B: I'm trying to cut down on caffeine, and honestly, I keep putting off the report review Sarah gave me last week.

A: Why not just carry it out today and get it off your plate?

B: I know, I know. I've finally kicked the habit of checking my phone every five minutes, so maybe I can build on that.

A: That's great progress! Let's figure out a way to break the report into smaller sections so it feels less overwhelming.

B: Good idea. We still need to iron out a few details before I can start, though — like which data set to use.

A: Don't give in to the urge to wait for the "perfect" moment. Just start with the easy part.

B: You're right. We're finally getting around to updating the client database too, so I should tackle both at once.

A: One thing at a time! Let's see this project through to the end before taking on anything else.

B: Fair enough. I'll sort out the data question first thing tomorrow.

A: Sounds like a plan. You've clearly worked hard to bounce back from last month's chaos.

B: Thanks — I don't want to slip back into old habits again.

Practice

Choose the best expression for each situation.

1. Which phrase best expresses reducing how much of something you do (like caffeine or sugar)?

- A) I'm trying to cut down on...
- B) Let's see this through to the end
- C) We need to iron out a few details before...
- D) Don't give in to the urge to...

2. Which phrase means you have completely stopped a bad habit?

- A) We need to iron out a few details before...
- B) I keep putting off...
- C) I've finally kicked the habit of...
- D) Let's figure out a way to...

3. Which phrase is used to propose a solution to a problem?

- A) Don't give in to the urge to...
- B) Let's figure out a way to...
- C) We're finally getting around to...
- D) I keep putting off...

4. If you finally start a task you had delayed for a long time, which phrase fits best?

- A) I've finally kicked the habit of...
- B) Let's see this through to the end
- C) We need to iron out a few details before...
- D) We're finally getting around to...

5. Which phrase means resisting a temptation?

- A) Don't give in to the urge to...
- B) I'm trying to cut down on...
- C) Let's see this through to the end
- D) We need to iron out a few details before...

Practice Quiz (25 Questions)

Choose the only correct answer for each question, based on international exams. Answers are in the Answer Key at the end of the book.

1. "After years of trying, she finally decided to ____ smoking."

- A) give up
- B) give in
- C) give away
- D) give off

2. "The old printer kept ____ every time we tried to use it, so we had to send it for repair."

- A) break up
- B) break down

- C) break in
- D) break off

3. "The engineers couldn't solve the bug alone, so they asked a colleague to help them ____ a solution."

- A) look up
- B) hold off
- C) come up with
- D) get away with

4. "The manager decided to ____ the meeting until next week because half the team was absent."

- A) carry out
- B) look into
- C) run out of
- D) put off

5. "He was clever enough to ____ cheating on the test — no one ever found out."

- A) get away with
- B) look into
- C) figure out
- D) sort out

6. "Please ____ the cost of the new project before we commit any funds."

- A) put off
- B) look into
- C) come up with
- D) get away with

7. "The team needs to ____ the survey among all employees by Friday."

- A) put off
- B) run out of
- C) carry out
- D) break down

8. "We can't order more supplies because we've ____ money this month."

- A) cut back on
- B) held off
- C) sorted out
- D) run out of

9. "The mechanic had to ____ the engine problem before repairing the car."

- A) figure out
- B) give up
- C) fall behind
- D) speak up

10. "The company decided to ____ its spending on advertising during the slow season."
- A) put off
 - B) cut back on
 - C) look into
 - D) bring up
11. "It took the whole afternoon to ____ the disagreement between the two departments."
- A) run out of
 - B) hold off
 - C) sort out
 - D) catch up
12. "Because she missed two weeks of class, she had to work hard to ____ with her classmates."
- A) fall behind
 - B) sort out
 - C) come around
 - D) catch up
13. "If you don't submit the report on time, you will ____ on the whole project."
- A) fall behind
 - B) come up with
 - C) look into
 - D) carry out
14. "Management decided to ____ the announcement until after the holidays."
- A) run out of
 - B) hold off on
 - C) deal with
 - D) figure out
15. "She always ____ any customer complaint the same day it arrives."
- A) puts off
 - B) gives up
 - C) deals with
 - D) breaks down
16. "During the interview, please don't ____ salary until the second round."
- A) look into
 - B) carry out
 - C) sort out
 - D) bring up
17. "The new employee had to ____ far more responsibility than he expected in his first week."

- A) take on
- B) put off
- C) get away with
- D) run out of

18. Choose the word closest in meaning to "morale" (team morale had hit rock bottom).

- A) salary
- B) confidence and spirit
- C) location
- D) schedule

19. Choose the word closest in meaning to "resent" (a developer resented being checked on every morning).

- A) enjoy
- B) ignore
- C) feel bitter about
- D) forget

20. Choose the best synonym for "sugarcoat" (Priya didn't sugarcoat anything).

- A) explain something in complete detail
- B) exaggerate a problem
- C) shout angrily
- D) make something unpleasant sound more pleasant than it really is

21. "The staff began to ____ once they saw the new schedule was actually working."

- A) come around
- B) fall apart
- C) run out of
- D) hold off

22. "The two writers decided to ____ so they could finish the article faster."

- A) catch up
- B) pair up
- C) break down
- D) look into

23. "It took a long meeting to ____ the last few details of the contract."

- A) put off
- B) run out of
- C) iron out
- D) give up

24. "By Friday evening, the team had finally managed to ____ the final report."

- A) hold off
- B) fall behind

- C) look into
- D) wrap up

25. Choose the best synonym for "advocate" (Callum became one of the project's strongest advocates).

- A) supporter
- B) critic
- C) stranger
- D) competitor

UNIT 8

Never Have I Ever Seen Such a Thing

Objective (CEFR B2): to understand and use expressions related to describing extreme experiences and reacting to them with astonishment and emphasis, and to interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity, presenting clear, detailed descriptions and viewpoints on a wide range of subjects.

Reading: Alone Against the Atlantic

I have always considered myself a calm, methodical sailor, the kind of person who checks every knot twice and never leaves the harbour without a full weather briefing. Never have I set out on a voyage without meticulous preparation, and the Transatlantic Solo Challenge was no exception. Eleven days at sea, three thousand nautical miles, and only the creak of the hull and the cry of the occasional gull for company – that was the plan. What I could not have prepared for was the night the ocean decided to test me beyond anything I had imagined.

Thirty-one boats had left the starting line together that grey morning, engines silent, sails snapping in a brisk westerly breeze while a small crowd of well-wishers waved from the harbour wall. By nightfall the fleet had already scattered across the horizon, each skipper alone with nothing but a compass, a satellite tracker, and their own judgement to guide them. I remember feeling a quiet, stubborn pride as the coastline slipped away behind me; whatever happened out there, I told myself, I would face it entirely on my own terms.

By the third day, I had settled into a comfortable rhythm: four hours of sleep, hourly checks on the rigging, and long stretches spent simply watching the horizon. Rarely does the sea offer such deceptive calm before chaos, but that afternoon the swell flattened to glass, and the sky turned a strange, bruised violet. Seasoned sailors will tell you that stillness like that is never a gift; it is a warning. I should have listened more closely. Instead, I allowed myself a small luxury: a proper meal, cooked slowly, and an hour spent simply lying on deck, watching a pod of dolphins trace lazy circles beside the hull, blissfully unaware of what the evening had in store.

At around nine that evening, the wind arrived without ceremony. Within twenty minutes it had climbed from a gentle breeze to a screaming forty knots, and the waves, which only hours before had been lapping lazily against the hull, now rose like grey walls on every side. Not only did the wind tear the mainsail from its track, but it also snapped one of the forestays clean in half, leaving the mast groaning under strain it was never designed to bear. I fought my way to the bow, harness clipped to the jackline, salt water stinging my eyes, and somehow managed to lash down the flailing sail before it could do further damage.

No sooner had I secured the last line than an enormous wave broke clean over the deck, lifting the boat almost vertically before slamming it back down with a force that knocked the breath from my lungs. I remember gripping the wheel so tightly that my knuckles turned white, certain the hull would splinter beneath me. Little did I know that the worst of the storm was still hours away, gathering strength somewhere out in the blackness to the west.

The radio crackled uselessly; the antenna, I would later discover, had been ripped away by the same gust that had claimed the forestay. Cut off from any voice but my own, I began to understand what true isolation felt like. Never in my years of sailing had I experienced such profound, disorientating solitude – not even during my first solo crossing, as a nervous twenty-three-year-old, had I felt so utterly at the mercy of the elements.

Hour after hour, I bailed water from the cabin, my arms burning, my mind narrowing to a single, animal purpose: survive until dawn. At one point, a rogue wave rolled the boat almost onto her side, and for a sickening moment I was certain we would capsize entirely. Only by throwing my full weight against the tiller did I manage to bring the bow back into the wind. Rarely does a sailor face a single night that tests every skill acquired over a lifetime, yet that was precisely what the Atlantic demanded of me.

Somewhere around three in the morning, exhausted beyond measure, I activated the emergency beacon, more out of desperation than genuine hope of rescue in such conditions. Not until the first grey light crept across the horizon did the wind finally begin to ease, the towering waves gradually softening into something merely dangerous rather than lethal. I allowed myself, for the first time in nine hours, to loosen my grip on the wheel.

It was then that I heard it: the distant, unmistakable thud of helicopter blades. A coastguard rescue crew, alerted by my beacon, had been scrambled from the nearest station the moment the signal registered. Little did the young pilot know, as he banked low over the churning water, that visibility would drop so sharply on the final approach that he would have to rely almost entirely on instruments to locate my position. He later admitted that no sooner had he spotted the boat's flare than the fog rolled back in, swallowing it from view again.

Lowered on a winch line, a paramedic reached the deck within minutes, shouting instructions I could barely process through sheer exhaustion. Not only was I dehydrated and shaking with cold, but I had also cracked two ribs against the wheel during the worst of the rolling, an injury adrenaline had conveniently hidden from me until then. As the harness tightened around my chest and the deck fell away beneath my feet, I finally permitted myself to cry, the tears mixing indistinguishably with the rain still lashing my face.

The flight back to shore passed in a blur of blankets, oxygen masks, and the low, reassuring murmur of the crew checking on me every few minutes. I remember staring out of the small window at the grey Atlantic below, utterly unable to reconcile the vast, indifferent expanse of water with the violence it had unleashed only hours before. By the time we touched down, word of the rescue had already reached the harbour, and a small crowd of fellow competitors, race organisers, and strangers had gathered on the tarmac, applauding as the medics wheeled me toward a waiting ambulance. Only in that moment, surrounded by so many relieved faces, did the full scale of what I had survived finally begin to sink in.

Looking back now, months later, safely on dry land, I find it difficult to convey the strange mixture of terror and clarity that a night like that produces. Never again will I underestimate the raw power of the ocean, nor take for granted the quiet competence of the men and women who risk their own lives to save strangers from the sea. Rarely does one emerge from an experience like that unchanged; I certainly did not. The boat itself, battered but repairable, was recovered two days later by a passing cargo vessel and eventually

returned to me, its hull scarred with a story only I could fully tell, every dent and torn fitting a small, permanent reminder of that single, unforgettable night.

People often ask whether I regret entering that race, whether the danger outweighed whatever I hoped to prove. Not only do I not regret it, but I have also, somewhat to my own surprise, already begun planning my next solo crossing. Little did I know, when I first signed the entry form all those months ago, just how completely that single voyage would reshape my understanding of my own limits – and how far beyond them I was, in fact, capable of going.

Reading Comprehension – True or False

Read the text again and decide if each statement is true (T) or false (F).

1. The narrator was sailing alone in a transatlantic race. ____ (T / F)
2. The storm built up gradually over several hours, giving the narrator plenty of warning. ____ (T / F)
3. The radio stopped working because the antenna was torn away by the wind. ____ (T / F)
4. The narrator was pulled from the water by a passing cargo vessel during the storm. ____ (T / F)
5. The narrator suffered two cracked ribs during the worst of the storm. ____ (T / F)

Reading Comprehension – Multiple Choice

Read each question and choose the correct answer.

1. What kind of event was the narrator participating in?

- A) A round-the-world yacht race with a full crew
- B) A solo transatlantic sailing race
- C) A charity rowing challenge
- D) A coastal fishing tournament

2. What warned experienced sailors that trouble was coming, according to the narrator?

- A) Unusually calm, flat seas
- B) A sudden drop in temperature
- C) A change in wind direction
- D) Dark clouds appearing on the horizon

3. What happened to the narrator's radio during the storm?

- A) It was damaged by seawater flooding the cabin
- B) The narrator switched it off deliberately to save power
- C) The battery died from overuse
- D) Its antenna was ripped away by the wind

4. Why did the coastguard pilot have difficulty locating the boat?

- A) The beacon's signal was too weak to track
- B) The boat's flare had already burned out
- C) Fog reduced visibility during the final approach

D) The helicopter's instruments malfunctioned

5. How does the narrator feel about the experience, looking back?

- A) Transformed by the ordeal, and already planning another solo crossing
- B) Regretful, vowing never to sail alone again
- C) Indifferent, since little in her outlook changed
- D) Resentful toward the race organisers

Key Vocabulary

High-frequency words and expressions (Oxford 3000, New General Service List and Brown Corpus), filtered by topic relevance and B2 level. Meanings are in the Dictionary at the end of the book.

1–10	11–20	21–30	31–40
1. astonishing	11. treacherous	21. gale	31. disoriented
2. breathtaking	12. exhilarating	22. torrent	32. numb
3. terrifying	13. harrowing	23. gasp	33. clutch
4. overwhelming	14. unfathomable	24. shudder	34. cling to
5. sheer	15. vast	25. adrenaline rush	35. hurl
6. plunge	16. summit	26. against all odds	36. quiver
7. plummet	17. ridge	27. brink	37. precipice
8. surge	18. crevasse	28. peril	38. white-knuckle
9. relentless	19. avalanche	29. perilous	39. death-defying
10. daunting	20. blizzard	30. stranded	40. narrow escape

Vocabulary Practice

Choose the correct option to complete each sentence.

1. In the passage, "meticulous" (preparation) is closest in meaning to:

- A) careless and rushed
- B) extremely careful and precise
- C) expensive
- D) unnecessary

2. "Deceptive" (calm) means:

- A) misleading; giving a false impression
- B) violent and sudden
- C) permanent
- D) noisy

3. "Disorientating" (solitude) describes something that:

- A) is comforting and familiar
- B) is exciting and enjoyable
- C) is predictable and dull
- D) causes confusion about one's surroundings or situation

4. "Isolation" refers to:

- A) a type of storm
- B) the state of being alone or cut off from others
- C) a sailing technique
- D) a piece of rescue equipment

5. To "capsize" means to:

- A) turn upside down in the water
- B) sail smoothly and steadily
- C) repair damage to a boat
- D) anchor safely in a harbour

6. "Exhaustion" means:

- A) mild excitement
- B) sudden fear
- C) extreme tiredness
- D) careful planning

7. "Scarred" (hull) describes something:

- A) painted a bright colour
- B) marked with visible signs of damage
- C) newly built
- D) completely destroyed

8. A "beacon" is:

- A) a type of sail
- B) a strong rope used for towing
- C) a written weather report
- D) a signal or light used to guide or alert others

9. "Churning" (water) means:

- A) violently stirred or agitated
- B) perfectly still and calm
- C) frozen solid
- D) very shallow

10. "Flailing" (sail) describes something:

- A) folded neatly

- B) securely fastened
- C) moving wildly and uncontrollably
- D) brightly coloured

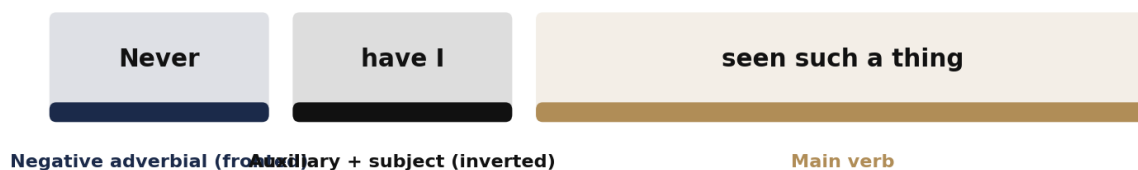
Grammar Focus: Inversion for Emphasis

In English, certain negative or limiting adverbials can be moved from their normal mid-sentence position to the very beginning of a sentence in order to give the idea they express greater emphasis or dramatic force. When this happens, the word order of the clause that follows changes: the subject and the auxiliary verb (or a form of "do" if there is no other auxiliary) swap places, just as they do in a question. This is called subject-auxiliary inversion. Adverbials that commonly trigger this pattern include never, rarely, seldom, hardly, scarcely, barely, no sooner, not only, and little. Compare the neutral sentence "I have never seen such a storm" with its emphatic inverted version, "Never have I seen such a storm" — the meaning is identical, but the inverted form sounds far more forceful and dramatic, as if the speaker can hardly believe what happened.

Some patterns follow slightly more specific rules. "Not only... but also" links two ideas, with inversion occurring only in the first clause: "Not only did the wind tear the sail, but it also snapped a stay." "No sooner... than" describes one event happening immediately after another, and it typically uses the past perfect in the inverted clause followed by a simple past clause introduced by than: "No sooner had I secured the sail than a wave broke over the deck." "Little did [subject] know" is a fixed, idiomatic pattern used to build suspense by revealing that a character was unaware of something important that the reader or listener already knows is coming: "Little did she know that the worst was still to come." Because this kind of inversion sounds formal, literary, or rhetorical, it is far more common in narrative writing, speeches, and journalism than in everyday casual conversation, where the plain, non-inverted structure is generally preferred.

Figure 8

1. Sentence structure



2. Forms and examples


Never / Rarely
 Rarely does he complain.


Not only...but also
 Not only was it late, but it was also windy.


No sooner...than
 No sooner had she arrived than it started raining.

Reference Table: Inversion for Emphasis

Never/Never before	Never (before) + auxiliary + subject + main verb	Never have I seen such a terrifying storm.
Rarely/Seldom	Rarely/Seldom + auxiliary + subject + main verb	Rarely does the ocean stay calm for long.
Not only... but also	Not only + auxiliary + subject + verb..., but (subject) also + verb	Not only was she exhausted, but she was also injured.
No sooner... than	No sooner + had + subject + past participle... than + subject + past simple	No sooner had he left port than the storm hit.
Little did... know	Little + did + subject + know + (that) clause	Little did I know what awaited me at sea.
Only when/after/until	Only when/after/until + clause, + auxiliary + subject + verb	Only when dawn broke did the wind finally ease.

Examples

1. Never have I felt so powerless as I did that night on the open ocean.
2. Rarely does the sea give sailors any warning before a storm turns violent.
3. Not only did the wind destroy the mainsail, but it also broke a forestay.
4. No sooner had she secured the last line than a wave broke over the deck.
5. Little did the pilot know that the fog would return just as he spotted the flare.
6. Only after the coastguard arrived did she finally allow herself to cry.

English Usage

Learn and practice these useful expressions.

- I couldn't believe what I was seeing.
expressing shock at something witnessed firsthand
- To this day, I still...
emphasizing a lasting impression when opening a story
- Never in my life had I...
dramatic inverted opener for describing an extreme first
- It was the most [adjective] thing I've ever experienced.
superlative emphasis when summing up an experience
- I was frozen with fear/shock.
describing a paralyzing physical reaction
- Out of nowhere, ...
signaling a sudden, unexpected turn of events
- Little did I know that...
inversion phrase foreshadowing a dramatic twist
- Words can't describe how...
emphasizing that a feeling is beyond description

Sample Dialogue

A: You look exhausted. What on earth happened to you this weekend?

B: You won't believe it. Never in my life had I felt so terrified.

A: What happened?

B: We were hiking near the ridge when a storm hit out of nowhere.

A: That sounds awful.

B: It was the most frightening thing I've ever experienced. The wind was absolutely relentless.

A: Were you hurt?

B: No, but I couldn't believe what I was seeing — the whole trail just vanished into the blizzard.

A: How did you manage to get down safely?

B: Little did I know that a park ranger was already out searching for us. He found us just in time.

A: Wow, that's incredible. You were so lucky.

B: I know. Words can't describe how relieved I felt the moment I saw his light.

A: I bet. Would you ever go hiking up there again?

B: Honestly, to this day, I still get chills thinking about it, but yes — I'd go back.

Practice

Choose the best expression for each situation.

1. Which phrase best expresses shock at witnessing something extraordinary?

- A) To this day, I still remember the date.

- B) I couldn't believe what I was seeing.
- C) It was rather ordinary, really.
- D) I was mildly interested in it.

2. In the sentence "Never in my life had I...", the negative opener is normally followed by which structure?

- A) an inverted auxiliary + subject + past participle
- B) a verb in the base form
- C) a gerund
- D) a to-infinitive

3. Which phrase is typically used to foreshadow a dramatic twist in a story?

- A) Out of nowhere, ...
- B) Words can't describe how...
- C) I was frozen with fear.
- D) Little did I know that...

4. Complete the sentence: "It was ____ terrifying thing I've ever experienced."

- A) a most
- B) the more
- C) the most
- D) most a

5. Which expression best describes a sudden, unexpected event?

- A) To this day
- B) Out of nowhere
- C) Little did I know
- D) Words can't describe

Practice Quiz (25 Questions)

Choose the only correct answer for each question, based on international exams. Answers are in the Answer Key at the end of the book.

1. Choose the correct inversion of: "I have never seen such a beautiful sunset."

- A) Never have I seen such a beautiful sunset.
- B) Never I have seen such a beautiful sunset.
- C) Never did I have seen such a beautiful sunset.
- D) Never seen I have such a beautiful sunset.

2. Complete: "Rarely _____ such dedication among new employees."

- A) the manager sees
- B) does the manager see
- C) see does the manager
- D) the manager does see

3. Choose the sentence that correctly uses "Not only... but also".

- A) Not only she was tired, but also hungry.
- B) Not only tired she was, but also hungry.
- C) Not only was she tired, but she was also hungry.
- D) Not only she was tired, but she was also hungry.

4. "No sooner _____ the house than it started to rain."

- A) I had left
- B) I left
- C) did I leave
- D) had I left

5. "Little _____ that his plan would fail so completely."

- A) did he know
- B) he knew
- C) knew he
- D) he did know

6. Which sentence uses inversion correctly?

- A) Seldom I have felt so proud.
- B) Seldom have I felt so proud.
- C) Seldom I felt have so proud.
- D) Seldom felt I have so proud.

7. "_____ had the ship left port than the storm hit."

- A) Not only
- B) Never
- C) No sooner
- D) Rarely

8. Complete: "Not only _____ the exam, but she also received a scholarship."

- A) she passed
- B) passed she
- C) she did pass
- D) did she pass

9. Which sentence is grammatically correct?

- A) Never before have I witnessed such courage.
- B) Never before I have witnessed such courage.
- C) Never before had witnessed I such courage.
- D) Never before have witnessed I such courage.

10. "Only when the rain stopped _____ leave the shelter."

- A) we did
- B) did we
- C) we do
- D) do we

11. Choose the correct inversion of: "She had barely sat down when the phone rang."

- A) Barely she had sat down when the phone rang.
- B) Barely sat she had down when the phone rang.
- C) Barely had she sat down when the phone rang.
- D) Barely had sat she down when the phone rang.

12. "Little did the sailor _____ that rescue was only hours away."

- A) knew
- B) known
- C) knowing
- D) know

13. Which sentence correctly follows the "Not only... but also" pattern?

- A) Not only was he brave, but he was also kind.
- B) Not only he was brave but also kind.
- C) Not only he was brave but also he was kind.
- D) Not only brave he was, but also kind.

14. "Rarely _____ we see such extreme weather in this region."

- A) does
- B) do
- C) did
- D) done

15. Choose the correctly inverted sentence: "I had never imagined such danger."

- A) Never I had imagined such danger.
- B) Never imagined I had such danger.
- C) Never had I imagined such danger.
- D) Never had imagined I such danger.

16. "No sooner had the helicopter arrived _____ the fog rolled in."

- A) when
- B) then
- C) as
- D) than

17. Which sentence correctly uses inversion for emphasis?

- A) Not until the storm passed did I feel safe.
- B) Not until the storm passed I felt safe.

- C) Not until the storm passed I did feel safe.
- D) Not until did the storm pass I felt safe.

18. "So terrifying _____ the storm that no one dared to leave the cabin."

- A) did
- B) was
- C) is
- D) has been

19. Choose the best inversion of: "He had scarcely finished speaking when the audience began to applaud."

- A) Scarcely he had finished speaking when the audience began to applaud.
- B) Scarcely finished he had speaking when the audience began to applaud.
- C) Scarcely had he finished speaking when the audience began to applaud.
- D) Scarcely had finished he speaking when the audience began to applaud.

20. Which of these adverbials triggers subject-auxiliary inversion when placed at the start of a sentence?

- A) Usually
- B) Sometimes
- C) Often
- D) Never

21. In the reading, what does the word "meticulous" describe?

- A) The narrator's preparation before the voyage
- B) The weather conditions during the storm
- C) The helicopter pilot's flying skills
- D) The design of the boat

22. According to the passage, what caused the mast to come under extreme strain?

- A) The anchor became stuck
- B) A forestay snapped
- C) The narrator lowered it too quickly
- D) It was struck by lightning

23. Which word from the reading is closest in meaning to "agitated" or "stirred violently"?

- A) deceptive
- B) meticulous
- C) churning
- D) scarred

24. What best describes the tone of the narrator's reflection at the end of the passage?

- A) Bitter and regretful
- B) Indifferent and detached
- C) Fearful and reluctant to sail again
- D) Transformed and eager for new challenges

25. Choose the sentence that best illustrates the structure "Little did [subject] know that..."

- A) Little did she know that the fog would return so quickly.
- B) She little knew that the fog would return so quickly.
- C) Little she knew that the fog would return so quickly.
- D) Little did know she that the fog would return so quickly.

UNIT 9

By This Time Next Year

Objective (CEFR B2): to understand and use expressions related to planning ahead and making predictions about the future, and to interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity, presenting clear, detailed descriptions and viewpoints on a wide range of subjects.

Reading: The Shape of Things to Come

Maria Alvarez is sitting in a small cafe in Valencia, staring at a blank page in her notebook. Above the page she has written a single sentence: "By this time next year, everything will have changed." She is not being dramatic. In eleven months she will finish the final module of her data-science diploma, and by the time she hands in her last assignment, she will have spent almost two years studying at night after long days at the office. She smiles at the thought and starts to write down exactly what her life will look like twelve months from now.

At nine o'clock tomorrow morning, while most of her colleagues will still be commuting, Maria will already be sitting at her new desk. By then, she will have finished her diploma, and, if everything goes according to plan, she will have accepted a job offer from a renewable-energy start-up on the outskirts of the city. She imagines the scene vividly: this time next year, she will be reviewing data from wind farms scattered across the region, and she will be collaborating with engineers who, only a few months earlier, will have installed dozens of new turbines along the coast. It is a strange feeling to plan a life that has not happened yet, but Maria has learned that thinking ahead, rather than simply reacting to events, is what will have made the biggest difference in her career.

Her personal story mirrors a much larger one. Analysts predict that by 2030, renewable sources will have overtaken fossil fuels as the world's primary source of electricity, and by the end of this decade, several major cities will have banned the sale of new petrol-powered cars altogether. Engineers are already testing battery technology that, within five years, will have doubled the driving range of electric vehicles while cutting production costs in half. Meanwhile, urban planners insist that by 2035, most large cities will be running extensive networks of autonomous public transport, and that commuters, instead of driving themselves, will be reading, working, or simply relaxing during journeys that once demanded their full attention.

Technology is expected to transform daily life just as profoundly. Researchers at several universities claim that by 2040, artificial intelligence will have taken over the majority of repetitive administrative tasks, freeing employees to focus on creative and strategic work. Doctors predict that, within the next fifteen years, medicine will have advanced to the point where genetic screening routinely identifies diseases decades before symptoms appear. Picture a hospital in 2045: at any given moment, algorithms will be monitoring thousands of patients simultaneously, flagging warning signs long before a human specialist would notice them. Sceptics warn that such rapid progress carries risks, and they argue that, unless governments act

quickly, technology companies will have gained an alarming amount of influence over ordinary people's lives before adequate regulations exist.

Environmental projections are more sobering, but not entirely without hope. Climate scientists calculate that, without decisive action, global temperatures will have risen by more than two degrees Celsius by the middle of the century, a change that would reshape coastlines and disrupt agriculture across the globe. Yet many of the same scientists also point to encouraging trends: reforestation projects currently underway in Latin America and Southeast Asia will, within a decade, have restored millions of hectares of degraded land, and by 2050, several countries will have achieved net-zero carbon emissions, according to current commitments. Some visionaries even suggest that by then, engineers will be operating floating cities designed to withstand rising sea levels, while others will be cultivating crops in vertical farms that use a fraction of the water required by traditional agriculture.

Education and the world of work are expected to look remarkably different too. By 2035, many universities predict that a majority of undergraduate courses will have moved to flexible, modular formats that blend online and in-person learning, allowing students to assemble personalised degrees rather than following a single fixed path from start to finish. Employers, for their part, increasingly emphasise adaptability over narrow qualifications: by the time today's teenagers enter the workforce, many of the jobs they eventually take will not yet exist, and companies will be relying heavily on continuous training programmes to keep their staff current. At the same time, remote and hybrid work, already common in many industries, is projected to expand further. Analysts believe that within the next decade, a significant proportion of the global workforce will be working from locations far from company headquarters, connected instead through virtual platforms that, by then, will have become as unremarkable as email is today. For someone like Maria, this shift matters directly: her new employer already permits two remote days a week, and she suspects that by the time she is leading her own team, such flexible arrangements will have become the industry standard rather than a rare exception granted to a fortunate few.

Returning to Maria's notebook, her five-year plan sits comfortably alongside these grander forecasts. In one year, she will have completed her diploma and started her new career. In three years, she predicts, she will be leading a small team of analysts, and by then the company will probably have expanded into two additional countries, opening offices where, right now, only a handful of remote employees are working. In five years, she hopes, she will have saved enough money to buy a modest apartment near the sea, and, perhaps most ambitiously, she will have begun mentoring university students who are just starting the journey she herself began. She even imagines a specific afternoon five years from now: at four o'clock, while the rest of the office is still finishing the day's tasks, she will be sitting across from a nervous first-year student, listening patiently to a plan not so different from the one she is writing today.

Of course, nobody can be entirely certain what the future holds. Plans change, unexpected opportunities arise, and global events can alter even the most carefully considered predictions overnight. Still, Maria finds comfort in the exercise of imagining a specific future moment and asking herself two simple questions: What will I have achieved by then, and what will I be doing at that very instant? The first question forces her to think about completed accomplishments, the kind of milestones she could list proudly on a resume; the

second invites her to picture an ongoing scene, almost like a photograph taken at a precise moment in time, full of small, human details that no summary of achievements could ever capture.

As she closes her notebook and orders another coffee, Maria reflects on how different these two kinds of thinking really are. One focuses on results that will already exist, finished and undeniable, while the other captures life exactly as it is happening, unfinished and full of motion. Whether she is imagining wind turbines spinning along the coastline, algorithms quietly protecting patients in a hospital ward, or herself sitting confidently at a new desk, Maria understands that the future, however uncertain, rewards those who dare to picture it clearly. By this time next year, she tells herself, she will not simply be waiting for change to arrive; she will be the one driving it forward.

Reading Comprehension – True or False

Read the text again and decide if each statement is true (T) or false (F).

1. Maria has been studying for her data-science diploma for almost two years. ____ (T / F)
2. Maria plans to work in the traditional fossil-fuel industry after graduating. ____ (T / F)
3. Analysts predict renewables will overtake fossil fuels as the main electricity source by 2030. ____ (T / F)
4. According to the text, all scientists agree that global warming will be completely stopped within five years. ____ (T / F)
5. Maria's five-year plan includes eventually mentoring university students. ____ (T / F)

Reading Comprehension – Multiple Choice

Read each question and choose the correct answer.

1. What will Maria have completed by this time next year, according to her plan?

- A) Her data-science diploma
- B) A university degree in engineering
- C) A job at a hospital
- D) A book about renewable energy

2. According to the text, what will several major cities have done by the end of the decade?

- A) Built new airports
- B) Eliminated public transport
- C) Banned the sale of new petrol-powered cars
- D) Doubled their population

3. What do researchers predict artificial intelligence will have done by 2040?

- A) Replaced all doctors
- B) Ended climate change
- C) Designed floating cities
- D) Taken over most repetitive administrative tasks

4. What positive environmental development does the text mention alongside rising temperature projections?

- A) A drop in world population
- B) Reforestation projects restoring degraded land
- C) The end of vertical farming
- D) A global ban on agriculture

5. What two questions does Maria ask herself about the future?

- A) What will I have achieved and what will I be doing at that moment?
- B) Where will I live and who will I marry?
- C) How much money will I have earned and spent?
- D) When will I retire and where will I travel?

Key Vocabulary

High-frequency words and expressions (Oxford 3000, New General Service List and Brown Corpus), filtered by topic relevance and B2 level. Meanings are in the Dictionary at the end of the book.

1–10	11–20	21–30	31–40
1. forecast	11. foresee	21. phase	31. foreseeable
2. projection	12. long-term	22. benchmark	32. trajectory
3. milestone	13. short-term	23. estimate	33. breakthrough
4. deadline	14. target	24. likelihood	34. innovation
5. timeline	15. aspiration	25. odds	35. sustainable
6. trend	16. ambition	26. inevitable	36. scalable
7. outlook	17. commitment	27. imminent	37. contingency plan
8. prospect	18. resolution	28. upcoming	38. fallback option
9. anticipate	19. strategy	29. eventually	39. checkpoint
10. envision	20. roadmap	30. prospective	40. progression

Vocabulary Practice

Choose the correct option to complete each sentence.

1. In the text, "outskirts" (of the city) most nearly means:

- A) the exact centre
- B) the underground system
- C) the outer edges or surrounding area
- D) the historical district

2. "Scattered" (as in "wind farms scattered across the region") most nearly means:

- A) spread out irregularly over an area
- B) placed in a single straight line

- C) destroyed completely
- D) hidden underground

3. "Renewable" (as in "renewable sources") most nearly means:

- A) unable to be replaced
- B) extremely expensive
- C) illegal in most countries
- D) naturally replenished and not depleted

4. "Autonomous" (as in "autonomous public transport") most nearly means:

- A) very slow and unreliable
- B) operating independently, without human control
- C) owned by the government only
- D) available only at night

5. "Sceptics" most nearly means:

- A) strong supporters of an idea
- B) government officials
- C) people who doubt or question something
- D) scientists who study climate

6. "Sobering" (as in "environmental projections are more sobering") most nearly means:

- A) making one think seriously; serious or grave
- B) exciting and joyful
- C) completely false
- D) related to alcohol

7. "Degraded" (as in "degraded land") most nearly means:

- A) newly created
- B) extremely fertile
- C) legally protected
- D) reduced in quality or condition

8. "Ambitiously" (as in "perhaps most ambitiously") most nearly means:

- A) with no clear purpose
- B) with a strong desire to achieve something
- C) carelessly and without thought
- D) reluctantly and slowly

9. "Undeniable" (as in "results that will already exist, finished and undeniable") most nearly means:

- A) easily questioned
- B) temporary and uncertain
- C) impossible to doubt or dispute
- D) hidden from view

10. "Flagging" (as in "flagging warning signs") most nearly means:

- A) ignoring completely
- B) erasing permanently
- C) celebrating with flags
- D) drawing attention to or marking as important

Grammar Focus: Future Perfect and Future Continuous

The Future Perfect Simple (will have + past participle) describes an action or situation that will be completed before a specific point in the future. It is often used with the preposition "by" (by 2030, by next year, by the time she graduates) to emphasize that something will already be finished at that moment, even though it has not happened yet from the speaker's present perspective. For example, "By the time she hands in her last assignment, she will have spent almost two years studying" tells us that the studying will be complete before that future deadline arrives. This tense is especially useful for talking about milestones, deadlines, and long-term achievements, and it contrasts with the simple future (will), which simply states that something will happen at some point without focusing on completion relative to another future moment.

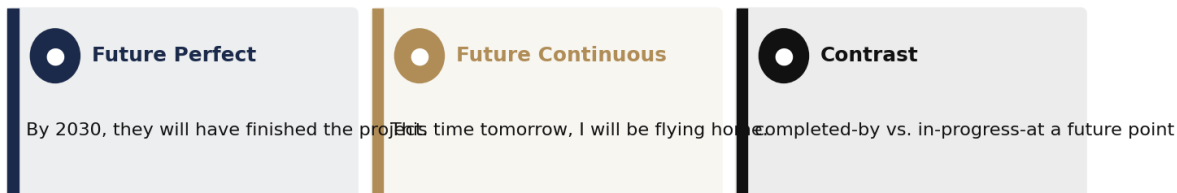
The Future Continuous (will be + -ing) describes an action that will be in progress at a specific point in the future, capturing a scene as it happens rather than as a finished result. It is frequently used with time expressions such as "at this time next year," "at nine o'clock tomorrow," or "in three years." For instance, "At nine o'clock tomorrow morning, Maria will already be sitting at her new desk" describes an ongoing action happening at that precise future moment. While simple future (will) predicts a single event or fact ("She will get a new job"), Future Continuous paints a picture of continuity and process ("She will be working there for months"), and Future Perfect Simple emphasizes that a task will be complete by a deadline ("She will have finished training by then"). Learning to distinguish these three forms allows B2-level speakers to talk about the future with much greater precision and nuance.

Figure 9

1. Sentence structure



2. Forms and examples



Reference Table: Future Perfect vs. Future Continuous

Tense	Structure	Example
Simple Future	will + base verb	She will start her new job next month.
Future Perfect Simple	will have + past participle	By next year, she will have finished her diploma.
Future Continuous	will be + -ing	At noon tomorrow, she will be presenting her project.
Future Perfect Simple (negative)	will not have + past participle	By Friday, the team will not have completed the report.
Future Continuous (question)	Will + subject + be + -ing?	Will you be working late this evening?

Examples

1. By this time next year, everything will have changed for Maria.
2. At nine o'clock tomorrow morning, Maria will already be sitting at her new desk.
3. By 2030, renewable sources will have overtaken fossil fuels as the world's primary source of electricity.
4. This time next year, she will be reviewing data from wind farms scattered across the region.
5. By 2040, artificial intelligence will have taken over the majority of repetitive administrative tasks.
6. In three years, she predicts, she will be leading a small team of analysts.

English Usage

Learn and practice these useful expressions.

- By the time..., I expect to...

used to describe an action completed before a future point

- Somewhere down the line, ...
refers to an unspecified point later in the future
- I'm hoping to have + past participle by...
expresses a goal to be completed by a future deadline
- This time next year, I'll be...
describes an action in progress at a specific future time
- In the pipeline
refers to plans or projects currently being developed
- On track to...
shows that progress is going as planned toward a goal
- Sooner or later, ...
says something will happen eventually, though the exact time is uncertain
- With any luck, ...
expresses hope that something will happen as planned

Sample Dialogue

- A: So, by the time we turn thirty, what do you expect to have achieved?
- B: Well, this time next year, I'll be finishing my master's degree, so that's a good start.
- A: Nice. I'm hoping to have saved enough for a flat deposit by then too.
- B: That's ambitious! Are you on track to hit that goal?
- A: Mostly, yes. I've got a solid plan, though there's always a project in the pipeline that could change things.
- B: True. Sooner or later, something unexpected always comes up.
- A: Exactly. But by the time I turn thirty-two, I expect to have paid off my student loans completely.
- B: That's great. What about further ahead, like your forties?
- A: Somewhere down the line, I'd love to start my own business, but that's still just an idea.
- B: By then, I'll probably be running my own team at work.
- A: Will you still be working in marketing?
- B: I imagine I'll still be working in marketing, just at a higher level.
- A: Well, with any luck, we'll both be exactly where we want to be.
- B: With any luck, we will.

Practice

Choose the best expression for each situation.

1. Which phrase refers to an unspecified point later in the future?

- A) By the time
- B) On track to
- C) Somewhere down the line
- D) In the pipeline

2. "We're currently developing three new products; they're all ____." Which phrase best completes the sentence?

- A) in the pipeline
- B) sooner or later
- C) with any luck
- D) on track to

3. Which phrase shows that progress is going as planned toward a goal?

- A) somewhere down the line
- B) in the pipeline
- C) sooner or later
- D) on track to

4. "____, I'll be managing my own department." Which phrase best fits this future continuous sentence about a specific future time?

- A) sooner or later
- B) this time next year
- C) with any luck
- D) in the pipeline

5. Which phrase expresses hope that something will happen as planned, without guaranteeing it?

- A) with any luck
- B) by the time
- C) somewhere down the line
- D) in the pipeline

Practice Quiz (25 Questions)

Choose the only correct answer for each question, based on international exams. Answers are in the Answer Key at the end of the book.

1. Choose the correct form: By the time we arrive, the film ____.

- A) will have started
- B) will start
- C) will be starting
- D) starts

2. Choose the correct form: At eight o'clock tomorrow, I ____ dinner with my parents.

- A) will have eaten
- B) will be eating
- C) eat
- D) have eaten

3. "By 2030, renewable sources ____ fossil fuels as the main source of electricity."

- A) will overtake
- B) overtook
- C) will have overtaken
- D) will be overtaking

4. Which sentence correctly uses the Future Continuous?

- A) She will have graduated by June.
- B) She has studied every day.
- C) She will study tomorrow.
- D) She will be studying at this time tomorrow.

5. "This time next year, Maria ____ at her new desk."

- A) will be sitting
- B) will sit
- C) will have sat
- D) sits

6. Choose the best completion: "In five years, engineers ____ dozens of new turbines."

- A) will install
- B) will have installed
- C) install
- D) are installing

7. Which time expression is most typically used with Future Perfect Simple?

- A) right now
- B) while I am working
- C) by next month
- D) at this moment

8. Which time expression is most typically used with Future Continuous?

- A) by 2050
- B) before the deadline
- C) already
- D) at this time next year

9. "Doctors predict that medicine ____ significantly by 2040."

- A) will have advanced
- B) will advance
- C) advances
- D) advanced

10. Choose the correct negative form: "By Friday, they ____ the report."

- A) will not finish

- B) will not have finished
- C) will not be finishing
- D) not finish

11. "At this time tomorrow, hundreds of commuters ____ the new train line."

- A) will have used
- B) will use
- C) will be using
- D) used

12. Which sentence is grammatically correct?

- A) By next year, she will opening her own business.
- B) By next year, she have opened her own business.
- C) By next year, she will has opened her own business.
- D) By next year, she will have opened her own business.

13. "Vertical farming" in the reading refers to:

- A) growing crops in tall, stacked structures
- B) farming only on flat plains
- C) a type of ocean fishing
- D) traditional soil-based agriculture

14. Choose the correct question form: "____ you have finished the course by December?"

- A) Do
- B) Will
- C) Are
- D) Have

15. "Reforestation" most nearly means:

- A) cutting down forests
- B) building cities in forests
- C) planting trees to restore a forest
- D) measuring forest size

16. Which is the correct Future Continuous question?

- A) Will you working at nine tomorrow?
- B) Are you will be working at nine?
- C) Do you be working at nine?
- D) Will you be working at nine tomorrow?

17. "By the middle of the century, temperatures ____ by more than two degrees, scientists warn."

- A) will have risen
- B) will rise
- C) rise

D) rose

18. Choose the correct sentence about an action in progress at a future point.

- A) At noon, the team will have presented the results.
- B) At noon, the team will be presenting the results.
- C) At noon, the team presents the results.
- D) At noon, the team has presented the results.

19. "Net-zero emissions" most nearly means:

- A) emissions have doubled
- B) all factories have closed
- C) the balance between emissions produced and removed is zero
- D) emissions are measured in negative numbers

20. "By 2045, algorithms ____ thousands of patients at any given moment."

- A) will monitor
- B) will have monitored
- C) monitored
- D) will be monitoring

21. Which sentence uses Future Perfect Simple correctly to describe a completed achievement?

- A) In three years, she will have saved enough money for an apartment.
- B) In three years, she will be saving enough money for an apartment.
- C) In three years, she saves enough money for an apartment.
- D) In three years, she is saving enough money for an apartment.

22. "Mentoring" most nearly means:

- A) competing against someone
- B) guiding and advising someone less experienced
- C) ignoring a colleague's advice
- D) hiring new employees

23. Choose the sentence that correctly contrasts simple future and future perfect.

- A) She graduates next year, and by then she will complete two internships.
- B) She will have graduated next year, and by then she graduates.
- C) She will graduate next year, and by then she will have completed two internships.
- D) She will graduate next year, and by then she has completed two internships.

24. "Sceptics warn that companies ____ too much influence before regulations exist."

- A) will gain
- B) gain
- C) gained
- D) will have gained

25. Which best describes the difference between Future Perfect Simple and Future Continuous?

- A) Future Perfect Simple shows completion before a future point; Future Continuous shows an action in progress at a future point.
- B) Future Perfect Simple shows an ongoing action; Future Continuous shows a completed one.
- C) They are always interchangeable with no difference in meaning.
- D) Future Continuous is used only for past events.

UNIT 10

It Is Essential That...

Objective (CEFR B2): to understand and use expressions related to making formal recommendations and analyzing corporate crises and policy decisions, and to interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity, presenting clear, detailed descriptions and viewpoints on a wide range of subjects.

Reading: The Memo That Saved the Company

When Marlowe & Finch Logistics discovered that a rival firm had gained unauthorized access to its client database, the executive board convened an emergency session that would determine the company's fate. The breach, though limited in scope, threatened to unravel a reputation built over four decades of careful, disciplined growth. It was Diane Okafor, the newly appointed Chief Risk Officer, who insisted that the board act immediately rather than wait for a formal investigation to conclude. "It is essential that we address this crisis within forty-eight hours," she told the assembled directors, "or our clients will lose confidence entirely."

The board's first move was to commission an internal report. The report's authors, a cross-departmental task force of six specialists, recommended that the company suspend all external data transfers until a full audit be completed. They further insisted that every employee with access to sensitive records undergo mandatory retraining, regardless of seniority or department. This second recommendation proved controversial: several senior managers argued that such a requirement be applied selectively, sparing those whose roles rarely touched client data. The task force, however, held firm. It was vital, they argued, that no exceptions be granted, since a single overlooked account had caused the original breach.

Diane's memo, circulated to all staff on a Tuesday morning, became something of a legend within the company. Rather than issuing a dry set of instructions, she wrote with unusual candor, explaining precisely why each measure mattered. She demanded that the IT department disable remote access to the client database by noon, and she required that all password credentials be reset before the end of the week. More strikingly, she suggested that the company hire an independent auditor rather than rely solely on its own staff, arguing that outside scrutiny would restore credibility far more effectively than an internal review alone.

Not everyone welcomed the memo's tone. The head of the sales division, Marcus Webb, complained that it was unreasonable that ordinary employees be treated as suspects in a crisis they had not caused. Diane's response, delivered calmly in a meeting the following day, has since been quoted often within the industry: "It is not that we suspect anyone individually. It is that the system itself must be beyond reproach, and it is imperative that every one of us demonstrate, through action, that we take this seriously." Her insistence that transparency be the guiding principle, rather than blame, gradually won over even her harshest critics.

The communications team, meanwhile, faced a delicate task of its own. It was proposed that the company notify every affected client directly, rather than issuing a single vague public statement, and it was recommended that each notification include a clear explanation of what data had been exposed and what

measures were being taken in response. Some executives worried that such candor might invite lawsuits or panic. Diane countered that clients would forgive an honest mistake far more readily than a concealed one, and she insisted that the notifications be sent within five days, well ahead of any legal deadline. The board ultimately agreed that speed and honesty be treated as equally important, a decision that proved decisive in the weeks that followed.

Over the following weeks, the task force's recommendations were implemented one by one. The board proposed that a permanent data-security committee be established, with representatives from every department, so that future risks might be identified before they escalated into crises. It was further recommended that this committee meet monthly and that its findings be published, in summary form, to all staff. Some directors initially resisted this level of openness, worrying that it might alarm clients rather than reassure them. Diane countered that clients would trust the company more, not less, once they understood that vigilance had become routine rather than exceptional.

The independent auditor, once engaged, confirmed what the task force had already suspected: the breach had originated from a single unsecured account, created years earlier and subsequently forgotten. The auditor's report recommended that the company adopt a stricter protocol requiring that any account be deactivated automatically after ninety days of inactivity. It also proposed that access privileges be reviewed quarterly rather than annually, a change the board approved without dissent.

In the months that followed, the company established a formal review process to ensure that the new measures did not simply fade with time, as such initiatives so often do once the initial urgency has passed. It was agreed that an external consultant be invited to assess the security committee's effectiveness twice a year, and it was further stipulated that any recommendation the consultant made be discussed openly at the following board meeting, rather than filed away and forgotten. Several employees who had been skeptical at first later admitted that they had underestimated how much the culture of the company would shift. One department head observed that it was remarkable that a single memo, written under pressure in the space of a single morning, should have produced changes that outlasted the crisis itself by years. The board, for its part, insisted that this review process itself be reviewed periodically, so that even the safeguards designed to prevent complacency would not themselves become a source of it.

Perhaps the most significant outcome of the crisis was cultural rather than technical. Employees who had once regarded security training as a bureaucratic formality began to treat it as a professional obligation. Junior staff members, in particular, praised the fact that management had insisted that everyone, from interns to executives, complete the same training modules. One young analyst remarked that it was refreshing that no one be exempted simply because of rank, adding that the experience had made her feel that the company genuinely valued fairness. It was suggested, informally at first and then formally, that this same principle of shared responsibility guide future decisions well beyond the realm of data security.

By the time the board issued its final statement, three months after the breach was first discovered, the company's reputation had not merely recovered; in several respects, it had improved. Industry analysts noted that Marlowe & Finch had responded to the crisis with unusual speed and candor, and several competitors began to model their own emergency protocols on the company's example. The board's closing

memo captured the episode succinctly: "It is our recommendation that every organization facing a similar crisis act swiftly, communicate honestly, and insist that accountability apply equally to all."

Diane Okafor, reflecting on the episode a year later, offered a piece of advice to other risk officers: it is crucial that leaders act before a crisis demands that they do so. She recommended that companies review their security protocols regularly, rather than waiting for an incident to expose their weaknesses, and she suggested that every organization designate someone whose sole responsibility be the anticipation of risk rather than merely its management. Her final observation, often repeated in training seminars since, remains a fitting summary of the entire episode: it is not enough that a company survive a crisis; it is essential that it emerge from one having learned something it did not know before.

Reading Comprehension – True or False

Read the text again and decide if each statement is true (T) or false (F).

1. Diane Okafor was the Chief Risk Officer who insisted that the board respond within forty-eight hours. ____ (T / F)
2. The task force recommended that only senior managers undergo mandatory retraining. ____ (T / F)
3. Diane suggested that the company hire an independent auditor. ____ (T / F)
4. The board decided that client notifications should be delayed until the legal deadline arrived. ____ (T / F)
5. The breach was ultimately traced to a single unsecured account that had been forgotten. ____ (T / F)

Reading Comprehension – Multiple Choice

Read each question and choose the correct answer.

1. Why did Diane Okafor insist that the board act within forty-eight hours?

- A) Because she feared clients would lose confidence in the company
- B) Because a competitor demanded an immediate response
- C) Because the auditor required it by contract
- D) Because the government had set a legal deadline

2. What did the task force recommend regarding mandatory retraining?

- A) That it be optional for senior staff
- B) That it apply to every employee, regardless of seniority
- C) That it apply only to the IT department
- D) That it be postponed until after the audit

3. Why did some executives object to notifying clients quickly and directly?

- A) They believed clients would not notice the breach
- B) They preferred to blame a single employee publicly
- C) They worried it might provoke lawsuits or panic
- D) They thought it would cost too much money

4. What did the independent auditor's investigation reveal about the breach?

- A) It was caused by a deliberate act of sabotage
- B) It resulted from a flaw in the company's software
- C) It was never fully explained
- D) It originated from a single unsecured, forgotten account

5. According to Diane's advice a year later, what should leaders do?

- A) Wait for a crisis before reviewing security protocols
- B) Act before a crisis makes action necessary
- C) Rely entirely on external auditors
- D) Avoid publishing findings to staff

Key Vocabulary

High-frequency words and expressions (Oxford 3000, New General Service List and Brown Corpus), filtered by topic relevance and B2 level. Meanings are in the Dictionary at the end of the book.

1–10	11–20	21–30	31–40
1. recommendation	11. accountability	21. remediation	31. sanction
2. proposal	12. crisis	22. restructuring	32. insolvency
3. board	13. mandate	23. resignation	33. merger
4. stakeholder	14. resolution	24. reinstate	34. litigation
5. shareholder	15. committee	25. suspend	35. settlement
6. executive	16. audit	26. implement	36. whistleblowing
7. liability	17. disclosure	27. enforce	37. integrity
8. compliance	18. transparency	28. policy	38. governance
9. misconduct	19. negligence	29. protocol	39. provision
10. oversight	20. breach	30. regulator	40. statutory

Vocabulary Practice

Choose the correct option to complete each sentence.

1. In the reading, "convened" most nearly means:

- A) called together
- B) canceled
- C) postponed
- D) investigated

2. "Threatened to unravel a reputation" means the reputation was at risk of:

- A) improving suddenly
- B) coming apart or being destroyed

- C) becoming more profitable
- D) being publicly celebrated

3. "She wrote with unusual candor" means she wrote with:

- A) great speed
- B) formal complexity
- C) frankness and honesty
- D) noticeable anger

4. "Outside scrutiny" refers to:

- A) financial support from outside investors
- B) casual observation with little interest
- C) legal permission to operate
- D) careful, close examination by others

5. "Approved without dissent" means the decision was approved:

- A) without any disagreement
- B) with several objections
- C) only after a long delay
- D) by a narrow majority vote

6. "Vigilance had become routine" suggests that careful watchfulness had become:

- A) unnecessary
- B) a regular, ordinary practice
- C) a source of conflict
- D) increasingly rare

7. "Accountability apply equally to all" refers to the idea that everyone should:

- A) receive the same salary
- B) work the same number of hours
- C) be equally responsible for their actions
- D) be promoted at the same time

8. "It is imperative that" is closest in meaning to:

- A) it is unlikely that
- B) it is somewhat useful that
- C) it is forbidden that
- D) it is absolutely necessary that

9. "No one be exempted" means that no one would be:

- A) excused from an obligation
- B) promoted ahead of schedule
- C) publicly criticized
- D) given additional responsibilities

10. "Restore credibility" means to bring back:

- A) financial profit
- B) public trust and believability
- C) office equipment
- D) staff numbers

Grammar Focus: The Mandative Subjunctive in Formal English

The mandative subjunctive is used in formal English after certain verbs that express a suggestion, recommendation, insistence, or demand, such as suggest, recommend, insist, demand, propose, and require. When one of these verbs is followed by a that-clause, the verb in that clause appears in its base form, regardless of the subject or the tense of the main verb. This means there is no third-person -s and no change to reflect past time: we say "The board recommended that the company suspend all transfers," not "suspends" or "suspended," even though the recommendation itself happened in the past. The negative form is created by placing "not" directly before the base form, as in "The committee insisted that the report not be delayed."

A second common pattern uses impersonal expressions of the type it is + adjective + that, where the adjective conveys necessity, importance, or urgency: it is essential, it is important, it is vital, it is necessary, it is imperative, and similar phrases. These are followed by the same structure: that + subject + base form, as in "It is essential that every employee complete the training" or "It is imperative that accountability apply equally to all." This construction is a hallmark of formal written and spoken English — reports, memos, academic writing, and official announcements — and it signals precision and seriousness. In everyday conversation, English speakers often prefer a more relaxed alternative using should, as in "It's important that everyone should complete the training" or simply "Everyone should complete the training," which conveys a similar meaning with a less formal tone.

Figure 10

1. Sentence structure



2. Forms and examples

After suggest/recommend/insist
 I suggest that she attend the meeting.

It is essential/vital that...
 It is vital that the report be accurate.

Register
 formal/written English

Reference Table: The Subjunctive in Formal English

Trigger	Structure	Example
suggest / recommend / propose	subject + verb + that + subject + base form	The auditor recommended that the company adopt a stricter protocol.
insist / demand	subject + verb + that + subject + base form	Marcus insisted that the committee reconsider its decision.
require	subject + require + that + subject + base form	The policy requires that every account be reviewed quarterly.
it is essential / important / vital that	it + be + adjective + that + subject + base form	It is vital that no exceptions be granted.
it is imperative / necessary that	it + be + adjective + that + subject + base form	It is necessary that the findings be published to all staff.

Examples

1. Diane insisted that the board act immediately rather than wait for the investigation to conclude.
2. The task force recommended that the company suspend all external data transfers.
3. It is essential that every employee, regardless of rank, complete the same training.
4. She required that all password credentials be reset before the end of the week.
5. The board proposed that a permanent data-security committee be established.
6. It is imperative that accountability apply equally to everyone in the organization.

English Usage

Learn and practice these useful expressions.

- We strongly recommend that...

introducing a formal, urgent recommendation

- It is essential that...
stressing that an action is absolutely necessary
- It would be advisable to...
softening a suggestion while remaining formal
- The board insists that...
reporting a firm formal demand
- We propose that...
putting forward a formal plan for consideration
- It is imperative that...
emphasizing extreme urgency in formal writing
- We urge the committee to...
pressing strongly for immediate action
- Failure to comply may result in...
warning formally about consequences of inaction

Sample Dialogue

A: Thank you all for joining this emergency session. As you know, the audit revealed serious compliance breaches in the finance department.

B: Yes, we've reviewed the report. It is essential that the board address this before the regulator does.

A: Agreed. We strongly recommend that the current finance director be suspended pending a full investigation.

B: I support that. It would be advisable to appoint an independent auditor immediately as well.

A: The legal team insists that we notify shareholders within seventy-two hours.

B: That timeline seems tight, but I understand the reasoning. Failure to comply may result in regulatory sanctions.

A: We propose that a new compliance committee be established to oversee remediation.

B: A sensible proposal. It is imperative that this committee report directly to the board, not to management.

A: Absolutely. We urge the committee to draft new protocols within thirty days.

B: I'll put that motion forward for a vote now.

A: One more point: it is essential that all staff receive updated training on disclosure requirements.

B: Noted. I'll ask the committee to prioritize that in their first meeting.

Practice

Choose the best expression for each situation.

1. Which phrase most directly expresses extreme formal urgency?

- A) It would be advisable to...
- B) It is imperative that...
- C) We propose that...
- D) Failure to comply may result in...

2. "It would be advisable to review the contract again." This phrase functions as a...
- A) direct order
 - B) formal warning
 - C) softened suggestion
 - D) legal threat
3. Which phrase is best used to warn about consequences of inaction?
- A) We urge the committee to...
 - B) Failure to comply may result in...
 - C) We propose that...
 - D) It is essential that...
4. In a formal report, "The board insists that..." is typically followed by a verb in which form?
- A) the base form (subjunctive)
 - B) the past simple
 - C) the present continuous
 - D) the past participle alone
5. Which phrase is most appropriate for formally putting forward a new plan for discussion?
- A) It is imperative that...
 - B) We propose that...
 - C) Failure to comply may result in...
 - D) We strongly recommend that...

Practice Quiz (25 Questions)

Choose the only correct answer for each question, based on international exams. Answers are in the Answer Key at the end of the book.

1. The board recommended that the new policy _____ immediately.
- A) be implemented
 - B) implements
 - C) implemented
 - D) is implemented
2. It is essential that every student _____ the exam on time.
- A) submits
 - B) submit
 - C) submitted
 - D) is submitting
3. The manager insisted that the report _____ before Friday.
- A) finishes
 - B) finished

- C) be finished
- D) is finished

4. She suggested that he _____ more carefully before signing the contract.

- A) reads
- B) reading
- C) has read
- D) read

5. It is vital that the committee _____ all the evidence before deciding.

- A) review
- B) reviews
- C) reviewed
- D) will review

6. The auditor demanded that the accounts _____ audited again.

- A) are
- B) be
- C) were
- D) being

7. It is important that he _____ present at tomorrow's meeting.

- A) is
- B) was
- C) be
- D) being

8. The professor requires that all essays _____ typed and double-spaced.

- A) are
- B) were
- C) is
- D) be

9. The committee proposed that the deadline _____ extended by two weeks.

- A) be
- B) is
- C) was
- D) has been

10. Choose the correct sentence.

- A) It is necessary that she attends the ceremony.
- B) It is necessary that she attend the ceremony.
- C) It is necessary that she attended the ceremony.
- D) It is necessary that she will attend the ceremony.

11. The doctor recommended that the patient _____ more rest.

- A) gets
- B) getting
- C) get
- D) got

12. The word "candor" in the reading most closely means:

- A) confusion
- B) anger
- C) delay
- D) honesty

13. Choose the correct sentence.

- A) The board insisted that the audit not be postponed.
- B) The board insisted that the audit doesn't be postponed.
- C) The board insisted that the audit not was postponed.
- D) The board insisted that the audit is not postponed.

14. It is crucial that the new employees _____ the safety guidelines.

- A) follows
- B) follow
- C) followed
- D) are following

15. The lawyer demanded that his client _____ silent.

- A) remains
- B) remained
- C) remain
- D) is remaining

16. Which sentence uses the mandative subjunctive correctly?

- A) I suggest that she attends the workshop.
- B) I suggest that she attended the workshop.
- C) I suggest that she will attend the workshop.
- D) I suggest that she attend the workshop.

17. The word "scrutiny" in the reading is closest in meaning to:

- A) close examination
- B) approval
- C) financial loss
- D) public celebration

18. It is important that the company _____ transparent with its clients.

- A) is
- B) be
- C) was
- D) being

19. Choose the sentence that is grammatically correct.

- A) The committee recommends that the rule changes.
- B) The committee recommends that the rule is changed.
- C) The committee recommends that the rule be changed.
- D) The committee recommends that the rule changed.

20. The director insisted that every applicant _____ an interview.

- A) attends
- B) attended
- C) is attending
- D) attend

21. In more casual English, "It is essential that he be present" is often rephrased as:

- A) He should be present.
- B) He is present essentially.
- C) It's essential he presents.
- D) He was essentially present.

22. The word "dissent" in the reading is closest in meaning to:

- A) agreement
- B) disagreement
- C) confusion
- D) enthusiasm

23. It is essential that the data _____ protected at all times.

- A) is
- B) was
- C) be
- D) being

24. Choose the correct sentence.

- A) The board required that each department submits a report.
- B) The board required that each department submitted a report.
- C) The board required that each department will submit a report.
- D) The board required that each department submit a report.

25. The word "credibility" in the reading refers to:

- A) trustworthiness
- B) financial value

- C) legal authority
- D) physical strength

Answer Key

Below are the correct answers to all reading comprehension, vocabulary, English Usage and practice-quiz exercises in each unit.

Unit 1: Behind the Scenes

True/False: 1. T 2. F 3. T 4. F 5. T

Reading Comprehension (multiple choice): 1. B 2. C 3. A 4. B 5. C

Vocabulary: 1. A 2. B 3. C 4. D 5. A 6. B 7. C 8. D 9. A 10. B

English Usage – Practice: 1. B 2. A 3. B 4. D 5. A

Practice Quiz: 1. A 2. B 3. C 4. D 5. A 6. B 7. C 8. D 9. A 10. B 11. C 12. D 13. A

14. B 15. C 16. D 17. A 18. B 19. C 20. D 21. A 22. B 23. C 24. D 25. A

Unit 2: He Told Me Not To...

True/False: 1. T 2. F 3. T 4. F 5. T

Reading Comprehension (multiple choice): 1. A 2. B 3. C 4. D 5. B

Vocabulary: 1. A 2. B 3. C 4. D 5. A 6. B 7. C 8. D 9. A 10. B

English Usage – Practice: 1. A 2. C 3. B 4. C 5. D

Practice Quiz: 1. A 2. B 3. C 4. D 5. A 6. B 7. C 8. D 9. A 10. B 11. C 12. D 13. A

14. B 15. C 16. D 17. A 18. B 19. C 20. D 21. A 22. B 23. C 24. D 25. A

Unit 3: What If...?

True/False: 1. F 2. T 3. F 4. F 5. T

Reading Comprehension (multiple choice): 1. B 2. C 3. D 4. A 5. B

Vocabulary: 1. C 2. B 3. C 4. D 5. A 6. D 7. C 8. B 9. A 10. D

English Usage – Practice: 1. A 2. B 3. C 4. D 5. B

Practice Quiz: 1. A 2. B 3. C 4. D 5. A 6. B 7. C 8. D 9. A 10. B 11. C 12. D 13. A

14. B 15. C 16. D 17. A 18. B 19. C 20. D 21. A 22. B 23. C 24. D 25. A

Unit 4: If Only...

True/False: 1. T 2. F 3. T 4. F 5. F

Reading Comprehension (multiple choice): 1. A 2. B 3. C 4. D 5. A

Vocabulary: 1. B 2. D 3. A 4. C 5. B 6. D 7. A 8. C 9. B 10. D

English Usage – Practice: 1. D 2. B 3. C 4. A 5. B

Practice Quiz: 1. A 2. B 3. C 4. D 5. A 6. B 7. C 8. D 9. A 10. B 11. C 12. D 13. A

14. B 15. C 16. D 17. A 18. B 19. C 20. D 21. A 22. B 23. C 24. D 25. A

Unit 5: Walking Down the Street, She Noticed...

True/False: 1. T 2. F 3. T 4. F 5. T

Reading Comprehension (multiple choice): 1. A 2. B 3. C 4. D 5. B

Vocabulary: 1. A 2. B 3. C 4. D 5. A 6. B 7. C 8. D 9. A 10. B

English Usage – Practice: 1. A 2. B 3. C 4. D 5. A

Practice Quiz: 1. A 2. B 3. C 4. D 5. A 6. B 7. C 8. D 9. A 10. B 11. C 12. D 13. A

14. B 15. C 16. D 17. A 18. B 19. C 20. D 21. A 22. B 23. C 24. D 25. A

Unit 6: What I Mean Is...

True/False: 1. F 2. F 3. T 4. F 5. T

Reading Comprehension (multiple choice): 1. B 2. C 3. A 4. D 5. A

Vocabulary: 1. B 2. A 3. C 4. D 5. A 6. B 7. C 8. D 9. A 10. B

English Usage – Practice: 1. B 2. C 3. A 4. D 5. B

Practice Quiz: 1. A 2. B 3. C 4. D 5. A 6. B 7. C 8. D 9. A 10. B 11. C 12. D 13. A

14. B 15. C 16. D 17. A 18. B 19. C 20. D 21. A 22. B 23. C 24. D 25. A

Unit 7: Give It Up, Break It Down

True/False: 1. T 2. F 3. T 4. T 5. F

Reading Comprehension (multiple choice): 1. B 2. C 3. D 4. A 5. C

Vocabulary: 1. C 2. A 3. D 4. B 5. A 6. C 7. D 8. B 9. C 10. A

English Usage – Practice: 1. A 2. C 3. B 4. D 5. A

Practice Quiz: 1. A 2. B 3. C 4. D 5. A 6. B 7. C 8. D 9. A 10. B 11. C 12. D 13. A

14. B 15. C 16. D 17. A 18. B 19. C 20. D 21. A 22. B 23. C 24. D 25. A

Unit 8: Never Have I Ever Seen Such a Thing

True/False: 1. T 2. F 3. T 4. F 5. T

Reading Comprehension (multiple choice): 1. B 2. A 3. D 4. C 5. A

Vocabulary: 1. B 2. A 3. D 4. B 5. A 6. C 7. B 8. D 9. A 10. C

English Usage – Practice: 1. B 2. A 3. D 4. C 5. B

Practice Quiz: 1. A 2. B 3. C 4. D 5. A 6. B 7. C 8. D 9. A 10. B 11. C 12. D 13. A

14. B 15. C 16. D 17. A 18. B 19. C 20. D 21. A 22. B 23. C 24. D 25. A

Unit 9: By This Time Next Year

True/False: 1. T 2. F 3. T 4. F 5. T

Reading Comprehension (multiple choice): 1. A 2. C 3. D 4. B 5. A

Vocabulary: 1. C 2. A 3. D 4. B 5. C 6. A 7. D 8. B 9. C 10. D

English Usage – Practice: 1. C 2. A 3. D 4. B 5. A

Practice Quiz: 1. A 2. B 3. C 4. D 5. A 6. B 7. C 8. D 9. A 10. B 11. C 12. D 13. A

14. B 15. C 16. D 17. A 18. B 19. C 20. D 21. A 22. B 23. C 24. D 25. A

Unit 10: It Is Essential That...

True/False: 1. T 2. F 3. T 4. F 5. T

Reading Comprehension (multiple choice): 1. A 2. B 3. C 4. D 5. B

Vocabulary: 1. A 2. B 3. C 4. D 5. A 6. B 7. C 8. D 9. A 10. B

English Usage – Practice: 1. B 2. C 3. B 4. A 5. B

Practice Quiz: 1. A 2. B 3. C 4. D 5. A 6. B 7. C 8. D 9. A 10. B 11. C 12. D 13. A

14. B 15. C 16. D 17. A 18. B 19. C 20. D 21. A 22. B 23. C 24. D 25. A

Dictionary

Meaning of all key words and expressions in the book, organized by unit. (Meanings are given in Spanish.)

Unit 1: Behind the Scenes

Word / expression	Meaning	Word / expression	Meaning
backstage	entre bastidores	teardown	desmontaje final
budget	presupuesto	to allocate	asignar
compliance	cumplimiento normativo	to assemble	ensamblar
contingency plan	plan de contingencia	to broadcast	transmitir
contractor	contratista	to coordinate	coordinar
crew	equipo de trabajo	to delegate	delegar
deadline	plazo	to dismantle	desmontar
infrastructure	infraestructura	to fine-tune	ajustar con precisión
liaison	enlace	to inspect	inspeccionar
logistics	logística	to mobilize	movilizar
milestone	hito	to oversee	supervisar
permit	permiso	to roll out	implementar/lanzar
production team	equipo de producción	to schedule	programar
rehearsal	ensayo	to streamline	agilizar
security detail	equipo de seguridad	to synchronize	sincronizar
setup	instalación/montaje	to troubleshoot	resolver problemas
stagehand	tramoyista	turnaround time	tiempo de respuesta
subcontractor	subcontratista	venue	recinto/sede
supply chain	cadena de suministro	volunteer	voluntario
task force	grupo de trabajo especial	workflow	flujo de trabajo

Unit 2: He Told Me Not To...

Word / expression	Meaning	Word / expression	Meaning
admit	admitir	investigate	investigar
allegation	acusación	investigation	investigación
anonymous	anónimo	journalist	periodista
article	artículo	leak	filtración

bias	sesgo	off the record	extraoficial
broadcast	transmitir	on the record	oficialmente
claim	afirmación	press conference	rueda de prensa
confidential	confidencial	publish	publicar
confirm	confirmar	quote	cita
corruption	corrupción	reporter	reportero
cover-up	encubrimiento	rumor	rumor
credible	creíble	scandal	escándalo
deny	negar	source	fuelle
disclose	revelar	statement	declaración
draft	borrador	subpoena	citación judicial
editor	editor	testify	testificar
evidence	prueba	testimony	testimonio
fact-check	verificar datos	transcript	transcripción
headline	titular	whistleblower	denunciante
interview	entrevista	witness	testigo

Unit 3: What If...?

Word / expression	Meaning	Word / expression	Meaning
aspiration	aspiración	speculation	especulación
breakthrough	avance decisivo	to drift apart	distanciarse
career path	trayectoria profesional	to fall into place	encajar / resolverse
comfort zone	zona de confort	to gamble on	apostar por
consequence	consecuencia	to hold back	contenerse
contentment	satisfacción	to look back on	mirar atrás
crossroads	encrucijada	to make peace with	reconciliarse con
dilemma	dilema	to pursue	perseguir
fulfillment	realización personal	to reconsider	reconsiderar
hindsight	perspectiva retrospectiva	to reflect on	reflexionar sobre
hypothetical	hipotético	to second-guess	dudar retrospectivamente
leap of faith	salto de fe	to settle for	conformarse con
life-changing	que cambia la vida	to shape	moldear
long-term impact	impacto a largo plazo	to take a chance	arriesgarse

milestone	hito	to venture into	aventurarse en
opportunity	oportunidad	to weigh up	sopesar
outcome	resultado	trade-off	disyuntiva
path not taken	camino no tomado	turning point	punto de inflexión
regret	arrepentimiento	unforeseen	imprevisto
self-doubt	inseguridad	what-if scenario	escenario hipotético

Unit 4: If Only...

Word / expression	Meaning	Word / expression	Meaning
bittersweet	agridulce	to hold back	contenerse
closure	cierre emocional	to let an opportunity slip	dejar pasar una oportunidad
comfort zone	zona de confort	to look back on	recordar/mirar atrás
crossroads	encrucijada	to make amends	reparar el daño
detour	desvío	to make peace with	hacer las paces con
hindsight	retrospectiva	to move on	seguir adelante
introspective	introspectivo	to pursue	perseguir
lingering doubt	duda persistente	to reconsider	reconsiderar
missed opportunity	oportunidad perdida	to reflect on	reflexionar sobre
outlook	perspectiva/actitud	to reinvent oneself	reinventarse
path not taken	camino no elegido	to second-guess	dudar de uno mismo
personal growth	crecimiento personal	to seize the moment	aprovechar el momento
regret	arrepentimiento	to take a chance	arriesgarse
resilience	resiliencia	to take for granted	dar por sentado
self-doubt	inseguridad	to take stock of	evaluar/hacer balance de
setback	contratiempo	turning point	punto de inflexión
soul-searching	introspección	unfulfilled	insatisfecho/incumplido
to acknowledge	reconocer	what could have been	lo que pudo haber sido
to come to terms with	aceptar/resignarse a	what if	qué habría pasado si
to dwell on	darle vueltas a	wisdom	sabiduría

Unit 5: Walking Down the Street, She Noticed...

Word / expression	Meaning	Word / expression	Meaning
ambience	ambiente	glow	resplandor
aroma	aroma	hue	matiz, tono
atmosphere	atmósfera	hush	silencio, calma
backdrop	telón de fondo	hustle and bustle	ajetreo
blur	borrón, mancha	linger	persistir, demorarse
bustling	bullicioso	muffled	amortiguado
contour	contorno	murmur	murmullo
crumbling	desmoronándose	nondescript	anodino, sin rasgos
dim	tenue	peer	mirar con atención
distant	distante, lejano	quaint	pintoresco
drift	flotar, ir a la deriva	scent	olor, aroma
echo	eco	shadowy	sombrío
evoke	evocar	silhouette	silueta
faded	descolorido	sprawling	extenso, disperso
faint	débil, tenue	striking	llamativo
flicker	parpadeo	texture	textura
gaze	mirada fija	unassuming	discreto, sin pretensiones
glance	mirada rápida	vibrant	vibrante
gleam	destello, brillo	vivid	vívido
glimpse	vistazo, atisbo	weathered	desgastado

Unit 6: What I Mean Is...

Word / expression	Meaning	Word / expression	Meaning
advocate for	abogar por	justify	justificar
argument	argumento	one-sided	parcial
assertion	aserción	opponent	oponente
bias	sesgo	persuade	persuadir
claim	afirmación	persuasive	persuasivo
compelling	convinciente	proponent	defensor
concede	conceder	rationale	fundamento
concession	concesión	rebuttal	refutación
consensus	consenso	refute	refutar

contend	sostener	reinforce	reforzar
controversial	controvertido	skeptic	escéptico
counterargument	contraargumento	stance	postura firme
counterpoint	contrapunto	standpoint	postura
credibility	credibilidad	subjective	subjetivo
dispute	disputar	substantiate	fundamentar
elaborate on	ampliar sobre	sway	influir
evidence	evidencia	underlying assumption	supuesto subyacente
exaggeration	exageración	undermine	socavar
fallacy	falacia	validate	validar
impartial	imparcial	viewpoint	punto de vista

Unit 7: Give It Up, Break It Down

Word / expression	Meaning	Word / expression	Meaning
bounce back from	recuperarse de	give up	dejar/abandonar
break away from	romper con	hold off on	aplazar
break down	descomponerse/analizar	iron out	resolver detalles
break into	iniciar/entrar en	keep up with	mantenerse al día
build up	acumular/desarrollar	kick the habit	dejar el hábito
carry on	continuar	phase in	introducir gradualmente
carry out	llevar a cabo	phase out	eliminar gradualmente
come up with	idear/proponer	push through	sacar adelante
cut back on	recortar	put off	posponer
cut down on	reducir	scale back	reducir en escala
do away with	eliminar	see through	llevar hasta el final
ease into	adaptarse gradualmente	slip back into	recaer en un hábito
ease off	disminuir/relajarse	sort out	organizar/resolver
fall back into	recaer en	stick to	apegarse a
figure out	descifrar/resolver	stick with	mantenerse fiel a
follow through on	cumplir con	streamline	optimizar/simplificar
get around to	encontrar tiempo para	tackle head-on	enfrentar directamente
get bogged down in	atascarse en	take up	empezar una afición
get rid of	deshacerse de	wean oneself off	dejar gradualmente

give in to	ceder ante	work through	resolver/superar
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Unit 8: Never Have I Ever Seen Such a Thing

Word / expression	Meaning	Word / expression	Meaning
adrenaline rush	subidón de adrenalina	overwhelming	abrumador
against all odds	contra todo pronóstico	peril	peligro
astonishing	asombroso	perilous	peligroso
avalanche	avalancha	plummet	caer en picada
blizzard	ventisca	plunge	caída, zambullida
breathtaking	que quita el aliento	precipice	precipicio
brink	borde, límite	quiver	temblar
cling to	aferrarse a	relentless	implacable
clutch	aferrarse, agarrar	ridge	cresta, cordillera
crevasse	grieta de glaciar	sheer	puro, absoluto
daunting	intimidante	shudder	estremecerse, escalofrío
death-defying	desafiante de la muerte	stranded	varado, atrapado
disoriented	desorientado	summit	cumbre
exhilarating	emocionante, estimulante	surge	oleada repentina
gale	vendaval	terrifying	aterrador
gasp	boqueada, exclamación ahogada	torrent	torrente
harrowing	angustioso	treacherous	traicionero, peligroso
hurl	arrojar con fuerza	unfathomable	insondable
narrow escape	escape por poco	vast	vasto, inmenso
numb	entumecido	white-knuckle	de miedo intenso

Unit 9: By This Time Next Year

Word / expression	Meaning	Word / expression	Meaning
ambition	ambición	long-term	a largo plazo
anticipate	anticipar	milestone	hito
aspiration	aspiración	odds	probabilidades
benchmark	punto de referencia	outlook	perspectiva
breakthrough	avance importante	phase	fase

checkpoint	punto de control	progression	progresión
commitment	compromiso	projection	proyección
contingency plan	plan de contingencia	prospect	posibilidad futura
deadline	fecha límite	prospective	futuro/potencial
envision	imaginar el futuro	resolution	resolución
estimate	estimación	roadmap	hoja de ruta
eventually	finalmente	scalable	escalable
fallback option	plan de respaldo	short-term	a corto plazo
forecast	pronóstico	strategy	estrategia
foresee	prever	sustainable	sostenible
foreseeable	previsible	target	meta
imminent	inminente	timeline	cronograma
inevitable	inevitable	trajectory	trayectoria
innovation	innovación	trend	tendencia
likelihood	probabilidad	upcoming	próximo

Unit 10: It Is Essential That...

Word / expression	Meaning	Word / expression	Meaning
accountability	rendición de cuentas	oversight	supervisión
audit	auditoría	policy	política
board	junta directiva	proposal	propuesta
breach	incumplimiento	protocol	protocolo
committee	comité	provision	disposición (legal)
compliance	cumplimiento normativo	recommendation	recomendación
crisis	crisis	regulator	regulador
disclosure	divulgación	reinstate	restituir
enforce	hacer cumplir	remediation	remediación
executive	ejecutivo	resignation	dimisión
governance	gobernanza	resolution	resolución
implement	implementar	restructuring	reestructuración
insolvency	insolvencia	sanction	sanción
integrity	integridad	settlement	acuerdo (legal)
liability	responsabilidad legal	shareholder	accionista

litigation	litigio	stakeholder	parte interesada
mandate	mandato	statutory	reglamentario
merger	fusión	suspend	suspender
misconduct	mala conducta	transparency	transparencia
negligence	negligencia	whistleblowing	denuncia interna

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