

ENGLISH

as a Foreign Language

NIVEL C1 · DOMINIO OPERATIVO EFICAZ / EFFECTIVE PROFICIENCY

Marco Común Europeo de Referencia para las Lenguas (MCER)

Recursos de preparación para el examen de inglés como lengua extranjera, Nivel C1

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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 C1 (Effective Operational Proficiency / Advanced) 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 B2 or have equivalent upper-intermediate knowledge of English. Each of the ten units combines a long-form contextualized reading, practice with sophisticated vocabulary, an English Usage section with practical communication expressions and its own practice exercise, an explanation of grammar and discourse structures with examples and figures, and a multiple-choice practice quiz in the style 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 C1. The vocabulary in each unit (40 words and expressions) was selected from validated linguistic frequency lists (Oxford 3000/5000, New General Service List, Academic Word 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 C1

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) describes level C1 as "Effective Operational Proficiency", the fifth level of the communicative-competence scale and the first of the "proficient 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 even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly. I can understand television programmes and films without too much effort."

Reading

"I can understand long and complex factual and literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style. I can understand specialised articles and longer technical instructions, even when they do not relate to my field."

Vocabulary

"Has a good command of a broad lexical repertoire allowing gaps to be readily overcome with circumlocutions; little obvious searching for expressions or avoidance strategies." (Vocabulary range, CEFR Companion Volume)

Speaking

"I can express myself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. I can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes... I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects."

Range: "Has a good command of a broad range of language allowing him/her to select a formulation to express him/herself clearly in an appropriate style."

Accuracy: "Consistently maintains a high degree of grammatical accuracy; errors are rare, difficult to spot and generally corrected when they do occur."

Fluency: "Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously, almost effortlessly. Only a difficult subject can hinder a natural, smooth flow of language."

Coherence: "Can produce clear, smoothly flowing, well structured speech, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices."

Writing

"I can express myself in clear, well-structured text, expressing points of view at some length. I can write about complex subjects in a letter, an essay or a report, underlining what I consider to be the salient issues."

Grammar

"Consistently maintains a high degree of grammatical accuracy; errors are rare and difficult to spot." (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
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1	Had I Known...	career change, risk, and reflection vocabulary	discussing life-changing decisions and regrets	The Door I Left Ajar	forming inverted conditionals in formal register
2	Little Did I Know	vocabulary of surprise, secrecy, and revelation	phrases for narrating a dramatic realization	The Name in the Margin	inversion and fronting for rhetorical emphasis
3	I Should Have Told You	workplace feedback, regret, and honest communication vocabulary	diplomatic phrases for giving and receiving feedback	The Feedback I Never Gave	should have, could have, might have, needn't have
4	Getting Things Done	delegation, project management, and outsourcing terms	phrases for delegating tasks and arranging services	The Reluctant Delegator: Notes from a Renovation Project	causative structures with have and get
5	It Is Said That...	investigative journalism and unverified evidence terms	hedging and distancing phrases for reported claims	The Man Who Fell From the Sky: The Enduring Mystery of D.B. Cooper	reporting verbs and distancing structures for claims
6	In Other Words...	circular economy and sustainability terminology	presenting research findings and reports formally	From Waste to Resource: The Emergence of the Circular Economy	forming nominalizations for academic register
7	Neither Do I	words for discussing shared experience and opinion	agreeing, disagreeing, and comparing opinions	Two Paths, One Table	ellipsis and substitution for cohesive agreement
8	A Blessing in Disguise	idioms and collocations for setbacks and resilience	functional phrases for silver-lining narratives	The Pink Slip That Paid Off	advanced idiomatic expressions and collocations
9	On the One Hand...	debate and workplace policy vocabulary	phrases for hedging and balancing arguments	The Four-Day Week: Progress or Illusion?	discourse markers and hedging expressions
10	As Far As I'm Concerned	personal opinion and persuasive stance terms	expressing conviction and reservation in debate	The Five-Day Fallacy: Rethinking the Modern Workweek	hedging, boosting, and epistemic modality markers

UNIT 1

Had I Known...

Objective (CEFR C1): to understand and use expressions related to reflecting on career change, risk-taking, and life-altering decisions, and to express ideas fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions, using language flexibly and effectively for social, academic, and professional purposes.

Reading: The Door I Left Ajar

Seventeen years have elapsed since the afternoon I was summoned into the senior partner's office and offered, with a handshake so brisk it felt almost perfunctory, a partnership at Ashcombe & Reyes. I remember the light slanting through the venetian blinds, striping the mahogany desk like a ledger of missed opportunities not yet incurred. Had I signed the letter that lay before me, I would, by now, be one of three names engraved on the brass plaque beside the lobby, my signature affixed to briefs worth more than most provincial towns' annual budgets. Instead, I set down the pen, thanked my mentor for a decade of unstinting guidance, and resigned within the month to open a secondhand bookshop in a town I had visited exactly twice.

People who hear this story tend to assume it was audacious, even romantic — a barrister trading litigation for the scent of old paper and binding glue. The truth is more circumspect than that. I did not leap so much as edge, crablike, away from a life whose contours I could already trace to their terminus: the corner office, the summer house, the eventual obituary noting my contributions to commercial arbitration. Were I a braver narrator, I might claim some singular epiphany, a thunderclap of clarity. In fact it was cumulative — years of drafting contracts for clients whose names I forgot before their cheques cleared, of coming home too late to read my daughter a single page before she fell asleep mid-sentence.

Had I known, at twenty-six, how thoroughly the profession would colonise every waking hour, I might have hesitated before articling. But hindsight is a luxury the young are rightly denied; had we access to it, ambition itself would wither, since so much of what drives a person forward depends on not yet knowing the price. What I did know, by thirty-nine, was the weight of the choice in front of me, and that weight, oddly, felt lighter than the one I already carried.

The specific moment that tipped the scale, if I am honest, was neither noble nor especially dramatic. I had been assigned to a merger that would, on paper, secure my partnership beyond any doubt, representing a logistics conglomerate intent on absorbing a smaller family firm whose founder had built it from a single delivery van. Had the founder's lawyer been less meticulous, less willing to stay until midnight combing through the covenants line by line, the deal would have closed within a fortnight and I would have thought little more of it. Instead, watching a man twice my age try, valiantly and unsuccessfully, to protect the seventy-odd jobs his father had created, I felt something in me curdle that no amount of billable satisfaction could sweeten. Were I asked to identify the precise second the decision was made, I would point to that conference room rather than to the afternoon, months later, when I finally said the words aloud.

The bookshop did not prosper in any way my former colleagues would recognise as success. Some months the till holds barely enough to cover the electricity bill, let alone a wage commensurate with my old billable hours. Were a younger version of myself to walk through the door today, past the shelves sagging under a decade of unsold poetry, he would likely wince and ask what, precisely, I imagined I was purchasing with my abandoned salary. I would tell him: mornings. An unhurried half-hour with the newspaper before the first customer arrives. The particular, unglamorous satisfaction of matching a stranger with a book that will, in some modest way, alter the shape of her week.

My mentor, Ms. Okafor, took the news with a composure I found more unsettling than anger would have been. She had spent a decade cultivating what she called my "instinct for the jugular clause," and she did not disguise her disappointment, though she was too gracious to voice it directly. Were she to visit the shop today — and she has, twice, ordering a biography of a jurist neither of us particularly admired — she would find, I think, a version of the instinct she trained still intact, redirected now toward matching a grieving widower with the right consoling memoir rather than toward dismantling an opposing counsel's argument. Had she pressed me harder that final week, had she offered the counter-argument I half expected, I am not certain my resolve would have held. That she did not press, choosing instead a single, weighted silence, remains one of the more generous gestures anyone has extended me.

My father, a man who measured worth in almost exclusively pecuniary terms, never fully forgave the decision. Were he alive to see the shop now — the reading corner where local schoolchildren do their homework after the last bell, the shelf of donated titles for anyone who cannot afford to buy — I suspect he would remain unconvinced, though perhaps grudgingly less scathing than he once was. He used to say that principles are a luxury afforded only to those who have already secured their fortune. I have come to believe the opposite: that a fortune secured too early forecloses precisely the questions worth asking about what one owes the years that remain.

None of this is to romanticise penury, nor to suggest that everyone facing a similar fork ought to choose the more precarious path. Had circumstances been even slightly different — had my wife's income been less stable, had we not sold the house in the city at a fortuitous moment, had either of our children required the sort of care that empties a bank account within a season — the calculus might have tilted decisively the other way, and I would be the first to counsel caution rather than abandon. Should anyone ask me whether they, too, should walk away from a lucrative but hollow career, I resist the temptation to proselytise. Circumstances are not transferable, however much a good story wants them to be. I have watched acquaintances make an ostensibly identical leap — the same industry, a comparable salary forfeited — and land somewhere far bleaker than I did, not for any deficiency of nerve but because the ground beneath them, the savings, the safety net of family, the sheer good fortune of timing, was simply less forgiving than mine. Were I to pretend otherwise, I would be flattering my own judgment at the expense of an honest accounting of luck.

And luck, I have come to think, is the word polite society least likes to hear in a story of reinvention, preferring instead the vocabulary of courage and conviction. Had fortune been marginally less kind — had the shop's lease not been offered at a rate its previous, retiring owner considered sentimental rather than commercial — this account would read very differently, and I would be, in all likelihood, back in some

adjacent branch of the law, chastened and a good deal more circumspect about the romance of walking away.

What I can attest to, with a confidence earned rather than assumed, is the particular species of regret that would have accompanied the alternative. Had I stayed at Ashcombe & Reyes, I would very likely be, at this moment, extraordinarily comfortable and quietly, persistently, dissatisfied — a condition harder to diagnose than poverty precisely because it wears the costume of accomplishment. Colleagues who remained speak, when they speak candidly at all, of a fatigue that no holiday seems to dissolve, an equanimity that is really just exhaustion in a well-tailored suit. I do not say this smugly; several of them are among the most decent, generous people I know, and had their own circumstances been mine, they might well have made an identical exchange.

There is a version of this account in which I emerge as some sort of sage, having traded avarice for authenticity in one clean gesture. Reality resists such a *précis*. I still, on certain grey mornings when the shop stands empty for hours, feel a flicker of the old vindication anxiety — the fear that I have squandered a hard-won credential on sentiment. Were that fear ever to calcify into genuine regret, I suspect I would know it by the silence it left behind, the particular quiet of a life examined and found wanting. So far, mercifully, the silence has not arrived.

My daughter, now seventeen herself, recently asked whether I would make the same choice again, knowing everything I know now. It is, I told her, the wrong question, because the man who would be doing the choosing no longer exists; he was reshaped by every year since spent shelving other people's stories instead of arguing other people's cases. Should she, in turn, ever face a comparable crossroads — and I suspect that in one guise or another she will — I hope she trusts the accumulation of small dissatisfactions over the seduction of a single, dramatic epiphany. Had I waited for a thunderclap, I would still be waiting, and the shop, the reading corner, the unhurried mornings would exist only as a wistful hypothesis I rehearsed on the train home from chambers, a door I imagined but never quite reached to open.

Instead, the door stood ajar, and one ordinary November afternoon, I simply walked through it.

Reading Comprehension – True or False

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

1. The narrator turned down a partnership at Ashcombe & Reyes in order to open a bookshop. ____ (T / F)
2. The narrator's father wholeheartedly approved of his decision to leave the law. ____ (T / F)
3. A merger case involving a family-owned logistics firm proved to be a turning point in the narrator's thinking. ____ (T / F)
4. Ms. Okafor, the narrator's mentor, argued angrily and at length in an attempt to change his mind. ____ (T / F)
5. The narrator's daughter is now seventeen years old. ____ (T / F)

Reading Comprehension – Multiple Choice

Read each question and choose the correct answer.

1. What prompted the narrator to reconsider his career, according to the text?

- A) Witnessing an opposing lawyer fail to protect a family firm's employees during a merger
- B) A sudden epiphany during a holiday
- C) A direct ultimatum from his wife
- D) A serious illness

2. How did the narrator's mentor, Ms. Okafor, react to his resignation?

- A) She fired him on the spot
- B) She responded with a quiet, unpressed silence despite her disappointment
- C) She argued forcefully against it for weeks
- D) She celebrated his decision enthusiastically

3. What does the narrator identify as decisive in allowing the bookshop to survive at all?

- A) A large inheritance from his father
- B) A grant from the local government
- C) A favourable lease and other elements of good fortune
- D) His own courage and conviction alone

4. How does the narrator characterize colleagues who remained in law?

- A) Uniformly miserable and impoverished
- B) Forced out of the profession entirely
- C) Wealthy and completely fulfilled
- D) Comfortable, yet marked by a persistent, well-disguised exhaustion

5. What does the narrator hope his daughter will do if she faces a similar crossroads?

- A) Trust the accumulation of small dissatisfactions rather than wait for a single epiphany
- B) Wait for one dramatic, defining moment before acting
- C) Always choose financial security over personal fulfilment
- D) Avoid taking any risks at all

Key Vocabulary

High-frequency and advanced words and expressions (Oxford 3000/5000, New General Service List, Academic Word List and Brown Corpus), filtered by topic relevance and C1 level. Meanings are in the Dictionary at the end of the book.

1–10	11–20	21–30	31–40
1. to relinquish	11. disillusionment	21. disenchanted	31. disquiet
2. disenchantment	12. a calculated risk	22. to plough into	32. to take stock of
3. to forgo	13. to yearn for	23. precarious	33. a bolt from the blue
4. a leap of faith	14. an epiphany	24. a nagging doubt	34. jaded
5. to second-guess	15. to forsake	25. to come to terms with	35. to chart a new course

6. soul-searching	16. a safety net	26. an ill-considered decision	36. wistful
7. a fork in the road	17. to gamble on	27. to hanker after	37. to sever ties with
8. to relish	18. unfulfilled	28. financial security	38. an existential crisis
9. burnout	19. a midlife reckoning	29. a watershed moment	39. to hedge one's bets
10. to reinvent oneself	20. to walk away from	30. to eke out a living	40. hindsight

Vocabulary Practice

Choose the correct option to complete each sentence.

1. "Perfunctory," as used in the reading, most nearly means:

- A) carried out with genuine enthusiasm and care
- B) done as a hurried, minimal formality, lacking real interest
- C) delayed indefinitely
- D) legally binding

2. "Circumspect" is closest in meaning to:

- A) reckless and impulsive
- B) extravagantly generous
- C) cautious and carefully considered
- D) openly emotional

3. "Meticulous" most nearly means:

- A) extremely careful and precise about details
- B) careless and hasty
- C) indifferent to outcomes
- D) financially motivated

4. "Commensurate," as in "a wage commensurate with my old billable hours," is closest in meaning to:

- A) drastically reduced
- B) entirely unrelated
- C) paid in advance
- D) proportional or corresponding in amount

5. "Pecuniary" relates most directly to:

- A) emotional wellbeing
- B) money or financial matters
- C) physical health
- D) legal procedure

6. "Penury" is closest in meaning to:

- A) extreme poverty
- B) great wealth

- C) moderate comfort
- D) professional prestige

7. "Equanimity" most nearly means:

- A) sudden panic
- B) bitter resentment
- C) reckless enthusiasm
- D) calmness and composure, especially under stress

8. A "précis" is best defined as:

- A) a lengthy, unabridged transcript
- B) a formal legal contract
- C) a brief summary of the main points
- D) a handwritten letter

9. In the text, "calcify" is used figuratively to mean:

- A) to dissolve gradually
- B) to harden or become fixed and rigid over time
- C) to improve steadily
- D) to disappear without a trace

10. "Wistful" is closest in meaning to:

- A) aggressively confident
- B) completely indifferent
- C) openly hostile
- D) filled with a vague, gentle, and often regretful longing

Grammar Focus: Conditional Inversion in Formal English

In formal, written, and literary English, conditional sentences are frequently constructed without the conjunction "if" at all. Instead, the subject and auxiliary verb are inverted, producing a more elevated, economical register appropriate to formal correspondence, legal and academic writing, public speeches, and reflective narrative prose such as memoir. Three patterns account for the great majority of cases. First, "Had + subject + past participle" replaces "if + subject + had + past participle," expressing an unreal condition in the past (third conditional): "Had I known the risks, I would have refused" instead of "If I had known the risks, I would have refused." Second, "Were + subject + to + infinitive" replaces "if + subject + were + to + infinitive," expressing a hypothetical or unlikely future possibility: "Were she to reconsider, the board would welcome her back" instead of "If she were to reconsider..." Third, "Should + subject + base form" replaces "if + subject + should + base form," expressing a more tentative, less certain future condition, often used in formal instructions, notices, and polite offers: "Should you need anything, do let us know" instead of "If you should need anything..."

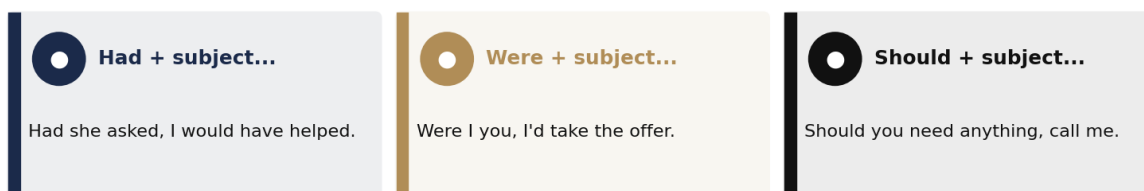
Several points of usage deserve particular attention at this level. Inversion is possible only with these three specific auxiliaries (had, were, should); it cannot be applied to a simple present-tense first conditional such as "if it rains," which has no inverted equivalent. Negation requires "not" to follow the subject rather than precede it: "Had I not known" (never "Had not I known"). The resulting sentences carry no difference in meaning from their "if" counterparts, but they do carry a difference in register and rhetorical weight: inversion signals formality, deliberateness, and often a slightly literary or ceremonious tone, which is precisely why it recurs throughout reflective essays, legal contracts ("Should the tenant default..."), and formal correspondence ("Were you to require further information...") but sounds distinctly stilted in casual conversation. Recognising and controlling this register shift — knowing when inversion elevates a sentence appropriately and when it would sound artificial — is itself a marker of advanced (C1) command of English.

Figure 1

1. Sentence structure



2. Forms and examples



Reference Table: Conditional Inversion in Formal English

Standard if-clause	Inverted form	Example
If I had known	Had + subject + past participle	Had I known the cost, I would have hesitated.
If I were to accept	Were + subject + to-infinitive	Were I to accept, I would need to relocate.
If you should need anything	Should + subject + base form	Should you need anything, call me at once.
If she had not resigned	Had + subject + not + past participle	Had she not resigned, she would still be a partner.
If it were to rain	Were + subject + to-infinitive	Were it to rain, the ceremony would move indoors.

Examples

1. Had I accepted the partnership at Ashcombe & Reyes, my life would look entirely different today.
2. Were I to advise my daughter on such a decision, I would tell her to trust her instincts.
3. Should you ever face a choice between security and fulfilment, take the time to examine both carefully.
4. Had Ms. Okafor pressed me harder that final week, my resolve might not have held.
5. Were the lease not offered at such a generous rate, the bookshop would likely have failed within a year.
6. Should my father read this account today, he would probably still consider the decision reckless.

English Usage

Learn and practice these useful expressions.

- Had I known...
expressing regret about a past decision using inversion
- Looking back on it now
introducing retrospective reflection
- It was a calculated risk
justifying a risky decision as carefully reasoned
- I've never looked back
expressing total confidence in a past choice
- There's a part of me that wonders "what if"
admitting lingering doubt about an alternative path
- On reflection
signalling a considered second thought
- For better or worse
acknowledging a decision's mixed consequences
- It was now or never
explaining urgency behind a decisive choice

Sample Dialogue

A: I heard you finally handed in your resignation. How does it feel?

B: Strange, if I'm honest. Had I known how nerve-racking it would be, I might have hesitated longer.

A: But you've been talking about this for years. Was it really a calculated risk, or just impulse?

B: A bit of both, actually. On reflection, I think I'd been circling the decision for so long that it became now or never.

A: And are you having second thoughts?

B: Not really. I've never looked back, not once. Looking back on it now, staying would have been the bigger risk.

A: Still, there's a part of me that wonders "what if" you'd waited another year and saved a bit more.

B: Were I to wait any longer, I doubt I'd ever have left at all. Some decisions only get harder with time.

A: Fair enough. For better or worse, you've made your choice.

B: Exactly. And should anyone ask me whether I regret it, my answer's already prepared: not for a single day.

Practice

Choose the best expression for each situation.

1. Which phrase is most appropriate for justifying a risky decision as carefully reasoned rather than impulsive?

- A) It was a calculated risk
- B) For better or worse
- C) Now or never
- D) Had I known

2. Someone says, "On reflection, I think I made the right choice." This phrase introduces...

- A) an urgent decision
- B) a considered second thought
- C) a regret
- D) a firm refusal

3. "It was now or never" best explains a decision made because...

- A) there was no urgency at all
- B) the person wanted to delay
- C) the opportunity would not come again
- D) the person regretted acting

4. Which phrase acknowledges that a decision had both good and bad outcomes?

- A) I've never looked back
- B) On reflection
- C) Had I known
- D) For better or worse

5. "There's a part of me that wonders 'what if'" is closest in meaning to...

- A) feeling a lingering doubt about a path not taken
- B) being completely satisfied with one's choice
- C) planning to repeat the same decision
- D) forgetting about the past entirely

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 sentence that means the same as: "If I had known the risks, I would have refused the offer."

- A) Had I known the risks, I would have refused the offer.
- B) Had I know the risks, I would refuse the offer.

- C) Have I known the risks, I would have refused the offer.
- D) Did I know the risks, I would have refused the offer.

2. Complete the sentence correctly: "___ you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact our office."

- A) Would
- B) Should
- C) Were
- D) Had

3. Choose the correct inverted form of "If she were to resign tomorrow, the firm would struggle to replace her."

- A) Should she resigns tomorrow, the firm would struggle to replace her.
- B) Were she resign tomorrow, the firm would struggle to replace her.
- C) Were she to resign tomorrow, the firm would struggle to replace her.
- D) Had she resigned tomorrow, the firm would struggle to replace her.

4. Which sentence is grammatically INCORRECT?

- A) Had I been more careful, I would have avoided the mistake.
- B) Were you to ask him, he would probably agree.
- C) Should the weather improve, we will proceed with the picnic.
- D) Had I knew the truth, I would have acted differently.

5. Choose the correct completion: "___ I to accept the position, I would need to relocate within a month."

- A) Were
- B) Should
- C) Had
- D) Did

6. Which register is most associated with conditional inversion (Had / Were / Should + inversion)?

- A) Casual spoken conversation among friends
- B) Formal, written, or literary English
- C) Text messages and informal chat
- D) Children's picture books

7. Choose the sentence with correct negative inversion:

- A) Had not I known, I would have refused.
- B) Had I not know, I would have refused.
- C) Had I not known, I would have refused.
- D) Not had I known, I would have refused.

8. Complete: "___ he have accepted the partnership, his career would have followed a very different path."

- A) Would
- B) Does
- C) Is

D) Had

9. Which sentence correctly uses "Should" inversion for an uncertain future meaning?

- A) Should you need anything during your stay, simply dial reception.
- B) Should you needed anything during your stay, simply dial reception.
- C) Should you will need anything during your stay, simply dial reception.
- D) Should you needing anything during your stay, simply dial reception.

10. The fixed expression "Were I you" is closest in meaning to:

- A) If I were to visit you
- B) If I were in your position
- C) If you were to become me
- D) Should I meet you

11. Choose the sentence that correctly conveys a hypothetical PAST unreal condition using inversion:

- A) Were I to have known, I would have left earlier.
- B) Should I have known, I would have left earlier.
- C) Had I known, I would have left earlier.
- D) Would I have known, I would have left earlier.

12. Which of the following is the correct inverted equivalent of "If it should rain, the match will be postponed"?

- A) Were it to rain, the match will be postponed.
- B) Had it rained, the match will be postponed.
- C) Rains it, the match will be postponed.
- D) Should it rain, the match will be postponed.

13. "Meticulous," as used to describe the opposing lawyer in the reading, most nearly means:

- A) extremely careful and thorough with details
- B) careless about details
- C) quick and superficial
- D) financially motivated

14. Choose the correctly punctuated and formed sentence:

- A) Had she arrived earlier she would have caught the train.
- B) Had she arrived earlier, she would have caught the train.
- C) Had she arrive earlier, she would have caught the train.
- D) Had arrived she earlier, she would have caught the train.

15. Which sentence uses conditional inversion to express a formal warning or instruction?

- A) If you needing assistance, press the button.
- B) You should need assistance, press the button.
- C) Should you need assistance, press the button.
- D) Need you assistance, press the button.

16. "Equanimity," as used in the reading to describe former colleagues, most nearly means:

- A) barely disguised anger
- B) sudden financial ruin
- C) overwhelming excitement
- D) calm composure, especially under strain

17. Choose the sentence that best preserves the meaning of: "If the lease had not been offered at a low rate, the bookshop would probably have failed."

- A) Had the lease not been offered at a low rate, the bookshop would probably have failed.
- B) Had not the lease been offered at a low rate, the bookshop would probably have failed.
- C) Were the lease not offered at a low rate, the bookshop would probably have failed.
- D) Should the lease not have been offered at a low rate, the bookshop would probably have failed.

18. Which auxiliary correctly completes: "___ we to lose this contract, the entire department could face layoffs"?

- A) Did
- B) Were
- C) Had
- D) Should

19. The phrase "a fatigue that no holiday seems to dissolve" most closely conveys:

- A) temporary tiredness cured easily by rest
- B) physical illness requiring medical treatment
- C) deep, persistent exhaustion that rest does not relieve
- D) a sudden burst of energy

20. Which sentence correctly uses inversion in a formal, contract-like style?

- A) Should the tenant is late with payment, the landlord may terminate the lease.
- B) Should the tenant late with payment, the landlord may terminate the lease.
- C) Should be the tenant late with payment, the landlord may terminate the lease.
- D) Should the tenant be late with payment, the landlord may terminate the lease.

21. Choose the correct inverted form of "If I were rich, I would travel the world."

- A) Were I rich, I would travel the world.
- B) Had I rich, I would travel the world.
- C) Should I rich, I would travel the world.
- D) Were I to rich, I would travel the world.

22. "Penury," used to describe a state the narrator does not wish to romanticise, most nearly means:

- A) modest comfort
- B) extreme poverty
- C) quiet retirement
- D) professional disgrace

23. Which sentence is the most natural, formal inversion of "If you should ever need advice, feel free to call"?

- A) Would you ever need advice, feel free to call.
- B) Were you ever need advice, feel free to call.
- C) Should you ever need advice, feel free to call.
- D) Had you ever need advice, feel free to call.

24. Choose the sentence with a grammatical error in the inversion:

- A) Had they arrived on time, the ceremony would have started as planned.
- B) Were the board to approve the budget, construction could begin next spring.
- C) Should any problem arise, contact the supervisor immediately.
- D) Had they have arrived on time, the ceremony would have started as planned.

25. Conditional inversion with "Had" typically corresponds to which standard if-clause structure?

- A) If + subject + had + past participle
- B) If + subject + were + to-infinitive
- C) If + subject + should + base form
- D) If + subject + will + base form

UNIT 2

Little Did I Know

Objective (CEFR C1): to understand and use expressions related to narrating sudden realizations, hidden secrets, and dramatic turns of events, and to express ideas fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions, using language flexibly and effectively for social, academic, and professional purposes.

Reading: The Name in the Margin

I had expected the clearing of my grandmother's house to be, if anything, a tedious formality—an afternoon of boxing up unremarkable objects before the estate agent's board went up outside. Little did I know that a single trunk, wedged beneath the eaves of the attic, would upend everything I thought I understood about my family and, by extension, about myself.

Eleanor had died in March, three weeks shy of her ninety-third birthday, having outlived not only her husband but, it seemed, nearly everyone who might have contradicted the story she had told about her own life. She was, by all accounts, a woman of formidable reticence: circumspect in conversation, sparing with affection, and utterly resistant to any question that ventured near her girlhood. We had long since stopped asking. Not until I was standing alone in that dust-choked attic, prising open a trunk whose hinges groaned in protest, did it occur to me that her silence might have been protecting something rather more than mere shyness.

The trunk contained the predictable relics of a long life—a moth-eaten shawl, a set of chipped china, a bundle of ration books from the war years. Beneath these, however, wrapped in a scrap of oilcloth, lay a stack of letters tied with string that had long since turned brittle. So carefully had they been preserved, and so deliberately hidden, that I understood at once they were not meant for casual discovery. Rarely had I felt so acutely the sensation of trespassing, yet curiosity, as it so often does, overpowered scruple.

The letters were addressed to Eleanor and signed by a woman named Miriam, whose name appeared nowhere in any family record I had ever seen. The earliest were dated 1953, written in a hand both elegant and urgent, and their tone was unmistakably that of a confidante rather than an acquaintance. Only gradually did I piece together, from oblique references and half-finished sentences, that Miriam had been present at something Eleanor wished never to revisit—a hospital, a departure, a child. Such was the guardedness of the language, however, that for the first dozen letters I could form no clear picture of what had actually happened, only an impression of grief carefully contained.

It was the ninth letter, postmarked from a coastal town I did not recognise, that finally supplied the missing frame. Miriam wrote of a young man named Thomas, a naval officer whom Eleanor had apparently loved before her marriage—loved, the letter implied, with an intensity she would later spend a lifetime disguising. Not until I read the closing lines did the full weight of the letter land: Thomas had been lost at sea in the autumn of 1952, and Eleanor had discovered, within weeks of the news reaching her, that she was carrying

his child. Never had I imagined my grandmother's carefully ordered life concealing anything so raw. Nor, I suspected, had anyone else still living.

What followed, gleaned from the remaining letters and from a handful of official documents folded inside a second envelope, was a story my grandmother had gone to extraordinary lengths to erase. In a town where an unmarried, pregnant young woman risked not merely scandal but genuine ruin, Eleanor's family had arranged, within a matter of months, a marriage to a widower nearly fifteen years her senior—my grandfather, as I had always known him. So swiftly was the arrangement made, and so thoroughly was the child's true parentage folded into the fiction of a premature birth, that even the child himself—my father—apparently never knew. Such was the impact of this realisation that I had to sit down on the attic floor, letters in hand, and simply breathe for several minutes before I could continue.

It was, in other words, no longer merely Eleanor's secret. It was my father's origin, and mine.

Determined to learn more, I spent that same evening trawling through digitised naval records and regional newspaper archives, searching for any trace of a young officer named Thomas who had served aboard a vessel called the *Cardigan*. Not until nearly midnight did I find him: a single line in a casualty list, dated November 1952, confirming that Sub-Lieutenant Thomas Everly Marsh had been lost when his ship struck a mine off the northern coast. So brief was the official record—a name, a rank, a date—that it seemed almost obscene in its inadequacy, offering nothing of the man my grandmother had evidently loved with such quiet ferocity. Only by cross-referencing a local newspaper's account of the sinking did I discover that he had been twenty-four years old, the eldest of three brothers, and engaged, according to one line I very nearly missed, to a young woman whose name the reporter had not thought worth recording. Little did that reporter know, presumably, that seventy years later a stranger would sit hunched over a laptop at midnight, grieving a man she had never met.

I telephoned my aunt that evening, uncertain how to begin, and it was only in the stumbling attempt to explain what I had found that I understood how little any of us had truly known the woman we thought we had buried with full and settled knowledge. My aunt, to my astonishment, was not entirely surprised. She recalled, she said, a photograph that had once sat on Eleanor's dressing table—a young officer in uniform, unlabelled, removed at some point in the 1970s and never mentioned again. Not once had she thought to ask who he was. "I remember asking Mother once, when I was perhaps nine, who the man in the photograph was," my aunt admitted, her voice unsteady even across a poor telephone line. "She told me he was a family friend who had died in the war, and something in the way she said it made it clear the subject was closed. I never raised it again." Such was the finality of that single conversation that it had apparently silenced an entire generation's curiosity. Only now, listening to my aunt's account decades after the fact, did I appreciate how effectively one carefully worded sentence could seal off an entire chapter of a life. Children rarely interrogate the furniture of their parents' grief; they simply grow accustomed to its presence, and then, eventually, to its absence.

The photograph itself I eventually found, tucked into the back of a Bible at the bottom of the trunk, its edges softened by decades of handling. On the reverse, in pencil so faint I nearly missed it, was written a single line: "T., before the *Cardigan* sailed—all my love, always." Beside it, in a different hand and clearly added

much later, someone—Eleanor herself, I assumed—had written a date and a single word: "Forgive." So spare an inscription, and yet so considerable was its capacity to unsettle. I have read a great many documents in my professional life, contracts and briefs weighted with legal consequence, but nothing had ever affected me quite so entirely as those two words scratched onto the back of a cracked photograph.

What troubles me still, weeks later, is not the fact of the secret itself—people conceal things, and wartime Britain gave them ample reason to do so—but the sheer discipline it must have required to maintain the fiction for over sixty years. Not until much later did I appreciate that my grandmother's reticence, which I had for so long read as coldness, might instead have been a kind of perpetual vigilance: a woman standing guard, decade after decade, over a version of events she had constructed to protect a child who never knew he needed protecting. Only in her final years, when memory itself began to loosen its grip, did small fragments apparently surface—half-remembered names, a hummed tune my aunt now recognises as a wartime song, moments that seemed, at the time, like nothing more than the ordinary confusion of old age.

I have not yet told my father. I turn the decision over most evenings, uncertain whether the truth would liberate him or simply reopen a wound none of us knew existed. Such is the peculiar burden of discovery: it does not announce itself with obligations attached, and yet it leaves you unable to pretend you never learned what you learned. Little did Eleanor know, perhaps, that the very carefulness with which she preserved those letters—rather than destroying them, as would surely have been simpler—would one day hand her secret directly to the granddaughter clearing out her attic. Whether that carefulness was oversight or, in some quiet way, an invitation, I suspect I will never be entirely certain. But not until I closed that trunk for the final time did I recognise the strange comfort in not knowing everything about the people who raise us—and the stranger comfort still in discovering, however belatedly, that we sometimes do.

For now, the letters remain where I found them, wrapped once more in their scrap of oilcloth, though I have added the newspaper clipping and the casualty record to the small archive I am quietly assembling.

Whatever I eventually decide to tell my father, I find myself increasingly persuaded that Eleanor deserves neither judgment nor pity for the story she constructed, but something closer to admiration—for the sheer, sustained tenderness of a lie told, in the end, entirely out of love.

Reading Comprehension – True or False

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

1. Eleanor died just three weeks before her ninety-third birthday. ____ (T / F)
2. The narrator found the bundle of letters hidden in the basement of the house. ____ (T / F)
3. Miriam's letters revealed that Eleanor had loved a naval officer named Thomas before her marriage. ____ (T / F)
4. Eleanor's family arranged a swift marriage in order to conceal her pregnancy and avoid a scandal. ____ (T / F)
5. The narrator's aunt immediately recognised the officer in the old photograph on the dressing table. ____ (T / F)

Reading Comprehension – Multiple Choice

Read each question and choose the correct answer.

1. What prompted the narrator to open the trunk in the attic?

- A) Curiosity while clearing the house after Eleanor's death
- B) A request from the estate agent
- C) A letter from Miriam addressed to the narrator
- D) Instructions left in Eleanor's will

2. What does the narrator discover about Thomas?

- A) He was Eleanor's cousin who emigrated abroad
- B) He was a naval officer Eleanor loved before her marriage
- C) He was a family friend who wrote letters to Miriam
- D) He was the man Eleanor eventually married

3. Why did Eleanor's family arrange a quick marriage?

- A) To fulfil a promise made to Thomas before he died
- B) To secure a financial inheritance for Eleanor
- C) To conceal Eleanor's pregnancy and avoid social scandal
- D) Because the widower requested it urgently

4. What does the inscription on the photograph reveal?

- A) The name of the ship Thomas served on
- B) The date of Eleanor's wedding
- C) A message written by the narrator's father
- D) Eleanor's true feelings and a note asking for forgiveness

5. How does the narrator ultimately interpret Eleanor's lifelong reticence?

- A) As a form of vigilance protecting a carefully constructed story
- B) As evidence of a cold and unfeeling personality
- C) As a result of a poor relationship with her husband
- D) As simple forgetfulness brought on by old age

Key Vocabulary

High-frequency and advanced words and expressions (Oxford 3000/5000, New General Service List, Academic Word List and Brown Corpus), filtered by topic relevance and C1 level. Meanings are in the Dictionary at the end of the book.

1–10	11–20	21–30	31–40
1. revelation	11. providential	21. incongruous	31. turning point
2. epiphany	12. fateful	22. startling	32. volte-face
3. bombshell	13. portentous	23. stupefied	33. reckoning
4. disconcerting	14. foreboding	24. flabbergasted	34. reticence
5. incredulity	15. harbinger	25. dumbfounded	35. circumspect

6. thunderstruck	16. culmination	26. aghast	36. oblique
7. staggering	17. denouement	27. blindsided	37. guardedness
8. unfathomable	18. upheaval	28. unforeseen	38. scruple
9. unbeknownst	19. disclosure	29. unprecedented	39. vigilance
10. inadvertent	20. unmasked	30. watershed moment	40. belatedly

Vocabulary Practice

Choose the correct option to complete each sentence.

1. In the reading, "reticence" (as in "a woman of formidable reticence") most nearly means:

- A) A reluctance to reveal one's thoughts or feelings
- B) An eagerness to share personal information
- C) A tendency to exaggerate stories
- D) A habit of interrupting others

2. "Circumspect" most nearly means:

- A) Impulsive and reckless
- B) Careful and cautious about what one says or does
- C) Extremely generous
- D) Easily deceived

3. An "oblique" reference (as in "oblique references and half-finished sentences") is one that is:

- A) Direct and explicit
- B) Loud and forceful
- C) Indirect or not straightforward
- D) Written in code

4. "Guardedness" (as in "the guardedness of the language") most nearly means:

- A) Openness and transparency
- B) Physical protection of property
- C) A feeling of pride
- D) Cautious reluctance to reveal information

5. "Prising" (as in "prising open a trunk") most nearly means:

- A) Forcing something open, typically with effort
- B) Praising enthusiastically
- C) Polishing carefully
- D) Measuring precisely

6. "Inscription" (as in "so spare an inscription") most nearly means:

- A) A formal invitation
- B) Words written or engraved on a surface

- C) A legal contract
- D) A type of postage stamp

7. "Vigilance" (as in "a kind of perpetual vigilance") most nearly means:

- A) Sudden anger
- B) Deep sadness
- C) Careful attention and watchfulness
- D) Financial caution

8. "Belatedly" (as in "however belatedly, that we sometimes do") most nearly means:

- A) Happening earlier than expected
- B) Happening secretly
- C) Happening repeatedly
- D) Happening after the appropriate or expected time

9. "Scruple" (as in "curiosity...overpowered scruple") most nearly means:

- A) A moral hesitation about doing something
- B) A strong desire for adventure
- C) A financial debt
- D) A physical obstacle

10. "Formidable" (as in "a woman of formidable reticence") most nearly means:

- A) Weak and unimpressive
- B) Inspiring respect or awe through impressive qualities
- C) Friendly and approachable
- D) Poorly organised

Grammar Focus: Rhetorical Inversion and Fronting for Emphasis

In formal and literary English, certain negative or limiting adverbial expressions—little, never, rarely, seldom, only later, only when, not until—can be moved to the front of a sentence for dramatic or rhetorical emphasis. When this happens, the clause that follows undergoes subject-auxiliary inversion: instead of the normal subject-verb order, an auxiliary verb (did, had, was, could, etc.) moves to a position before the subject, exactly as in a question. "I little knew what awaited me" becomes "Little did I know what awaited me"; "She did not realise the truth until years later" becomes "Not until years later did she realise the truth." The same pattern applies to "only" expressions of time or manner (Only later did I understand...) and to compound negative structures such as "not only... but also" (Not only did she hide the letters, but she also destroyed the envelope). This construction is a hallmark of heightened, suspenseful narration: it delays the main information, creates a sense of surprise, and signals to the reader that something significant is about to be revealed.

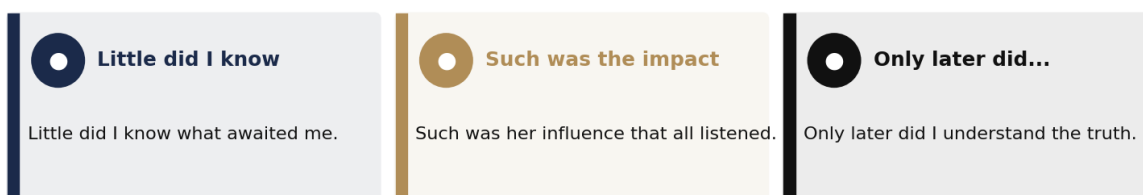
A related but structurally distinct pattern is the "such was... that" construction, used to emphasise the intensity or extremity of a situation before explaining its consequence. Here, "such" itself is fronted as a subject complement, forcing inversion of the verb "to be": "The impact of the news was such that she could not speak" becomes "Such was the impact of the news that she could not speak." A close variant fronts "so" together with an adjective ("So overwhelming was the silence that no one dared to speak"). Both inversion for emphasis and the "such/so... that" pattern belong to a formal, literary, and often journalistic register; they are common in narrative prose, memoirs, editorials, and rhetorical speech, but they would sound distinctly stilted in casual conversation, where speakers generally prefer the uninverted equivalent ("I didn't realise until years later"). Recognising and controlling this register shift—knowing when heightened, inverted phrasing serves a text and when plain word order is preferable—is itself a marker of advanced (C1) command of English style.

Figure 2

1. Sentence structure



2. Forms and examples



Reference Table: Rhetorical Inversion for Emphasis

Little did + subject	Little did + subject + bare infinitive	Little did I know that the letters had been hidden for sixty years.
Only + adverbial + auxiliary + subject	Only later/then/when... + did/had/was + subject + verb	Only later did I understand the true cost of her silence.
Not until + clause + auxiliary + subject	Not until + time clause + did/had + subject + verb	Not until I opened the second envelope did the story make sense.
Never/Rarely/Seldom + auxiliary + subject	Negative adverb + had/did + subject + verb/past participle	Never had I felt so unsettled by a single photograph.
Such was + noun + that clause	Such + was/were + subject complement + that + result clause	Such was the impact of the news that she never spoke of Thomas again.

Examples

1. Little did I know that a single trunk would upend everything I understood about my family.
2. Only later did I realise that my grandmother's silence had been a form of protection, not indifference.
3. Not until I read the ninth letter did the truth about Thomas begin to emerge.
4. Never had I imagined that a single photograph could carry such a devastating inscription.
5. Such was the shock of the discovery that I had to sit on the attic floor to compose myself.
6. Rarely had a single sentence, scratched in pencil, altered so completely the story I thought I knew.

English Usage

Learn and practice these useful expressions.

- Little did I know that...
opens a narrative with ironic foreshadowing
- It suddenly dawned on me that...
marks the exact moment realization strikes
- To my utter astonishment, ...
signals profound, genuine surprise at an outcome
- I was taken aback by...
expresses being momentarily startled or unsettled
- Only later did I come to realize...
frames a delayed, retrospective understanding
- Nothing could have prepared me for...
emphasizes an overwhelming, unforeseen impact
- It came as a complete shock when...
introduces an abrupt, unexpected turn of events
- Bit by bit, the truth came to light
describes a gradual unveiling of hidden facts

Sample Dialogue

A: You look like you've seen a ghost. What's going on?

B: Honestly, I still can't quite believe it. Little did I know that the "storage unit" my uncle rented was actually full of my grandfather's unpublished manuscripts.

A: Wait, seriously? How did you even find out?

B: I was helping my mother clear it out, and it suddenly dawned on me that the boxes weren't just old furniture — they were labelled by year, going back decades.

A: That must have been quite a moment.

B: To my utter astonishment, one box contained an entire novel no one in the family had ever mentioned.

A: I can only imagine how you felt.

B: I was taken aback by how deliberately it had been hidden. Not until I read the final page did I understand why he'd kept it secret.

A: What was the reason?

B: Only later did I come to realize that the story was about a scandal in our own family — one he clearly didn't want made public while he was alive.

A: Nothing could have prepared me for a plot twist like that, if it were my family.

B: Exactly my reaction. It came as a complete shock when I realized the main character was based on my own grandmother.

A: So what will you do with the manuscript now?

B: We haven't decided yet. Bit by bit, the truth came to light as we read further, and I think we owe it to him to handle it carefully.

Practice

Choose the best expression for each situation.

1. Which phrase best introduces a story with ironic foreshadowing about a future realization?

- A) Little did I know that...
- B) It came as a complete shock when...
- C) I was taken aback by...
- D) Bit by bit, the truth came to light

2. Which expression is most appropriate for describing a gradual, rather than sudden, revelation?

- A) Nothing could have prepared me for...
- B) Bit by bit, the truth came to light
- C) It suddenly dawned on me that...
- D) To my utter astonishment,...

3. You want to say you were caught completely off guard by some news. Which phrase fits best?

- A) Only later did I come to realize...
- B) Little did I know that...
- C) I was taken aback by...
- D) Bit by bit, the truth came to light

4. Which phrase emphasizes that an event's impact was so overwhelming that no preparation could have helped?

- A) It suddenly dawned on me that...
- B) Only later did I come to realize...
- C) To my utter astonishment,...
- D) Nothing could have prepared me for...

5. Which phrase specifically signals that understanding arrived only after some delay, not immediately?

- A) It came as a complete shock when...

- B) Only later did I come to realize...
- C) To my utter astonishment,...
- D) Little did I know 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. Complete the sentence: " _____ did I know that this letter would change everything."

- A) Little
- B) Nevertheless
- C) Much
- D) Most

2. Choose the correct inversion: "Only after reading every letter _____ the whole picture."

- A) I understood
- B) did I understand
- C) I did understand
- D) understood I

3. "Not until she opened the box _____ the truth."

- A) she realized
- B) she did realize
- C) did she realize
- D) realized she

4. Which sentence uses correct subject-auxiliary inversion?

- A) Never I had felt so shocked.
- B) Never I felt had so shocked.
- C) Never felt I had so shocked.
- D) Never had I felt so shocked.

5. "Such was the impact of the news _____ she could not speak for several minutes."

- A) that
- B) which
- C) so
- D) as

6. Choose the grammatically correct sentence.

- A) Rarely I have seen such a moving letter.
- B) Rarely have I seen such a moving letter.
- C) Rarely seen have I such a moving letter.
- D) Rarely I seen have such a moving letter.

7. "Not only _____ hide the letters, but she also destroyed the envelope."

- A) she did
- B) she does
- C) did she
- D) does she

8. Complete: "So overwhelming _____ the silence that followed that no one dared to speak."

- A) did
- B) were
- C) had
- D) was

9. Which of the following correctly fronts a negative adverbial?

- A) Little did I know about her past.
- B) Little I knew about her past.
- C) Little I did know about her past.
- D) Little know did I about her past.

10. "Only later _____ the significance of her words."

- A) I grasped
- B) did I grasp
- C) grasped I
- D) I did grasped

11. Choose the correct sentence.

- A) Not until much later he understood the truth.
- B) Not until much later did he understood the truth.
- C) Not until much later did he understand the truth.
- D) Not until much later understood he the truth.

12. "No sooner _____ the trunk than the letters spilled out."

- A) I had opened
- B) I opened
- C) opened I had
- D) had I opened

13. Identify the sentence with the correct inversion after a negative adverbial of frequency.

- A) Seldom does she talk about her past.
- B) Seldom does she talks about her past.
- C) Seldom she talks about her past.
- D) Seldom talk does she about her past.

14. "Such _____ her discipline that no one ever suspected the secret."

- A) is
- B) was
- C) were
- D) did

15. Choose the sentence that correctly uses inversion for emphasis.

- A) Never she had imagined such a revelation.
- B) Never imagined she had such a revelation.
- C) Never had she imagined such a revelation.
- D) Never had imagined she such a revelation.

16. "Only when I found the photograph _____ how much she had hidden."

- A) I understood
- B) understood I
- C) I did understand
- D) did I understand

17. Which sentence is an example of fronting with inversion for dramatic or rhetorical effect?

- A) Little did I know what awaited me in the attic.
- B) I little knew what awaited me in the attic.
- C) I did little know what awaited me in the attic.
- D) Little I knew what did await me in the attic.

18. "Not until the final letter _____ the whole story come together."

- A) had
- B) did
- C) does
- D) was

19. Which word best means "a reluctance to reveal one's thoughts or feelings"?

- A) enthusiasm
- B) negligence
- C) reticence
- D) audacity

20. "Circumspect" most nearly means:

- A) careless
- B) generous
- C) arrogant
- D) cautious

21. An "oblique" reference is one that is:

- A) indirect
- B) direct

- C) offensive
- D) official

22. "Vigilance" is best defined as:

- A) sudden fear
- B) careful watchfulness
- C) deep regret
- D) financial planning

23. Something done "belatedly" is done:

- A) too early
- B) secretly
- C) too late, or after the expected time
- D) enthusiastically

24. A "scruple" is best described as:

- A) a legal document
- B) a physical injury
- C) a financial reward
- D) a moral hesitation

25. "Formidable" most nearly means:

- A) impressive and commanding respect
- B) weak
- C) friendly
- D) disorganised

UNIT 3

I Should Have Told You

Objective (CEFR C1): to understand and use expressions related to reflecting on missed opportunities for honest workplace feedback, and to express ideas fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions, using language flexibly and effectively for social, academic, and professional purposes.

Reading: The Feedback I Never Gave

For eighteen months, I told myself that Daniel's resignation had come out of nowhere. It was only when I reread his farewell email for the third time, long after he had cleared his desk, that I recognised the truth: it hadn't come out of nowhere at all. I had simply refused to see it coming, and there is a world of difference between the two.

Daniel joined my team as a junior data analyst two years ago, fresh out of graduate school and visibly eager to prove himself. Within six months he had automated a reporting process that used to take three analysts an entire week, and within a year he was quietly running circles around colleagues who had a decade more experience. I should have recognised then that I was dealing with someone exceptional, and I should have said so, loudly and often. Instead, I convinced myself that praising him too effusively might inflate his ego or, worse, tip off other departments to how good he really was. I needn't have worried about either outcome; Daniel was among the most self-effacing people I have ever managed, and my silence achieved nothing except to leave him wondering whether his work actually mattered to anyone.

The first real warning sign arrived in an email he sent me on a Friday evening, eleven months into his tenure. It was three paragraphs long, carefully worded, and — reading it now — unmistakably a cry for acknowledgement. He described feeling invisible in meetings, watching more senior colleagues take credit for frameworks he had built, and wondering aloud whether there was any future for him on the team. I skimmed it between two other emails, replied with a bland "Let's chat about this soon," and then let three weeks pass before we actually spoke. I must have imagined, in some unexamined corner of my mind, that the feeling would simply dissolve on its own. It didn't. Feelings like that rarely do. I should have cleared my calendar that same evening and called him; instead, I let bureaucratic momentum decide the timeline for me, and by the time we spoke, the conversation had the flat, procedural tone of a box being ticked rather than a relationship being repaired.

Then there was the incident in the quarterly review meeting, which I still cringe to recall. Daniel had proposed a change to our forecasting model that diverged from the approach preferred by our division head, a man not known for welcoming dissent. Rather than backing Daniel privately beforehand or defending the substance of his idea in the room, I criticised his proposal in front of eleven people, citing "process concerns" that were, if I am honest with myself, a way of managing upward rather than managing well. I shouldn't have done that. It was cowardly, and it was unnecessary: the division head, as I later discovered, would probably have respected a well-argued counterpoint far more than the reflexive deference I offered instead. Daniel said nothing in the meeting. He didn't need to. His expression said everything, and it was the particular,

controlled stillness of someone recalibrating exactly how much of himself he was willing to keep investing in a place that had just publicly diminished him.

Looking back, there were at least three moments when I could have changed the trajectory of what happened. I could have promoted him during the restructuring that took place eight months before he left; his name was on the shortlist, and I chose someone with more tenure but, by any honest measure, less talent, telling myself that Daniel was "still growing into the role." I might have offered him a lateral move onto the strategy team, where his analytical instincts would have been used rather than merely tolerated, but that conversation kept sliding down my list of priorities behind more urgent, less important tasks. And I could, at almost any point, have simply asked him how he was doing — not as a manager conducting a check-in, but as one person being candid with another — and I never did. There is a certain arrogance, I now realise, in assuming that an employee's silence is contentment rather than exhaustion.

The resignation letter, when it finally came, was scrupulously professional: two paragraphs, no recriminations, generic thanks for "the opportunities and experience." Reading between the lines, though, he must have been composing that letter, at least in draft form, for months. Nobody accepts an offer from a competitor, negotiates a start date, and serves out a notice period on a whim; the calm, unhurried tone of his farewell was the tell, not the absence of one. I confronted him gently, on his last day, and asked whether there was anything I could have done differently. He was, characteristically, reticent, offering only that he "just felt ready for something new." It was a generous lie, the kind reticent people tell so as not to burden others with the full weight of the truth, and I recognised it as a kindness I hadn't earned.

Priya, who sat two desks away from Daniel and had worked with him longest, tried to warn me herself, back in the spring. She mentioned, almost in passing, that Daniel had asked her whether the company usually took this long to promote from within, and that he hadn't sounded merely curious so much as quietly calculating. I should have taken that remark far more seriously than I did; instead, I thanked her for flagging it and returned to whatever spreadsheet had been occupying my attention that afternoon. She must have noticed my distraction, because she raised it again a few weeks later, this time more directly, suggesting that I have a proper conversation with him before the situation "got away from us." I told her I would, and I meant it, in the vague, well-intentioned way people mean things they have no immediate plan to act on. I needn't have been so dismissive of her concern; she had, after all, correctly read a situation I was too absorbed in daily operations to see clearly myself. Looking back, I could have simply asked her what, precisely, Daniel had said, word for word, rather than accepting a paraphrase and moving on. That single missing detail — the actual phrasing of a passing remark — might have told me everything I needed to know months before the resignation letter ever reached my inbox.

What strikes me most, in the acrimonious little argument I still have with myself about all this, is how avoidable each individual failure was. No single decision destroyed the working relationship; it eroded, incrementally, the way rapport does when nobody tends to it. I needn't have let a Friday-evening email sit for three weeks. I shouldn't have chosen procedure over principle in that review meeting. I could have promoted him, or at least discussed openly why I hadn't. I might have simply asked. None of these were extraordinary asks; they were, in fact, the unremarkable, daily obligations of managing well, and I let complacency — the

quiet, comfortable assumption that things were basically fine because nobody was actively complaining — substitute for attention.

There is a peculiar, belated form of vindication in hearing, eight months after Daniel left, that the team he joined now credits him with redesigning their entire client-reporting pipeline. I was, in a sense, right about his talent all along; I simply wasn't the one who acted as though I believed it. It would be presumptuous of me to imagine that a single conversation, or a single promotion, would have kept him — people leave for a hundred converging reasons, and some of them have nothing to do with a manager's shortcomings. But I no longer tell myself the story that his departure came out of nowhere. It came, tacitly, out of every moment I chose silence over candour, and comfort over the slightly awkward, entirely necessary act of telling someone, clearly and in time, that they mattered.

I have changed how I manage since then, not out of some tidy narrative of redemption, but out of a fairly unglamorous fear of repeating the same mistake. I now say the difficult, complimentary things out loud, in the moment, rather than filing them away for a review that may or may not happen. I answer Friday-evening emails on Friday evening. I no longer wait for a formal occasion to say something that could have been said the moment I first thought it. None of this guarantees that I will keep every talented person who works for me — nobody can guarantee that — but at least I will no longer be the manager who must have known, on some level, and said nothing anyway. If there is one thing I would tell my younger, more cautious self, it is this: the feedback you are withholding out of politeness is rarely received as politeness at all. It is received as indifference, and indifference, given enough time and enough silence, is more than enough to make a brilliant person quietly start looking elsewhere.

I still see Daniel occasionally, at industry conferences or through mutual colleagues, and the conversations are warm enough, if a little careful on both sides. He has never once reproached me directly, which somehow makes the episode harder to sit with, not easier. A part of me suspects he decided long ago that explaining what he needed from me would have cost more than simply leaving quietly, and that verdict, unspoken as it is, is the harshest one I have received in my career. Colleagues sometimes ask what I would do differently with that first Friday-evening email, and my answer is always disappointingly simple: I would have picked up the phone. Not eventually, but that same night, while the feeling he was describing was still raw enough for both of us to do something useful with it.

Reading Comprehension – True or False

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

1. Daniel resigned suddenly, with no prior indication that anything was wrong. ____ (T / F)
2. The narrator publicly criticised Daniel's forecasting proposal during a quarterly review meeting. ____ (T / F)
3. The narrator responded to Daniel's Friday-evening email the same day it was sent. ____ (T / F)
4. Daniel was passed over for a promotion in favour of a colleague with more tenure but less talent. ____ (T / F)
5. Daniel's resignation letter was angry and full of specific complaints about his managers. ____ (T / F)

Reading Comprehension – Multiple Choice

Read each question and choose the correct answer.

1. What does the narrator realise upon rereading Daniel's farewell email?

- A) That Daniel had planned to leave since his first week
- B) That the resignation was not as sudden as it had first seemed
- C) That Daniel had been offered a better salary elsewhere
- D) That the email contained a formal complaint against the company

2. Why did the narrator initially avoid praising Daniel's work?

- A) She feared it would make other departments try to recruit him
- B) She genuinely doubted the quality of his work
- C) Company policy discouraged public praise of junior staff
- D) Daniel had asked not to be singled out for praise

3. How did the narrator respond to Daniel's Friday-evening email?

- A) She called him immediately to discuss it
- B) She forwarded it to the division head for advice
- C) She gave a vague reply and postponed the conversation for weeks
- D) She ignored it completely and never mentioned it again

4. What happened during the quarterly review meeting?

- A) The division head publicly praised Daniel's proposal
- B) The narrator criticised Daniel's idea in front of the whole group
- C) Daniel refused to present his forecasting model
- D) The narrator privately supported Daniel against the division head

5. What does the narrator conclude about the true cause of Daniel's departure?

- A) It resulted from one single, decisive mistake
- B) It was mainly due to low pay compared to competitors
- C) It had nothing to do with the narrator's management
- D) It was the cumulative effect of many small failures to communicate

Key Vocabulary

High-frequency and advanced words and expressions (Oxford 3000/5000, New General Service List, Academic Word List and Brown Corpus), filtered by topic relevance and C1 level. Meanings are in the Dictionary at the end of the book.

1–10	11–20	21–30	31–40
1. hindsight	11. equivocation	21. scrutiny	31. accountability
2. candor	12. candid	22. subordinate	32. discretion
3. reticence	13. tactful	23. undermine	33. blunt

4. remorse	14. rebuke	24. fester	34. diplomacy
5. culpability	15. admonish	25. simmering	35. grievance
6. rapport	16. reprimand	26. unspoken	36. resentment
7. deference	17. conciliatory	27. misgivings	37. complacency
8. complicity	18. contrition	28. qualms	38. negligence
9. reckoning	19. deflect	29. second-guess	39. oversight
10. forbearance	20. condone	30. hesitancy	40. withhold

Vocabulary Practice

Choose the correct option to complete each sentence.

1. In the reading, "disillusionment" most nearly means:

- A) A sense of disappointment when something is revealed to be less good than believed
- B) A feeling of intense joy and satisfaction
- C) A formal complaint filed with human resources
- D) A sudden burst of motivation

2. "Complacency," as used in the text, refers to:

- A) Active effort to solve a difficult problem
- B) A self-satisfied unwillingness to notice or address a problem
- C) A formal agreement between two departments
- D) Deep sadness following a loss

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

- A) Deliberate deception
- B) Excessive formality
- C) Honest, straightforward openness
- D) Quiet indifference

4. Someone described as "reticent" is:

- A) Extremely talkative and outgoing
- B) Prone to sudden anger
- C) Highly organised and methodical
- D) Reluctant to speak openly about their thoughts or feelings

5. A "tacit" understanding is one that is:

- A) Unspoken but nonetheless understood by those involved
- B) Written down in a formal contract
- C) Publicly announced to everyone
- D) Based on a misunderstanding

6. "Rapport," in the context of the reading, refers to:

- A) A written performance evaluation
- B) A harmonious, trusting relationship between people
- C) A financial report submitted quarterly
- D) A formal apology

7. To describe an assumption as "presumptuous" is to suggest that it is:

- A) Carefully researched and well justified
- B) Extremely cautious and modest
- C) Overconfident and made without sufficient right or evidence
- D) Officially approved by management

8. Feeling "vindicated" means feeling that:

- A) One has been unfairly blamed for something
- B) One is completely indifferent to the outcome
- C) One has made a serious error in judgment
- D) One has been proven right or justified after doubt or criticism

9. An "acrimonious" argument is one that is:

- A) Bitter, angry, and marked by ill will
- B) Calm, polite, and quickly resolved
- C) Purely theoretical and abstract
- D) Conducted entirely in writing

10. A "self-effacing" person tends to:

- A) Boast frequently about their own achievements
- B) Avoid drawing attention to their own abilities or accomplishments
- C) Criticise others harshly and often
- D) Demand constant praise from colleagues

Grammar Focus: Modals of Past Speculation, Criticism, and Regret

At C1 level, English speakers regularly use modal verbs followed by "have" plus a past participle to speculate about the past, to express regret, or to criticise actions that cannot be undone. "Should have" and "shouldn't have" are used to criticise a past action or express regret over something that was, or was not, the wise or correct thing to do: "I should have said so" implies the speaker did not say it, and regrets that failure, while "I shouldn't have done that" implies the action was carried out but was, in retrospect, a mistake. "Needn't have" is subtly different from these: it describes an action that was in fact performed, but that turned out to be unnecessary — the speaker did something, only to realise afterwards that the effort or worry was wasted, as in "I needn't have worried about either outcome," where the worrying happened but achieved nothing.

"Could have" and "might have" both express past possibilities that were never realised, describing an alternative course of events that did not happen but plausibly could have; "could have" often carries a slightly stronger sense of a missed opportunity or capability ("I could have promoted him"), while "might

have" can suggest a more tentative, less certain alternative ("I might have offered him a lateral move"). "Must have," by contrast, is not about missed opportunities at all but about confident deduction: the speaker infers, from available evidence, that something almost certainly happened, even without direct proof, as in "he must have been composing that letter for months" — a conclusion drawn logically from his calm, prepared resignation rather than something the speaker witnessed directly. Distinguishing these forms precisely — criticism versus regret versus unnecessary effort versus unrealised possibility versus confident inference — is essential for expressing nuanced reflection on the past, a hallmark of sophisticated, C1-level discourse.

Figure 3

1. Sentence structure



2. Forms and examples



Reference Table: Modals of Past Speculation and Criticism

Should have / Shouldn't have + past participle	Criticism or regret about a past action (or inaction) that cannot be changed	You should have called him back that evening instead of waiting three weeks.
Needn't have + past participle	An action was performed but turned out to be unnecessary	She needn't have rewritten the whole report; the original version was fine.
Could have + past participle	A realistic past possibility or ability that was never acted on	He could have accepted the promotion, but he decided to stay in his current role.
Might have + past participle	A more tentative or uncertain unrealised possibility in the past	They might have resolved the conflict sooner if someone had spoken up.
Must have + past participle	A confident logical deduction about the past, based on evidence	Given how prepared she seemed, she must have rehearsed that speech many times.

Examples

1. I should have told Daniel how much his work meant to the team, but I let months go by in silence.
2. I shouldn't have criticised his proposal in front of eleven colleagues; it was needlessly humiliating.
3. Daniel needn't have worried that his contributions went unnoticed, though nothing I did reassured him of that.
4. The narrator could have promoted Daniel during the restructuring instead of choosing someone less talented.
5. She might have offered him a lateral transfer to the strategy team, but the conversation never took place.
6. Judging by the calm, unhurried tone of his resignation letter, Daniel must have been planning his departure for months.

English Usage

Learn and practice these useful expressions.

- I should have mentioned this sooner
expressing regret for delayed feedback
- In hindsight, I could have been more direct
acknowledging a missed opportunity for candor
- I probably should have said something at the time
softening self-criticism about past silence
- It might have made a difference if I'd spoken up
speculating about an alternative past outcome
- I didn't want to overstep, but I should have
balancing tact with honest disclosure
- Looking back, that was a conversation we needed to have
framing overdue feedback diplomatically
- I appreciate you telling me now, even if it's overdue
acknowledging delayed but valued feedback
- Let's not let this go unspoken again
committing to future openness

Sample Dialogue

A: Do you have a minute? I should have mentioned this sooner, but something's been on my mind.

B: Of course. What's going on?

A: It's about the client presentation last month. In hindsight, I could have been more direct about my concerns with the timeline.

B: I remember that project got tense. Why didn't you raise it then?

A: I probably should have said something at the time. I didn't want to overstep, but I should have.

B: I wish you had. It might have made a difference if I'd spoken up too — I noticed the same problems and stayed quiet.

A: Looking back, that was a conversation we needed to have weeks before the deadline, not after.

B: You must have felt torn between loyalty to the team and being honest about the risks.

A: Exactly. I kept telling myself it wasn't my place to comment on someone else's work.

B: Well, I appreciate you telling me now, even if it's overdue. It can't have been easy to bring up.

A: It wasn't, but staying silent felt worse in the end.

B: Let's not let this go unspoken again. Next time, tell me right away, even if it's uncomfortable.

A: Agreed. I should have trusted that you'd want to know.

B: We both should have communicated better. Let's make sure it doesn't happen again.

Practice

Choose the best expression for each situation.

1. Which phrase best expresses regret for not giving feedback earlier?

- A) Let's not let this go unspoken again
- B) I should have mentioned this sooner
- C) I appreciate you telling me now, even if it's overdue
- D) It might have made a difference if I'd spoken up

2. Which phrase acknowledges that delayed feedback is still valued?

- A) I appreciate you telling me now, even if it's overdue
- B) I probably should have said something at the time
- C) In hindsight, I could have been more direct
- D) Looking back, that was a conversation we needed to have

3. Which phrase speculates about how things might have turned out differently?

- A) I should have mentioned this sooner
- B) Let's not let this go unspoken again
- C) It might have made a difference if I'd spoken up
- D) I didn't want to overstep, but I should have

4. Which phrase commits to more openness going forward?

- A) In hindsight, I could have been more direct
- B) I probably should have said something at the time
- C) I appreciate you telling me now, even if it's overdue
- D) Let's not let this go unspoken again

5. Which phrase balances respecting boundaries with admitting one should have spoken?

- A) Looking back, that was a conversation we needed to have
- B) I didn't want to overstep, but I should have
- C) In hindsight, I could have been more direct
- D) I should have mentioned this sooner

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 ____ told him the truth sooner; my silence only made things worse." Which is correct?
 - A) should have
 - B) needn't have
 - C) must have
 - D) could

2. "You ____ apologised — it wasn't your fault at all, so the apology was unnecessary." Which fits best?
 - A) should have
 - B) needn't have
 - C) can't have
 - D) might

3. Choose the sentence that expresses a confident deduction about the past.
 - A) He should have forgotten the meeting.
 - B) He needn't have forgotten the meeting.
 - C) He must have forgotten the meeting; his calendar shows no record of it.
 - D) He might forget the meeting.

4. "Given how exhausted she looked, she ____ worked all night on the proposal."
 - A) should have
 - B) needn't have
 - C) shouldn't
 - D) must have

5. Which sentence criticises a past action that was actually carried out?
 - A) You shouldn't have interrupted her while she was speaking.
 - B) You shouldn't interrupt her.
 - C) You needn't interrupt her.
 - D) You couldn't have interrupted her.

6. "We ____ have taken the early flight; it would have saved us hours." Best modal:
 - A) must
 - B) could
 - C) needn't
 - D) shouldn't

7. "They ____ have won the contract if they had submitted the proposal on time." (unrealised possibility)
 - A) must
 - B) needn't
 - C) might
 - D) shouldn't

8. Choose the correct form: "She was clearly furious, so something ____ have upset her earlier."

- A) needn't
- B) shouldn't
- C) could not
- D) must

9. "I ____ have brought an umbrella — it didn't rain at all, so I carried it for nothing."

- A) needn't
- B) should
- C) must
- D) can't

10. Which sentence best expresses regret over something that was NOT done?

- A) I needn't have called my mentor.
- B) I should have called my mentor before making the decision.
- C) I must have called my mentor.
- D) I couldn't call my mentor.

11. "He ____ have taken that job; he clearly regrets it now." (criticism of a decision made)

- A) needn't
- B) might
- C) shouldn't
- D) must

12. Complete: "The lights were on when we arrived, so someone ____ have been in the office."

- A) needn't
- B) shouldn't
- C) could not
- D) must

13. Which best fits: "You ____ have worried about the exam; you passed with the highest score."

- A) needn't
- B) should
- C) must
- D) shouldn't

14. "Looking back, we ____ have handled that negotiation more diplomatically." (unrealised alternative, tentative)

- A) must
- B) might
- C) needn't
- D) can't

15. Choose the sentence with a grammatically correct past modal structure.

- A) She should have went to the meeting.
- B) She should has gone to the meeting.
- C) She should have gone to the meeting.
- D) She should have go to the meeting.

16. "It's odd that he didn't answer; he ____ have left his phone at home."

- A) needn't
- B) shouldn't
- C) can
- D) must

17. Which word best completes: "Her ____ silence during the review left her colleague feeling unappreciated."

- A) tacit
- B) candid
- C) presumptuous
- D) acrimonious

18. "He handled the criticism with surprising grace, never boasting about how right he had been." This describes someone who is:

- A) reticent
- B) self-effacing
- C) vindicated
- D) complacent

19. Choose the closest synonym for "disillusionment."

- A) excitement
- B) gratitude
- C) disappointment
- D) confusion

20. "After months of doubt, the results finally proved her theory correct." She felt:

- A) acrimonious
- B) presumptuous
- C) reticent
- D) vindicated

21. Which sentence uses "could have" to express a past ability that was not used?

- A) She could have solved the problem herself, but she asked for help instead.
- B) She could solve the problem herself.
- C) She could have solve the problem herself.
- D) She can have solved the problem herself.

22. "The negotiations became increasingly ____ as both sides refused to compromise." Best word:

- A) tacit

- B) acrimonious
- C) self-effacing
- D) vindicated

23. Complete: "You ____ have booked a hotel; my cousin offered us his spare room for free."

- A) must
- B) can't
- C) needn't
- D) shouldn't

24. Which sentence correctly criticises an action using "shouldn't have"?

- A) I shouldn't trust him so quickly.
- B) I shouldn't have trust him so quickly.
- C) I shouldn't having trusted him so quickly.
- D) I shouldn't have trusted him so quickly; he betrayed that trust almost immediately.

25. "Given the empty coffee cups and scattered papers, the team ____ have worked through the night."

- A) must
- B) needn't
- C) shouldn't
- D) can

UNIT 4

Getting Things Done

Objective (CEFR C1): to understand and use expressions related to delegating tasks and commissioning services for renovation, events, and business operations, and to express ideas fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions, using language flexibly and effectively for social, academic, and professional purposes.

Reading: The Reluctant Delegator: Notes from a Renovation Project

For most of my adult life, I prided myself on being the kind of person who does things herself. I fixed my own bicycle, painted my own flat, and once, disastrously, attempted to rewire a lamp without consulting anyone who actually understood electricity. So when my partner and I bought a dilapidated Victorian townhouse—complete with a leaking roof, crumbling plaster, and wiring that predated the Second World War—I assumed I would simply roll up my sleeves and get on with it. Six months later, having learned an uncomfortable but valuable lesson in humility, I can report that renovating an entire house is not, in fact, a solo endeavour. It is an exercise in learning to let other people do what they do best, and in discovering, sentence by sentence, just how many ways the English language has invented to describe getting other people to do your work for you.

The first thing we had to do, before a single brick was touched, was have an architect draw up proper plans. I could have sketched something on the back of an envelope, but the local council would never have granted planning permission for an extension based on my doodles, so we paid a professional to produce drawings that satisfied every regulation. Once the plans were approved, we had a structural engineer assess the load-bearing walls, since we wanted to knock through between the kitchen and the dining room, and no sane person removes a wall without first getting it inspected by someone qualified to say whether the house will still be standing afterwards.

With the paperwork sorted, we moved on to the daunting task of finding people to actually do the work. We got quotes from six different contractors, which taught me that "reasonable" is a wildly subjective term in the building trade, and eventually settled on a small firm recommended by a neighbour. The first job was the roof: rather than attempting anything so foolhardy ourselves, we had it completely re-slatted, with new lead flashing around the chimney and a skylight installed in what would become our bedroom. Watching someone else balance on scaffolding thirty feet above the ground was, frankly, a relief; some tasks are best left to people who have actually been trained to do them.

Next came the wiring, which was, by any measure, a fire hazard waiting to happen. We had the entire house rewired from scratch, which meant getting every socket, switch, and light fitting replaced, and having the fuse box brought up to modern safety standards. The electrician, a taciturn man named Gary who communicated mainly in grunts and raised eyebrows, turned out to have excellent instincts, so after the first week I simply let him decide where the extra sockets should go rather than hovering over him with a tape

measure. It was, I discovered, remarkably freeing to trust someone else's judgment instead of insisting on supervising every decision myself.

Not every contractor earned that same latitude, however. The plumber we initially hired made a spectacular mess of the bathroom, fitting the shower at such an angle that it sent water cascading directly onto the newly plastered wall. When we pointed this out, he shrugged and suggested we simply "get used to it," which was not an acceptable answer. Despite his objections, we made him redo the entire installation at his own expense, citing the guarantee in his contract, and this time we had a second plumber double-check the work before signing off on it. There is a meaningful difference, I realised, between letting a competent professional exercise autonomy and allowing an incompetent one to cut corners; the causative verb you choose says a great deal about how much trust you are actually extending.

The kitchen proved to be the most satisfying part of the entire project, largely because it involved the fewest surprises. We had the units custom-built by a small joinery workshop rather than buying flat-pack furniture, which cost more but meant every cupboard fitted the slightly irregular Victorian walls perfectly. We had a granite worktop cut to measure and delivered by a specialist firm, and had it installed by two men who manoeuvred an alarmingly heavy slab through our narrow front door with a precision that bordered on choreography. When the tiler arrived to finish the splashback, we asked him to lay the tiles in a herringbone pattern rather than the straightforward grid he had originally quoted for; a good tradesperson, it turns out, will happily adjust a job if you communicate what you want clearly and early, before the grout has set.

The garden, it turned out, required almost as much outside intervention as the house itself. We had the overgrown hedges cut back by a local landscaping firm, and got a collapsing boundary wall entirely rebuilt using reclaimed brick chosen to match the original Victorian facade. When we discovered a cracked drain pipe running beneath the patio, we had a specialist camera-inspect the entire length of piping before we would allow any paving to be laid on top of it; nobody wants to relay an expensive patio twice because of a problem that could have been caught first. We also had a small greenhouse built along the back fence, choosing a local carpenter over a flat-pack kit once again, since our earlier experience with the kitchen had convinced us that having something built to measure is nearly always worth the extra expense, even when it takes longer and costs more up front.

Not everything went smoothly, of course. Partway through the project, we discovered that a previous owner had had some illegal wiring installed in the attic decades earlier, tucked behind insulation where no inspector had ever found it. Rather than panicking, we had a specialist come in to assess the damage and got the offending cables removed and replaced immediately, before they could cause a fire. We also had to make an insurance claim after a delivery van backed into our newly repainted garden wall, and while the insurer initially offered a laughably small settlement, we had our claim reassessed by a loss adjuster and eventually got fair compensation for the damage.

Before we agreed to settle the final invoice, we had the entire property inspected room by room, drawing up what builders call a "snagging list"—a document itemising every small imperfection that still needed attention before the job could be considered complete. We had the contractor fix a dozen minor issues from that list: a door that stuck in its frame, a length of skirting board left unpainted, a window that would not

close all the way. Rather than simply accepting the work as finished because the big, visible jobs were done, we insisted on having every remaining item addressed properly before releasing payment, and I was pleasantly surprised by how willingly the contractor agreed once he understood that we intended to be thorough rather than merely difficult. It was, in its own small way, another lesson in delegation: having someone else do a job well does not mean abandoning all responsibility for how it turns out.

Throughout the process, I found myself thinking constantly about how the same principles applied to running my small graphic design business, which I had, until recently, insisted on managing single-handedly. I did my own accounting, answered my own phones, and refused, out of some misplaced sense of pride, to let anyone else touch the parts of the business I considered "mine." Watching a team of skilled professionals transform our house taught me something about delegation that no business book ever had: you do not lose control by letting other people do things well; you lose far more by insisting on doing everything badly yourself. Since the renovation finished, I have started having an accountant handle our quarterly taxes instead of muddling through spreadsheets at midnight. I have let my new assistant screen calls and schedule meetings, rather than answering every single enquiry personally. I even had a freelance web designer redesign our woefully outdated website, something I had been putting off for three years out of sheer stubbornness.

None of this came naturally. There is something almost physically uncomfortable, for a certain kind of person, about paying someone else to do a job you believe you could do yourself, even when the evidence overwhelmingly suggests you would do it worse and more slowly. But somewhere between the rewiring and the granite worktop, I stopped viewing delegation as an admission of failure and started seeing it as what it actually is: a form of respect, both for other people's expertise and for your own limited time. These days, when something in the house breaks, I no longer reach automatically for a screwdriver. I pick up the phone, explain the problem, and have someone who actually knows what they are doing come and fix it—usually rather better, and rather faster, than I ever managed on my own.

Looking back at the finished house now—the re-slatted roof holding firm against autumn storms, the rewired sockets working exactly as they should, the kitchen units fitting snugly into walls that have not been perfectly square since 1891—I no longer think of the project as something I renovated. I think of it as something I had renovated, with the crucial difference between those two phrases containing, I have come to believe, an entire philosophy of how to get things done.

Reading Comprehension – True or False

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

1. Before the renovation, the narrator prided herself on doing most repairs and jobs herself. ____ (T / F)
2. The narrator and her partner hired an architect only after the roof work had already begun. ____ (T / F)
3. The electrician, Gary, was eventually given the freedom to decide where to place extra sockets. ____ (T / F)
4. The first plumber's faulty shower installation was accepted without any complaint or change. ____ (T / F)
5. After the renovation, the narrator began delegating tasks in her business that she had previously insisted on doing herself. ____ (T / F)

Reading Comprehension – Multiple Choice

Read each question and choose the correct answer.

1. Why did the narrator and her partner hire a structural engineer?

- A) To assess whether a load-bearing wall could safely be removed
- B) To design the custom-built kitchen units
- C) To install the new electrical wiring
- D) To repair the leaking roof

2. What was unusual about the electrician's working style?

- A) He refused to work with a modern fuse box
- B) He never removed any of the old wiring
- C) He communicated mainly through grunts and raised eyebrows, yet had excellent instincts
- D) He insisted on being supervised at every stage

3. Why did the narrator and her partner make the first plumber redo his work?

- A) He installed the wrong style of tiles
- B) He fitted the shower at an angle, causing water damage to the wall
- C) He failed to order materials on time
- D) He refused to answer the couple's questions

4. What change did the tiler agree to make to the original plan?

- A) He agreed to work through the weekend
- B) He agreed to replace the granite worktop
- C) He agreed to lower his price
- D) He agreed to lay the tiles in a herringbone pattern instead of a grid

5. According to the final paragraphs, what has the narrator learned about delegation?

- A) That paying skilled people to do a job well is a form of respect for their expertise and her own time
- B) That delegating tasks is best avoided in a small business
- C) That delegation always represents a loss of control
- D) That only architects and engineers should ever be trusted with decisions

Key Vocabulary

High-frequency and advanced words and expressions (Oxford 3000/5000, New General Service List, Academic Word List and Brown Corpus), filtered by topic relevance and C1 level. Meanings are in the Dictionary at the end of the book.

1–10	11–20	21–30	31–40
1. to delegate	11. stakeholder	21. to renovate	31. inspection
2. to outsource	12. deliverable	22. contractor	32. permit

3. to commission	13. to allocate (resources)	23. quotation	33. to refurbish
4. to procure	14. milestone	24. to overhaul	34. budget overrun
5. subcontractor	15. turnaround time	25. project scope	35. caterer
6. to oversee	16. to entrust	26. to troubleshoot	36. venue
7. accountability	17. vendor	27. workflow	37. to finalize
8. to streamline	18. logistics	28. to authorize	38. supervision
9. contingency plan	19. to expedite	29. feasibility	39. to negotiate terms
10. to liaise (with)	20. compliance	30. to coordinate	40. operational efficiency

Vocabulary Practice

Choose the correct option to complete each sentence.

1. "Dilapidated" (as in "a dilapidated Victorian townhouse") most nearly means:

- A) in a state of disrepair
- B) recently renovated
- C) extremely expensive
- D) architecturally unusual

2. In the reading, "load-bearing" (wall) describes a wall that:

- A) is purely decorative
- B) supports the structural weight of a building
- C) separates two bedrooms
- D) has been painted a specific colour

3. "Foolhardy" is closest in meaning to:

- A) intelligent and careful
- B) financially costly
- C) recklessly bold
- D) socially awkward

4. A "taciturn" person, like the electrician Gary, is someone who:

- A) talks constantly
- B) is skilled but dishonest
- C) works only part-time
- D) says very little

5. To be given "latitude" in this context means to be given:

- A) freedom to make one's own decisions
- B) a lower salary
- C) a written contract
- D) a strict deadline

6. "Autonomy" most nearly means:

- A) supervision by a manager
- B) independence in decision-making
- C) financial compensation
- D) formal qualification

7. A "herringbone" pattern is:

- A) a random, unplanned layout
- B) a straight grid of identical tiles
- C) a single row of tiles
- D) a zigzag arrangement of tiles or bricks

8. "Muddling through" (spreadsheets) means:

- A) completing a task efficiently and confidently
- B) managing a task in a disorganised, confused way
- C) delegating a task entirely to someone else
- D) refusing to attempt a task

9. "Stubbornness" is best defined as:

- A) a willingness to compromise
- B) a talent for negotiation
- C) an unwillingness to change one's attitude or approach
- D) a tendency to forget commitments

10. If units fit "snugly," they fit:

- A) loosely, with visible gaps
- B) only after being cut down
- C) tightly and closely, with no gaps
- D) in a temporary, makeshift way

Grammar Focus: Causative Structures

Causative structures allow speakers to describe actions that are performed by someone else on their behalf, rather than by themselves. The most common causative pattern, *have/get + object + past participle*, is used when we arrange for a service to be carried out for us: "We had the roof re-slatted" or "We got the wiring replaced" both describe the couple paying professionals to perform the work, with the focus falling on the result rather than on who actually did it. "Have" is the more neutral and slightly more formal choice, appropriate in both spoken and written registers, whereas "get" tends to sound more informal and can subtly suggest effort, persuasion, or a longer process before the task was finally accomplished, as in "we finally got the claim reassessed." This same *have/get + object + past participle* pattern also extends to situations that are unplanned or even unwelcome, such as "we had some illegal wiring installed" or "she had

her bike stolen," where the causative describes something that happened to the subject rather than something the subject deliberately arranged.

A related but distinct set of structures, have/make/let + object + base form (with no "to"), describes one person instructing, compelling, or permitting another person to carry out an action directly, and the choice of verb signals a precise degree of authority or control. "Have" in this pattern is the most neutral and managerial: it simply arranges for someone to do a task, as in "the foreman had the workers clear the site," without implying either force or generosity. "Make," by contrast, expresses obligation or compulsion, often against the other person's will or preference, as in "we made him redo the entire installation," and consequently carries a firmer, sometimes confrontational tone. "Let" sits at the opposite end of the scale, expressing permission or the granting of freedom, as in "I let him decide where the sockets should go," and often signals trust rather than authority. Recognising these nuances of formality and control—neutral arrangement with "have," compulsion with "make," and permission with "let"—is essential for expressing exactly how much power one person is exercising over another's actions.

Figure 4

1. Sentence structure



2. Forms and examples



Reference Table: Causative Structures

have + object + past participle	Arrange for someone else to perform a service for you; neutral, common in speech and writing	We had the roof re-slatted by a local firm.
get + object + past participle	Same core meaning as "have," but more informal and sometimes implying effort or persuasion	We finally got the wiring replaced before winter.
have + object + base form	Instruct or arrange for someone to do something, without implying force or generosity	The architect had the assistant file the permit application.

make + object + base form	Compel or force someone to do something, often against their will	The company made the contractor redo the faulty tiling.
let + object + base form	Give someone permission or the freedom to act on their own	We let the electrician decide where to place the sockets.

Examples

1. We had the kitchen units custom-built by a small joinery workshop.
2. After weeks of delay, we finally got the bathroom retiled properly.
3. The architect had the plans redrawn to satisfy the council's requirements.
4. The insurer initially refused to pay, but we had the claim reassessed by a loss adjuster.
5. When the plumber's work proved faulty, we made him redo the entire installation at his own expense.
6. Rather than supervising every decision, we let the electrician choose the position of the extra sockets.

English Usage

Learn and practice these useful expressions.

- to have something done
causative structure describing a service arranged through a third party
- to get someone to do something
causative phrase for persuading or arranging for someone to act
- to hand over responsibility for
to formally delegate a task or project to someone else
- to sort something out
to arrange or resolve a matter, often used informally
- to bring someone in (to do something)
to recruit an external person or firm for a task
- to see to it that
to personally ensure that something gets arranged or completed
- to farm out (a task)
to outsource work to an external party instead of doing it in-house
- to leave something in someone's hands
to entrust a matter fully to another person's judgment

Sample Dialogue

- A: We really need to get the office renovation moving before the new quarter starts.
- B: Agreed — we're having the reception area completely redone by the end of the month.
- A: Good. Can you see to it that the permits are sorted out this week?
- B: I'll bring in a project coordinator to handle the paperwork; it's too much for one person.
- A: That makes sense. I'd rather farm out the electrical work anyway, since our in-house team isn't licensed for it.
- B: Exactly, and I want to hand over responsibility for the vendor negotiations to Priya.

A: Fine, as long as she gets the caterer to confirm numbers before the launch event.

B: She will — she's already sorting the seating plan out with the venue manager.

A: What about the AV equipment for the conference room?

B: I've had a specialist inspect the wiring, and the new system goes in next week.

A: Perfect. Just leave the final budget approval in my hands.

B: Will do. I'll have the updated figures sent to you by tomorrow morning.

Practice

Choose the best expression for each situation.

1. Which phrase best describes outsourcing a task to an external company rather than handling it internally?

- A) to farm out
- B) to see to it that
- C) to leave something in someone's hands
- D) to hand over responsibility for

2. "I want you to ____ the client relationship from now on." Which phrase fits best?

- A) sort out
- B) hand over responsibility for
- C) bring in
- D) farm out

3. Which sentence correctly uses a causative structure to describe arranging for a service via a third party?

- A) I did the roof repaired last week.
- B) I have repaired the roof last week.
- C) I had the roof repaired last week.
- D) I was repairing the roof last week.

4. If a manager says, "Just leave it in my hands," what is she communicating?

- A) She wants someone else to do it.
- B) She refuses to get involved.
- C) She is unsure how to proceed.
- D) She will personally ensure it is taken care of.

5. Which phrase means to recruit an external person specifically to carry out a task?

- A) to get someone to do something
- B) to bring someone in
- C) to sort something out
- D) to see to it 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. We _____ the roof re-slatted before winter arrived.

- A) had
- B) made
- C) let
- D) do

2. The teacher wouldn't _____ us leave the room until we had finished the exam.

- A) have
- B) let
- C) make
- D) get

3. My parents always _____ me tidy my room when I was a child, even when I complained.

- A) let
- B) have
- C) made
- D) get

4. Choose the sentence with the correct causative form.

- A) We had our car repair yesterday.
- B) We had our car to repair yesterday.
- C) We had repaired our car yesterday.
- D) We had our car repaired yesterday.

5. After the accident, she _____ her injuries checked by a doctor immediately.

- A) had
- B) let
- C) made
- D) get

6. The strict manager never _____ his staff leave early, regardless of the reason.

- A) had
- B) let
- C) made
- D) got

7. Choose the correct sentence.

- A) He made his assistant to rewrite the report.
- B) He made his assistant rewriting the report.
- C) He made his assistant rewrite the report.
- D) He made his assistant rewritten the report.

8. We _____ the kitchen units custom-built rather than buying flat-pack furniture.
- A) let
 - B) made
 - C) did
 - D) had
9. The plumber's work was faulty, so, despite his objections, we _____ him redo the entire job at his own expense.
- A) made
 - B) let
 - C) had
 - D) got
10. Which sentence correctly uses "get" in a causative structure?
- A) We got the wiring replace last month.
 - B) We got the wiring replaced last month.
 - C) We got the wiring replacing last month.
 - D) We got replaced the wiring last month.
11. The electrician was so competent that we _____ him decide where to place the sockets.
- A) made
 - B) had
 - C) let
 - D) got
12. In the reading, why did the narrator let the electrician make his own decisions?
- A) Because company policy required it
 - B) Because she was too busy to supervise
 - C) Because the contract obliged her to
 - D) Because he had proven his instincts were reliable
13. The architect _____ new plans drawn up to satisfy the council.
- A) had
 - B) let
 - C) made
 - D) did
14. Which of the following implies compulsion or force?
- A) let someone do something
 - B) make someone do something
 - C) have someone do something
 - D) get something done
15. Which of the following implies permission?

- A) make someone do something
- B) have someone do something
- C) let someone do something
- D) get something done

16. Choose the correct passive causative form: "Someone stole my bike." → "I ____."

- A) made my bike stolen
- B) let my bike stolen
- C) had my bike steal
- D) had my bike stolen

17. The insurance company initially refused to pay, but eventually we _____ our claim reassessed.

- A) had
- B) let
- C) made
- D) did

18. According to the text, what does the narrator conclude about delegation by the end of the passage?

- A) It is a sign of weakness
- B) It is a form of respect for others' expertise and one's own time
- C) It should be avoided in business
- D) It only applies to home renovation

19. Choose the correctly formed sentence.

- A) She had her hair cutting yesterday.
- B) She had her hair to cut yesterday.
- C) She had her hair cut yesterday.
- D) She had cut her hair yesterday.

20. "Taciturn," used to describe the electrician Gary, means:

- A) talkative and friendly
- B) dishonest and unreliable
- C) highly qualified
- D) reserved and saying very little

21. Which sentence best describes "getting a service done by paying a professional"?

- A) I had my house painted.
- B) I let my house painted.
- C) I made my house painted.
- D) I have painted my house paint.

22. The company _____ its accounting outsourced to a specialist firm rather than doing it in-house.

- A) let
- B) had

- C) made
- D) did

23. "Load-bearing," as used in the reading, describes a wall that:

- A) is decorative only
- B) has been demolished
- C) supports the structure of the building
- D) divides two rooms without any support function

24. Which sentence uses "make" correctly in the causative structure?

- A) The teacher made the students to stay after class.
- B) The teacher made the students staying after class.
- C) The teacher made the students stayed after class.
- D) The teacher made the students stay after class.

25. Based on the reading, why did the narrator eventually let her assistant screen calls and schedule meetings?

- A) Because she had learned to trust delegation rather than control everything herself
- B) Because she had no other choice financially
- C) Because the assistant demanded it
- D) Because the business closed temporarily

UNIT 5

It Is Said That...

Objective (CEFR C1): to understand and use expressions related to reporting unverified claims and evaluating the credibility of evidence, and to express ideas fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions, using language flexibly and effectively for social, academic, and professional purposes.

Reading: The Man Who Fell From the Sky: The Enduring Mystery of D.B. Cooper

On the evening of November 24, 1971, a middle-aged man in a dark business suit boarded Northwest Orient Airlines Flight 305 in Portland, Oregon, using the name Dan Cooper. He is said to have ordered a bourbon and soda shortly after takeoff, behaving with the unremarkable composure of any business traveller bound for Seattle. Yet within minutes of the aircraft's ascent, the man passed a note to a flight attendant that would transform him into one of the most elusive figures in American criminal history. The note, which the attendant initially assumed to be a phone number scrawled by a lonely passenger, in fact announced that a bomb was aboard the plane.

Curiously, the name by which the hijacker is now overwhelmingly known, D.B. Cooper, is itself the product of a journalistic error rather than any fact established by the FBI. A wire-service reporter, working from police radio traffic in the hours after the hijacking, is thought to have confused the alias "Dan Cooper" with that of D.B. Cooper, an entirely unrelated Portland resident who was briefly, and wrongly, questioned as a suspect before being cleared within a day. The mistaken initials stuck, propagated by a wave of subsequent news coverage, and the hijacker has been known by that name in the popular imagination ever since, even though no evidence has ever linked him to those initials at all.

What followed has since become the stuff of American folklore, endlessly retold, embellished, and disputed. Cooper is reported to have demanded \$200,000 in unmarked twenty-dollar bills and four parachutes, threatening to detonate the device unless his demands were met upon landing. The passengers, unaware of the drama unfolding a few rows behind them, were told only that the flight faced a minor mechanical delay. When the aircraft finally touched down in Seattle, Cooper is known to have exchanged the passengers for the ransom, allowing all thirty-six of them, along with two flight attendants, to disembark unharmed. He is believed to have inspected the parachutes meticulously, rejecting one that had been supplied with its static line sewn shut, a detail that has long been cited as circumstantial evidence of prior skydiving experience.

With the ransom secured, Cooper ordered the pilots to fly toward Mexico City at a low altitude and reduced speed, with the flaps partially lowered and the landing gear down, a configuration investigators later determined was consistent with an intention to jump mid-flight. Somewhere over the dense, mountainous forest of southwestern Washington, in the vicinity of the Lewis River, the rear stairway of the Boeing 727 was lowered, and Cooper is believed to have leapt into the night, into a driving rainstorm, wearing only his business suit, loafers, and a parachute strapped to his back. He was never seen again. The aircraft landed safely in Reno, Nevada, its cabin bearing no trace of the man beyond a black clip-on tie, which is thought to have been left behind either deliberately or in the haste of the jump.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation, in what would become one of the longest and most expensive manhunts in its history, code-named the case NORJAK, short for "Northwest hijacking." Hundreds of agents combed the forested terrain below the presumed jump zone; military helicopters and ground teams searched for weeks, and later years, without ever finding a body, a parachute, or any conclusive wreckage. The circumstantial evidence that emerged only deepened the mystery. Given the altitude, temperature, and violence of the storm that night, most meteorologists and skydiving experts consulted by investigators concluded that survival was improbable at best; Cooper is widely believed to have died on impact or from exposure in the wilderness, his remains never recovered. And yet the absence of a body has allowed an alternative narrative to flourish: that he is said, in the more romantic corners of American mythology, to have survived, vanished into obscurity, and lived out his days under an assumed identity.

The case is also credited with a lasting, if little-known, legacy in aviation engineering. Within a year of the hijacking, the Federal Aviation Administration is reported to have required all Boeing 727s to be retrofitted with a mechanical device, informally nicknamed the Cooper vane, that prevents the rear airstair from being lowered while the aircraft is in flight. The modification, still fitted to surviving 727s decades later, stands as one of the few uncontested facts in a case otherwise defined by uncertainty: whatever else remains unknown about the man who jumped, his escape route is understood to have been permanently closed to anyone who might attempt to follow it.

The case took an unexpected turn in February 1980, when an eight-year-old boy digging in the sandy bank of the Columbia River, near a spot known as Tina Bar, unearthed three decaying packets of cash. Once cross-checked against FBI records, the serial numbers corroborated that the bills were indeed part of the ransom paid nearly a decade earlier. The discovery reignited public fascination and gave investigators their only physical confirmation that Cooper, or at least the money, had drifted, or been carried, into the river system. Yet the find raised as many questions as it resolved: how had the bills travelled so far downstream, and did their location suggest a jump zone entirely different from the one long assumed by investigators?

Over the decades, dozens of suspects have been proposed, investigated, and largely dismissed, each attached to a web of speculation that the FBI itself was never able to substantiate. Richard Floyd McCoy Jr., who carried out a strikingly similar hijacking the following year and was later captured, is thought by some amateur investigators to have been Cooper himself, despite the bureau's own conclusion that the physical descriptions did not match and that McCoy had a verifiable alibi for the earlier date. Kenneth Christiansen, a former paratrooper and Northwest Orient employee, is alleged by his family to have confessed on his deathbed, though no corroborating financial or physical evidence has ever surfaced. Perhaps the most persistent candidate, Robert Rackstraw, a Vietnam veteran with a documented history of fraud and a reported facility with skydiving and explosives, is believed by a group of independent researchers to be the true culprit; he consistently denied it, and died in 2019 with the question still unresolved. A fourth name, Lynn Doyle Cooper, was proposed by relatives who claimed he had confessed to being "involved" in a robbery shortly before his death, though DNA evidence obtained from the necktie left on the plane is reported to have failed to conclusively link him to the case.

The FBI, for its part, suspended active investigation of the case in 2016, citing the exhaustion of credible leads and the diversion of resources to more urgent priorities, though tips from the public are still

occasionally reviewed. Sceptics of the various suspect theories point out that the case's most tantalising "clues," the tie, the parachute rigging, the eyewitness sketches, are all, in the final analysis, inconclusive, capable of fitting almost any determined narrative that an amateur sleuth wishes to construct. Believers, meanwhile, argue that the sheer audacity of the crime, executed without violence and seemingly without a trace, demands an explanation more satisfying than "he probably died in the woods." A dedicated community of amateur investigators, some of whom refer to themselves collectively as "Cooper's crew," continues to comb through declassified case files, conduct their own forensic tests, and organise annual gatherings to compare notes and theories, a testament to the case's rare capacity to sustain serious amateur inquiry across more than five decades.

What makes the Cooper case so resilient, more than fifty years after the fact, is not merely its unresolved nature but the peculiar dignity it has acquired in popular memory. Cooper is rarely portrayed as a villain; he is, more often, cast as a folk antihero, an ordinary man who briefly outwitted an intractable federal bureaucracy and then, whether by death or by design, disappeared into the very anonymity he had exploited. Annual festivals in Ariel, Washington, near the presumed jump site, celebrate his legend with costume contests and commemorative merchandise, evidence that the case has long since transcended criminology to become a fixture of American folklore.

Whether Cooper's fate will ever be conclusively established remains doubtful. Advances in forensic technology have so far failed to extract usable DNA from the tie or to corroborate any of the leading suspects. Every few years, a new theory is floated, a new deathbed confession reported, a new patch of forest searched, and each time the case reverts to its familiar equilibrium of tantalising possibility and stubborn silence. In the absence of definitive proof, D.B. Cooper is destined to remain exactly what he has been since that stormy November night: a man who is said to have jumped, believed to have vanished, and never proven, one way or another, to have done anything at all beyond disappear.

Reading Comprehension – True or False

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

1. Cooper is believed to have jumped from the rear stairway of the aircraft over Washington state. ____ (T / F)
2. All the passengers were held on the plane until it landed in Mexico City. ____ (T / F)
3. Some of the ransom money was later found along the banks of the Columbia River. ____ (T / F)
4. The FBI officially confirmed Robert Rackstraw's identity as Cooper before his death. ____ (T / F)
5. The case remains formally unsolved, though the FBI suspended active investigation in 2016. ____ (T / F)

Reading Comprehension – Multiple Choice

Read each question and choose the correct answer.

1. What name did the hijacker use when purchasing his ticket?

- A) Dan Cooper
- B) Richard McCoy
- C) Kenneth Christiansen

D) Robert Rackstraw

2. What did Cooper demand in exchange for the passengers' safety?

- A) Safe passage to Cuba
- B) A private jet and diplomatic immunity
- C) \$200,000 and four parachutes
- D) \$1 million in gold bars

3. What detail about the parachutes suggested Cooper had prior skydiving experience?

- A) He requested a reserve chute only
- B) He rejected one with a sewn-shut static line
- C) He asked for a tandem harness
- D) He asked for a specific brand

4. What was discovered near Tina Bar on the Columbia River in 1980?

- A) A parachute
- B) The hijacker's suit
- C) A skeleton
- D) Decaying packets of ransom cash

5. According to the article, why does the FBI no longer actively investigate the case?

- A) A suspect was formally charged
- B) Credible leads were exhausted and resources were redirected
- C) The case was proven legally unsolvable
- D) The statute of limitations expired

Key Vocabulary

High-frequency and advanced words and expressions (Oxford 3000/5000, New General Service List, Academic Word List and Brown Corpus), filtered by topic relevance and C1 level. Meanings are in the Dictionary at the end of the book.

1–10	11–20	21–30	31–40
1. allegation	11. eyewitness	21. dubious	31. scrutiny
2. corroborate	12. speculation	22. inconclusive	32. misattribute
3. substantiate	13. conjecture	23. verify	33. discredit
4. hearsay	14. discrepancy	24. disclose	34. veracity
5. fabrication	15. anomaly	25. whistleblower	35. unverified
6. debunk	16. provenance	26. retraction	36. exonerate
7. purported	17. authenticate	27. defamation	37. implicate
8. unsubstantiated	18. forgery	28. circumstantial	38. probe

9. credibility	19. skeptic	29. fallacious	39. cover-up
10. testimony	20. plausible	30. innuendo	40. leak

Vocabulary Practice

Choose the correct option to complete each sentence.

1. In the reading, "elusive" most nearly means:

- A) financially rewarding
- B) legally binding
- C) difficult to find, catch, or achieve
- D) simple to explain

2. "Meticulously," as used in the text, means:

- A) with great and careful attention to detail
- B) carelessly and quickly
- C) angrily and impulsively
- D) secretly and dishonestly

3. To "corroborate" a claim means to:

- A) deny it completely
- B) invent it from nothing
- C) translate it accurately
- D) confirm or give supporting evidence for it

4. "Circumstantial" evidence is best described as evidence that is:

- A) based on direct eyewitness testimony
- B) based on inference rather than direct proof
- C) legally inadmissible in any court
- D) recorded on video

5. "Speculation," in the reading, refers to:

- A) the forming of theories without firm evidence
- B) a formal legal accusation
- C) a confirmed scientific fact
- D) a written confession

6. Something described as "resilient" is:

- A) quick to collapse under pressure
- B) easily forgotten
- C) financially valuable
- D) able to withstand or recover quickly from difficulties

7. Evidence that is "inconclusive" is evidence that is:

- A) leading to a definite conclusion
- B) extremely persuasive
- C) not leading to a definite conclusion
- D) officially certified

8. The "audacity" of the crime refers to its:

- A) bold or daring nature, especially involving risk
- B) extreme caution and timidity
- C) quiet humility
- D) careful legal planning

9. An "intractable" bureaucracy is one that is:

- A) easy to manage or persuade
- B) difficult to control or deal with
- C) newly established
- D) financially generous

10. Something "tantalising" is something that is:

- A) boring and repetitive
- B) legally binding
- C) completely irrelevant
- D) causing a strong desire or interest, especially something unattainable

Grammar Focus: Reporting and Distancing Structures

In formal and journalistic English, speakers and writers frequently need to report a claim, rumour, or belief without committing themselves to its truth. One common device is the impersonal construction "It is said/believed/reported/thought/known that + clause," as in "It is said that Cooper jumped from the plane." An equally common, more concise alternative restructures the sentence so that the subject of the reported clause becomes the subject of the main sentence, followed by a passive reporting verb and a to-infinitive: "Cooper is said to have jumped from the plane." Both versions convey the same distancing effect, signalling to the reader that the information comes from an outside source, from rumour, from unverified testimony, or from a claim that cannot be independently confirmed, rather than from the speaker's own direct knowledge. This structure is especially prevalent with verbs such as say, believe, report, think, know, allege, claim, understand, and consider, all of which allow the writer to present information cautiously, an essential skill in news reporting, academic writing, and any context where responsibility for a claim's accuracy must be carefully hedged.

The choice between the present infinitive (to be/to do) and the perfect infinitive (to have been/to have done) is not merely stylistic; it marks a genuine difference in time reference. The present infinitive describes a state or action understood to be true at the same time as the reporting verb, as in "He is thought to be alive," meaning that, at this moment, he is believed to be living. The perfect infinitive, by contrast, refers to

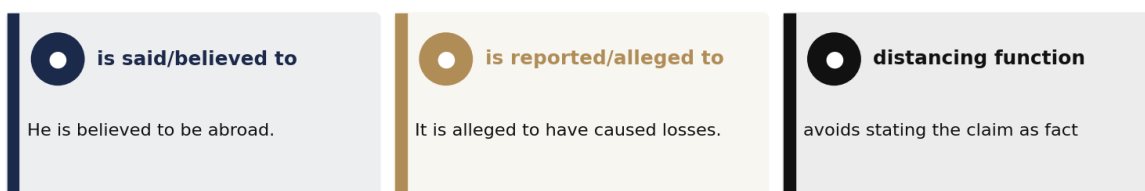
something that is understood to have happened, or to have been true, before the time of reporting, as in "He is thought to have died," meaning the death is presumed to have already occurred. This same present/perfect distinction extends to passive infinitives describing events done to the subject, such as "The money is believed to have been hidden" (an action completed in the past) versus "The money is believed to be hidden" (a state assumed to hold now). Mastering this distinction allows C1-level writers to report claims with precision about both the source's uncertainty and the timing of the event being described, distancing themselves from a proposition while still situating it correctly in time.

Figure 5

1. Sentence structure



2. Forms and examples



Reference Table: Reporting and Distancing Structures

It is said that + clause	Subject + is said to (have) + infinitive	It is said that Cooper jumped. / Cooper is said to have jumped.
It is believed that + clause	Subject + is believed to (have) + infinitive	It is believed that the money is hidden. / The money is believed to be hidden.
It is reported that + clause	Subject + is reported to (have) + infinitive	It is reported that the suspect confessed. / The suspect is reported to have confessed.
It is thought that + clause	Subject + is thought to (have) + infinitive	It is thought that he died in the fall. / He is thought to have died in the fall.
It is known that + clause	Subject + is known to (have) + infinitive	It is known that he trained as a paratrooper. / He is known to have trained as a paratrooper.

Examples

1. Cooper is said to have jumped from the plane during a violent rainstorm over Washington state.
2. Some of the ransom money is believed to have been carried downstream by the current of the Columbia River.
3. Richard McCoy is thought to have been responsible for a strikingly similar hijacking the following year.
4. Kenneth Christiansen is alleged to have confessed to his family shortly before his death.
5. The tie left behind on the plane is reported to have yielded no usable DNA evidence.
6. Cooper is known to have handled the parachutes with considerable, and telling, expertise.

English Usage

Learn and practice these useful expressions.

- It is said that...
reports a claim without vouching for it
- Rumour has it that...
introduces unverified gossip or hearsay
- Allegedly, ...
distances the speaker from an unproven claim
- According to unconfirmed reports, ...
attributes information to unnamed sources
- There are those who claim that...
reports a disputed view neutrally
- It remains to be seen whether...
flags an unresolved, unverified question
- So the legend goes, ...
introduces a widely repeated but unproven tale
- Purportedly, ...
marks information as reported rather than confirmed

Sample Dialogue

A: Have you read the piece on the so-called "cursed manuscript"? It is said that the previous owner vanished without a trace.

B: I saw it. Rumour has it that he simply moved abroad, but nobody has ever confirmed that.

A: Allegedly, the manuscript itself contains a coded warning, though the translation has never been verified.

B: According to unconfirmed reports, at least three scholars have tried to decode it and given up.

A: There are those who claim that the whole thing is an elaborate hoax cooked up by a rare-book dealer.

B: Perhaps, but it remains to be seen whether the carbon dating the museum commissioned will settle the matter one way or the other.

A: So the legend goes, anyone who reads the final page aloud meets with misfortune within a year.

B: That sounds like pure embellishment to me. Purportedly, similar stories circulate about half the manuscripts in that archive.

A: True, but the journalist did track down a descendant of the original owner.

B: And what did she say?

A: She wouldn't confirm or deny anything, which only fuelled more speculation.

B: Well, until someone produces solid evidence, I'd treat the whole affair with a healthy dose of scepticism.

Practice

Choose the best expression for each situation.

1. Which phrase would you use to introduce a claim you cannot verify, without stating it as fact?

- A) It is said that...
- B) It is a fact that...
- C) I am certain that...
- D) It is proven that...

2. "____, the treasure was buried on the island by pirates fleeing capture." Which phrase best shows that this is a widely repeated legend rather than a confirmed fact?

- A) It has been proven that
- B) So the legend goes,
- C) The evidence confirms that
- D) It is a documented fact that

3. Choose the phrase that most clearly attributes information to unnamed sources rather than to a confirmed authority.

- A) The court has ruled that
- B) Scientists have proven that
- C) According to unconfirmed reports,
- D) The official records show that

4. Which sentence correctly uses a distancing structure to report an unproven accusation?

- A) He was convicted of embezzling the funds.
- B) He definitely embezzled the funds.
- C) He embezzled the funds, as everyone agrees.
- D) He allegedly embezzled the funds, though no charges have been filed.

5. "____ whether the letters are genuine or a later forgery." Which phrase best completes this sentence about an unresolved question?

- A) It remains to be seen
- B) There is no doubt
- C) Everyone agrees
- D) It has already been confirmed

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. "It is said that Cooper jumped from the plane." Which sentence means the same?

- A) Cooper is said to have jumped from the plane.
- B) Cooper says he jumped from the plane.
- C) Cooper is saying to jump from the plane.
- D) Cooper said that he is jumping from the plane.

2. Choose the correct reporting structure: "People believe that the money is still hidden somewhere in the forest."

- A) The money believes to be still hidden in the forest.
- B) The money is believed to be still hidden in the forest.
- C) The money is believed to have hidden in the forest.
- D) The money believed to be hidden in the forest.

3. "It is reported that the suspect confessed before his death." Rewrite using a passive reporting structure.

- A) The suspect is reporting to have confessed before his death.
- B) The suspect reports to have confessed before his death.
- C) The suspect is reported to have confessed before his death.
- D) The suspect was reported confessing before his death.

4. Which sentence correctly uses the perfect infinitive to refer to a completed past action?

- A) He is thought to die in the crash.
- B) He is thought to be dying in the crash.
- C) He is thought to dying in the crash.
- D) He is thought to have died in the crash.

5. "It is known that Cooper trained as a paratrooper." Choose the equivalent sentence.

- A) Cooper is known to have trained as a paratrooper.
- B) Cooper knows to have trained as a paratrooper.
- C) Cooper is knowing to train as a paratrooper.
- D) Cooper was known training as a paratrooper.

6. Which word best completes: "Investigators found the evidence entirely _____, unable to prove or disprove the theory."

- A) conclusive
- B) inconclusive
- C) corroborated
- D) fabricated

7. According to airline records, the hijacker _____ a false name.

- A) is said to used
- B) is said using
- C) is said to have used

D) said to use

8. Which sentence is grammatically correct?

- A) The money is said to being found in the river.
- B) The money is said found in the river.
- C) The money say to have been found in the river.
- D) The money is said to have been found in the river.

9. Choose the sentence that correctly distances the speaker from an unverified claim.

- A) He is alleged to have confessed on his deathbed.
- B) He allegedly confesses on his deathbed, they say.
- C) He is alleging to confess on his deathbed.
- D) He alleged to have confessed on his deathbed himself.

10. "It is believed that she survived the fall." Which is the correct passive reporting form?

- A) She believed to survive the fall.
- B) She is believed to have survived the fall.
- C) She is believing to have survived the fall.
- D) She is believed surviving the fall.

11. Which sentence uses the present, not perfect, infinitive correctly to describe a current state?

- A) The suspect is thought to have be guilty.
- B) The suspect is thought having been guilty.
- C) The suspect is thought to be guilty.
- D) The suspect is thought to having guilty.

12. Choose the best synonym for "elusive" as used in investigative journalism.

- A) easily identified
- B) openly cooperative
- C) financially motivated
- D) difficult to track down

13. "People think that the parachute was defective." Choose the reporting structure equivalent.

- A) The parachute is thought to have been defective.
- B) The parachute thinks to be defective.
- C) The parachute is thinking to have defective.
- D) The parachute was thought defective to be.

14. Which sentence best distances the writer from a rumour, without asserting it as fact?

- A) The suspect definitely died in the forest.
- B) The suspect is rumoured to have died in the forest.
- C) The suspect died in the forest; everyone knows it.
- D) The suspect, the forest killed him.

15. Choose the grammatically correct sentence.

- A) He is know to have trained as a skydiver.
- B) He is known having trained as a skydiver.
- C) He is known to have trained as a skydiver.
- D) He known to have trained as a skydiver.

16. Which word means "a strong desire or curiosity about something unattainable"?

- A) inconclusive
- B) meticulous
- C) resilient
- D) tantalising

17. "It is understood that the case remains open." Choose the equivalent reporting structure.

- A) The case is understood to remain open.
- B) The case understands to remain open.
- C) The case is understanding to have remained open.
- D) The case understood to be remaining open.

18. Which sentence correctly reports an action completed before the present, using a passive reporting verb?

- A) The money is reported to disappear without a trace.
- B) The money is reported to have disappeared without a trace.
- C) The money reports to have disappeared without a trace.
- D) The money is reporting to disappear without a trace.

19. Select the sentence with a grammatical error.

- A) He is said to have vanished into the wilderness.
- B) The tie is believed to have been left behind deliberately.
- C) He is said to vanished into the wilderness.
- D) The case is thought to have reached a dead end.

20. Choose the best definition of "corroborate."

- A) to invent a story with no basis
- B) to reject as false
- C) to remain silent about
- D) to support or confirm with evidence

21. "It is claimed that he lived under a false identity for decades." Choose the equivalent.

- A) He is claimed to have lived under a false identity for decades.
- B) He claims to living under a false identity for decades.
- C) He is claiming to have lived under a false identity for decades.
- D) He was claimed living under a false identity for decades.

22. Which sentence correctly uses a reporting structure in the present tense, describing an ongoing state rather than a completed action?

- A) The suspect is said to have be alive today.
- B) The suspect is said to be alive today.
- C) The suspect is saying to be alive today.
- D) The suspect said to being alive today.

23. Choose the sentence that best expresses journalistic distancing from an unverified claim.

- A) The witness definitely saw him jump.
- B) Everyone agrees the witness saw him jump.
- C) The witness is reported to have seen him jump.
- D) The witness, of course, saw him jump.

24. Which word best fits: "Despite decades of investigation, the suspect's true identity remains an utter _____."

- A) certainty
- B) confirmation
- C) conclusion
- D) enigma

25. Choose the correct transformation: "It is said that the hijacker parachuted into a storm."

- A) The hijacker is said to have parachuted into a storm.
- B) The hijacker says to parachute into a storm.
- C) The hijacker is saying to have parachuted into a storm.
- D) The hijacker said to parachute into a storm himself.

UNIT 6

In Other Words...

Objective (CEFR C1): to understand and use expressions related to analyzing the shift from a linear economy toward circular and regenerative production models, and to express ideas fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions, using language flexibly and effectively for social, academic, and professional purposes.

Reading: From Waste to Resource: The Emergence of the Circular Economy

For much of the past two centuries, industrial production has followed a linear model: the extraction of raw materials, the manufacture of goods, the consumption of those goods by end users, and, ultimately, their disposal. This "take-make-dispose" approach fuelled unprecedented economic growth throughout the industrial era, underpinning the emergence of mass production, the expansion of global trade, and a dramatic improvement in material living standards across much of the world. Yet its long-term viability is now under serious question. The depletion of finite resources, the accumulation of waste in landfills and oceans, and the degradation of ecosystems have all intensified alarm among scientists, policymakers, and the general public alike. The publication of numerous studies documenting the acceleration of biodiversity loss and the intensification of climate disruption has added further urgency to these concerns. In response to these mounting pressures, a growing number of governments, businesses, and researchers are advocating for a transition toward what has come to be known as the circular economy — a model in which the reduction of waste, the extension of product lifespans, and the continual reuse of materials replace the wasteful patterns of the past.

At its core, the circular economy rests on three interlocking principles: the elimination of waste and pollution by design, the circulation of products and materials at their highest value, and the regeneration of natural systems. The first principle demands a fundamental redesign of products from the earliest stages of development, so that durability, reparability, and eventual disassembly are built in rather than treated as afterthoughts. The second principle calls for the recovery, refurbishment, and remanufacturing of components once a product reaches the end of its initial use, thereby postponing — sometimes indefinitely — the moment of final disposal. The third principle recognises that genuine sustainability cannot be achieved through efficiency alone; it also requires active restoration of the soil, water, and biodiversity that industrial activity has depleted. Taken together, these principles amount to a wholesale reconceptualization of the relationship between production, consumption, and the natural environment, one in which the generation of value is decoupled from the depletion of resources.

The economic case for this transformation is increasingly persuasive. Proponents argue that the adoption of circular practices could generate substantial cost savings through the reduction of raw-material purchases, while simultaneously opening new revenue streams through the resale, leasing, and refurbishment of goods. The creation of remanufacturing industries, for instance, has already produced thousands of jobs in sectors ranging from electronics to automotive parts, and this expansion is expected to continue as demand for repaired and refurbished products grows. Furthermore, the improvement of resource efficiency reduces

exposure to the volatility of commodity markets, offering firms a measure of protection against price fluctuations that have historically undermined profitability. Analysts increasingly frame the shift not as a cost to be endured but as an investment whose returns — in resilience, reputation, and long-term competitiveness — justify the initial outlay. The textile industry offers a particularly instructive illustration: the introduction of take-back schemes and the expansion of fibre-recycling technologies have enabled several major clothing manufacturers to reduce their dependence on virgin cotton and synthetic inputs, generating both environmental benefits and measurable improvements in supply-chain stability.

Nevertheless, the implementation of circular practices at scale faces substantial obstacles. Chief among these is the persistence of planned obsolescence, a design philosophy in which the deliberate shortening of a product's functional life encourages repeated purchases. The dismantling of this entrenched practice requires not only a change in corporate incentives but also a shift in consumer expectations, since many buyers still equate frequent replacement with modernity and status. A second obstacle is the fragmentation of supply chains: the recovery of materials for reuse is often complicated by the sheer complexity of modern products, which may contain dozens of components sourced from different countries and bonded together in ways that resist easy separation. The absence of standardised labelling further complicates the sorting and recycling of materials, particularly plastics, whose chemical diversity makes uniform processing difficult. A third obstacle, less frequently discussed, is the limited availability of reliable data on material flows; without accurate measurement of what enters and leaves the economy, the assessment of progress toward circularity remains inherently imprecise, and the identification of the most promising interventions is correspondingly more difficult.

The role of regulation in overcoming these barriers cannot be overstated. Several governments have introduced extended producer responsibility schemes, under which manufacturers bear financial responsibility for the collection and treatment of their products at the end of their life. The intention behind such measures is the internalisation of environmental costs that would otherwise be absorbed by the public, thereby incentivising the redesign of products for easier disassembly and recycling. Some jurisdictions have gone further, mandating minimum levels of recycled content in packaging or imposing taxes on the incineration and landfilling of waste. Critics of these interventions warn of the risk of excessive bureaucracy and the imposition of compliance costs that smaller firms may struggle to absorb, yet the evidence increasingly suggests that well-designed regulation accelerates rather than hinders innovation, by providing the certainty that businesses need to justify long-term investment. The harmonisation of standards across national borders, moreover, would substantially ease the compliance burden faced by firms operating in multiple markets, and its absence remains a persistent source of inefficiency in international trade.

Equally significant is the cultivation of public awareness. The success of any circular initiative ultimately depends on the willingness of consumers to embrace repair, resale, and sharing rather than immediate replacement. Educational campaigns, the proliferation of repair cafes, and the emergence of online platforms for the exchange of second-hand goods have all contributed to a gradual shift in attitudes, particularly among younger generations who display heightened sensitivity to questions of sustainability. Nonetheless, the persistence of convenience culture — the expectation of rapid, low-cost access to new goods — continues to act as a countervailing force, and the reconciliation of these competing impulses

remains an unresolved challenge. The provision of clear, comparable information about a product's durability and reparability at the point of sale has been proposed as one means of narrowing the gap between stated environmental preferences and actual purchasing behaviour, though the effectiveness of such disclosure requirements remains a subject of ongoing debate among researchers.

The involvement of multiple stakeholders — governments, corporations, civil-society organisations, and consumers — is therefore indispensable to the advancement of the circular economy. Collaboration across sectors allows for the sharing of expertise, the pooling of investment, and the establishment of common standards that no single actor could achieve in isolation. Some economists caution against excessive optimism, noting that the scale of transformation required is immense and that the transition, if pursued without careful attention to social equity, could generate new forms of exclusion, particularly for workers whose livelihoods depend on the continuation of the linear model. The retraining of such workers, alongside the provision of adequate social protection during the period of adjustment, is therefore essential to ensuring that the benefits of circularity are broadly and fairly distributed. The establishment of dedicated funding mechanisms to support this transition, financed in part through the reallocation of subsidies currently directed toward extractive industries, has been proposed by several international bodies as a means of easing the social costs of adjustment while accelerating the pace of reform.

The measurement of progress toward circularity presents its own set of difficulties, and the development of robust indicators has therefore become a priority for researchers and international organisations alike. Traditional metrics of economic performance, such as gross domestic product, capture the expansion of output but offer little insight into the depletion of natural capital or the accumulation of waste that frequently accompanies growth under the linear model. The formulation of alternative indicators — measures of material footprint, resource productivity, and the circularity of national economies — has therefore attracted considerable attention, though the standardisation of such measures across jurisdictions remains incomplete. Without the widespread adoption of comparable metrics, the verification of claimed progress becomes difficult, and the risk of exaggeration or superficial rebranding, sometimes described as "greenwashing," increases correspondingly. The establishment of independent verification bodies, empowered to audit corporate claims regarding the reuse, recycling, and recovery of materials, has consequently been advocated as a necessary complement to voluntary corporate commitments, lending credibility to an area of reporting that has historically been susceptible to inconsistency and self-interested interpretation.

Looking ahead, the accumulation of scientific evidence regarding resource scarcity, combined with growing recognition of the economic opportunities inherent in circular models, suggests that the momentum behind this transition is unlikely to dissipate. The achievement of a fully circular economy will not occur overnight; rather, it will require the sustained commitment of policymakers, the continued innovation of engineers and designers, and the gradual transformation of consumer habits. What is increasingly clear, however, is that the perpetuation of a purely linear model is neither economically nor environmentally sustainable in the long run. The reduction of waste, the extension of product life, and the restoration of natural systems are no longer peripheral concerns but central pillars of a viable economic future — one in which prosperity is decoupled, at last, from the relentless extraction and disposal that defined the industrial age. The realisation

of this vision will demand patience, coordination, and a willingness on the part of every stakeholder to reconsider assumptions about growth, consumption, and value that have gone largely unexamined for generations.

Reading Comprehension – True or False

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

1. The linear economic model described in the text is based on extraction, manufacture, consumption, and disposal. ____ (T / F)
2. According to the text, planned obsolescence encourages consumers to keep their products for longer. ____ (T / F)
3. Extended producer responsibility schemes make manufacturers financially responsible for their products at the end of their life. ____ (T / F)
4. The text claims that regulation always hinders innovation in the circular economy. ____ (T / F)
5. The circular economy's third principle involves the regeneration of natural systems such as soil and water. ____ (T / F)

Reading Comprehension – Multiple Choice

Read each question and choose the correct answer.

1. **According to the text, what are the three core principles of the circular economy?**
 - A) Elimination of waste, circulation of materials, and regeneration of natural systems
 - B) Extraction, production, and disposal
 - C) Recycling, taxation, and consumer education
 - D) Manufacturing, marketing, and distribution
2. **What does the text identify as a major obstacle to implementing circular practices?**
 - A) Excessive government subsidies
 - B) A shortage of raw materials
 - C) The persistence of planned obsolescence
 - D) Overregulation of consumer markets
3. **What is the purpose of extended producer responsibility schemes?**
 - A) To ban the sale of second-hand goods
 - B) To increase the export of recycled materials
 - C) To reduce consumer prices
 - D) To make manufacturers financially responsible for the end-of-life treatment of their products
4. **According to the text, what effect does convenience culture have on the circular economy?**
 - A) It eliminates the need for public awareness campaigns
 - B) It accelerates the adoption of repair and resale
 - C) It acts as a countervailing force against sustainable habits
 - D) It has no measurable effect on consumer behavior

5. What concern do some economists raise about the transition to a circular economy?

- A) That it will increase the volatility of commodity markets
- B) That it could generate new forms of exclusion for workers in linear-model industries
- C) That it will make products more difficult to disassemble
- D) That it will be too inexpensive to implement

Key Vocabulary

High-frequency and advanced words and expressions (Oxford 3000/5000, New General Service List, Academic Word List and Brown Corpus), filtered by topic relevance and C1 level. Meanings are in the Dictionary at the end of the book.

1–10	11–20	21–30	31–40
1. circular economy	11. upcycling	21. consumption pattern	31. scarcity
2. resource depletion	12. downcycling	22. finite resources	32. degradation
3. closed-loop system	13. biodegradable	23. value retention	33. proliferation
4. planned obsolescence	14. carbon footprint	24. policy incentive	34. mitigate
5. extended producer responsibility	15. supply chain	25. market mechanism	35. underpin
6. industrial symbiosis	16. regenerative design	26. ecological footprint	36. mounting evidence
7. decoupling	17. material recovery	27. resource efficiency	37. stakeholder
8. externality	18. throwaway culture	28. end-of-life product	38. paradigm shift
9. life-cycle assessment	19. waste stream	29. take-back scheme	39. unsustainable
10. remanufacturing	20. sustainability	30. byproduct	40. viable alternative

Vocabulary Practice

Choose the correct option to complete each sentence.

1. In the text, "depletion" (paragraph 1) most nearly means:

- A) the gradual exhaustion or reduction of a resource
- B) the sudden increase in demand
- C) the improvement of quality
- D) the transportation of goods

2. "Degradation" (paragraph 1) most nearly means:

- A) improvement
- B) deterioration or decline in condition
- C) expansion
- D) classification

3. "Remanufacturing" (paragraph 2) refers to:

- A) the initial design of a new product
- B) the marketing of a used product
- C) the disposal of a product in a landfill
- D) the process of rebuilding a product from recovered components

4. "Obsolescence" (paragraph 4) refers to:

- A) the state of being outdated or no longer functional
- B) the process of manufacturing
- C) the act of recycling
- D) the improvement of durability

5. "Fragmentation" (paragraph 4, of supply chains) means:

- A) unification into a single system
- B) division into many separate, disconnected parts
- C) rapid growth
- D) careful planning

6. "Volatility" (paragraph 3, of commodity markets) most nearly means:

- A) stability
- B) profitability
- C) regulation
- D) unpredictable and rapid change

7. "Proliferation" (paragraph 6, of repair cafes) means:

- A) a rapid increase in number
- B) a gradual decline
- C) a legal restriction
- D) a financial investment

8. A "countervailing" force (paragraph 6) is one that:

- A) supports and reinforces another force
- B) has no effect at all
- C) opposes or offsets another force
- D) eliminates all opposition

9. "Indispensable" (paragraph 7) means:

- A) optional
- B) temporary
- C) absolutely necessary
- D) illegal

10. To be "decoupled" (final paragraph) from something means to be:

- A) closely linked to it

- B) separated or disconnected from it
- C) dependent upon it
- D) identical to it

Grammar Focus: Nominalization and Formal/Academic Register

Nominalization is the process of converting a verb or an adjective into a noun, typically through the addition of a suffix such as -tion, -ment, -ance, -ness, or -ity. Verbs like "decide," "implement," and "reduce" become the nouns "decision," "implementation," and "reduction"; adjectives like "aware," "necessary," and "efficient" become "awareness," "necessity," and "efficiency." This transformation allows a writer to package an entire action or quality into a single noun phrase, which can then function as the subject or object of a sentence. Instead of writing "They decided to reduce emissions," a formal writer might write "Their decision to reduce emissions..." or, taken further, "The reduction of emissions was decided upon after lengthy deliberation." The effect is a shift from a verb-centred, agent-focused style — typical of everyday spoken English — to a noun-centred, information-dense style strongly associated with academic writing, official reports, and scientific discourse.

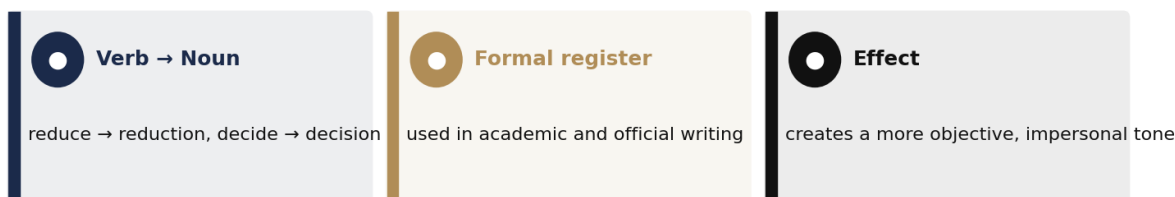
The stylistic consequences of this shift are significant. Nominalized structures allow writers to compress complex processes into compact noun phrases, which can then be modified, quantified, and embedded within longer sentences, producing the dense, layered syntax typical of C1-level academic prose. They also tend to remove the human agent from the sentence, lending the text a more impersonal, objective tone appropriate for formal contexts in which the focus should fall on processes and outcomes rather than on who performed them. Compare the informal "Scientists discovered that pollution damages ecosystems" with the formal "The discovery that pollution causes damage to ecosystems..." — the second version foregrounds the finding itself rather than the people who made it. However, overuse of nominalization can also make writing needlessly abstract or difficult to follow; skilled academic writers therefore balance nominalized structures with clear verbs so that the underlying action of the sentence remains traceable.

Figure 6

1. Sentence structure



2. Forms and examples



Reference Table: Nominalization for Academic Register

Verb/Adjective	Noun form	Example in a formal sentence
reduce	reduction	The reduction of carbon emissions is a policy priority.
implement	implementation	The implementation of the new law faced strong opposition.
aware	awareness	Public awareness of the issue has increased significantly.
necessary	necessity	The necessity of reform is now widely acknowledged.
efficient	efficiency	Improvements in efficiency have lowered production costs.

Examples

1. Informal: Companies need to reduce waste if they want to survive. Formal: The reduction of waste is essential to the survival of companies.
2. Informal: They decided to implement new recycling regulations. Formal: Their decision to implement new recycling regulations marked a turning point.
3. Informal: It is necessary to reduce plastic consumption. Formal: The reduction of plastic consumption is a necessity.
4. Informal: Consumers are becoming more aware of sustainability issues. Formal: There has been a growing awareness of sustainability issues among consumers.
5. Informal: The government regulated the recycling industry more strictly. Formal: The government introduced stricter regulation of the recycling industry.
6. Informal: Engineers innovated new ways to remanufacture products. Formal: The innovation of new remanufacturing methods has transformed the industry.

English Usage

Learn and practice these useful expressions.

- It is widely acknowledged that...
introducing a broadly accepted claim in formal writing
- The findings indicate/suggest that...
reporting research results objectively
- A case in point is...
introducing a specific illustrative example
- This raises the question of whether...
signalling an unresolved issue for discussion
- With regard to..., it should be noted that...
shifting topic while adding a qualifying remark
- The data presented above underscore...
emphasizing the significance of evidence just given
- It could be argued that..., however...
presenting a counterpoint before refuting it
- In light of these findings, it is recommended that...
moving from evidence to a formal recommendation

Sample Dialogue

A: Before the meeting, I wanted to run through the report's key section with you.

B: Of course. Which part are you least confident about?

A: The conclusion. It is widely acknowledged that circular models reduce landfill dependency, but I'm not sure the committee will accept that without more evidence.

B: The findings indicate that resource recovery rates rose by thirty percent in the pilot regions, so the data is fairly robust.

A: True. A case in point is the Netherlands' textile take-back scheme, which cut raw material demand significantly.

B: That's a strong example. This raises the question of whether smaller economies could replicate the same infrastructure, though.

A: Exactly my concern. With regard to funding, it should be noted that most pilot programmes relied on public-private partnerships.

B: The data presented above underscore the need for coordinated policy, not just isolated corporate initiatives.

A: It could be argued that voluntary corporate action is sufficient, however, the scale of the waste problem suggests otherwise.

B: Agreed. In light of these findings, it is recommended that we propose a phased regulatory framework in the closing slide.

A: I'll draft that recommendation tonight and send it for your review before the presentation.

B: Perfect. Let's also make sure the register stays formal throughout; the board expects an academic tone.

Practice

Choose the best expression for each situation.

1. Which phrase is most appropriate for introducing a widely accepted claim in an academic report?

- A) Everybody knows that...
- B) It is widely acknowledged that...
- C) I guess that...
- D) People say that...

2. A researcher wants to report objective results from a study. Which phrase fits best?

- A) I feel that the results were good.
- B) It's obvious that...
- C) The findings indicate that...
- D) Honestly, the results were fine.

3. Which phrase would best introduce a specific illustrative example in a formal presentation?

- A) Like, for example...
- B) You know, take this...
- C) So, anyway...
- D) A case in point is...

4. Which expression signals an unresolved issue that merits further discussion?

- A) This raises the question of whether...
- B) Who cares whether...
- C) Whatever, maybe...
- D) It doesn't matter if...

5. Which phrase correctly moves from presenting evidence to making a formal recommendation?

- A) So yeah, we should probably...
- B) Just do whatever...
- C) I think maybe we could...
- D) In light of these findings, it is recommended 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. Choose the correct noun form of "implement":

- A) implementation
- B) implement
- C) implementing
- D) implemental

2. Choose the correct noun form of "necessary":

- A) necessary
- B) necessity
- C) necessarily
- D) necessitous

3. Choose the correct noun form of "aware":

- A) awarely
- B) awarity
- C) awareness
- D) awared

4. Choose the correct noun form of "efficient":

- A) efficient
- B) efficiently
- C) effience
- D) efficiency

5. Choose the correct noun form of "significant":

- A) signifiance
- B) significant
- C) significantly
- D) significancy

6. Choose the correct noun form of "reduce":

- A) reducement
- B) reduction
- C) reducing
- D) reductive

7. Choose the correct noun form of "decide":

- A) decidement
- B) deciding
- C) decision
- D) decisive

8. Choose the correct noun form of "sustainable":

- A) sustainably
- B) sustainable
- C) sustaining
- D) sustainability

9. Choose the correct noun form of "collaborate":

- A) collaboration
- B) collaborative
- C) collaborating
- D) collaborator

10. Choose the correct noun form of "resilient":

- A) resiliently
- B) resilience
- C) resilient
- D) resiliential

11. "They implemented the policy quickly." Choose the formal, nominalized equivalent:

- A) They quickly policy implemented.
- B) The policy was quickly implementing by them.
- C) Their implementation of the policy was rapid.
- D) Implementing the policy they were quick.

12. "It is important to conserve energy." Choose the formal, nominalized equivalent:

- A) Conserving energy it is important.
- B) It important is to conserve energy.
- C) Energy conservation important is.
- D) The conservation of energy is important.

13. "The scientists discovered a new method." Choose the formal, nominalized equivalent:

- A) The scientists' discovery of a new method attracted attention.
- B) The scientists discover new method attracted.
- C) A new method the scientists discovering.
- D) Discovery scientists new method attracted.

14. "Prices fluctuate constantly." Choose the formal, nominalized equivalent:

- A) Prices constant fluctuating.
- B) The constant fluctuation of prices concerns economists.
- C) Fluctuate prices do constantly.
- D) Constantly prices are fluctuate.

15. "The city expanded rapidly." Choose the formal, nominalized equivalent:

- A) The city rapid expanding.
- B) Rapidly the city expand.
- C) The rapid expansion of the city surprised planners.
- D) Expansion rapid city the.

16. Which sentence demonstrates correct nominalization?

- A) They recycle more plastic now.
- B) Plastic they recycle more now.

- C) More plastic recycle they now.
- D) The recycling of plastic has increased significantly.

17. Which of the following sentences is written in INFORMAL, verbal style rather than formal nominalized style?

- A) They decided to cut costs.
- B) The reduction of costs was decided upon.
- C) Their decision to reduce costs followed months of deliberation.
- D) The cost reduction reflected careful deliberation.

18. Choose the correct noun form of "responsible":

- A) responsibly
- B) responsibility
- C) responsive
- D) responsibleness

19. Choose the correct noun form of "accumulate":

- A) accumulative
- B) accumulating
- C) accumulation
- D) accumulator

20. Choose the correct noun form of "generate":

- A) generative
- B) generating
- C) generator
- D) generation

21. Choose the correct noun form of "degrade":

- A) degradation
- B) degrading
- C) degradable
- D) degrader

22. Choose the correct noun form of "regulate":

- A) regulator
- B) regulation
- C) regulating
- D) regulative

23. In academic writing, "obsolescence" most nearly means:

- A) improvement in design
- B) increase in price
- C) the state of being outdated or no longer used

D) a type of recycling process

24. In academic writing, "depletion" most nearly means:

- A) an increase in supply
- B) a careful restoration
- C) an unexpected discovery
- D) the gradual exhaustion of a resource

25. "Companies must innovate constantly." Choose the formal, nominalized equivalent:

- A) Continual innovation is essential for companies.
- B) Companies constant innovate must.
- C) Innovate companies must constantly do.
- D) Constantly companies must be innovating.

UNIT 7

Neither Do I

Objective (CEFR C1): to understand and use expressions related to expressing agreement, contrast, and shared experience in conversation, and to express ideas fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions, using language flexibly and effectively for social, academic, and professional purposes.

Reading: Two Paths, One Table

Maya had not seen Julian in fifteen years, not since their graduation ceremony, when both of them had stood at the threshold of adulthood with wildly different plans and roughly the same amount of certainty about none of them working out. Now, seated across from each other at a corner table in a restaurant neither of them would have chosen alone, they were discovering how strange it is to measure a friendship against the trajectory two lives actually take.

"I still can't get over the fact that you left law," Maya said, twirling her fork. "I was convinced you'd be a partner by thirty."

"So was I," Julian admitted, laughing. "So was everyone, actually. My parents certainly thought so. But somewhere around year four, I realised I didn't want the life that came with the title, and once I saw that clearly, I couldn't unsee it."

"I know exactly what you mean. I felt the same way about advertising. Everyone assumed I'd stay - I was good at it, I was well paid, and I hated almost every minute of it. My sister still doesn't believe me when I say that."

"Neither does mine, when I tell her the same thing about litigation," Julian said. "She thinks I'm being falsely modest. I'm not. I genuinely dreaded most mornings."

"So did I. God, so did I." Maya shook her head. "I used to lie in bed on Sunday nights doing the arithmetic of how many hours until Monday, as though counting could postpone it."

"I did exactly that too. Every single Sunday, without fail."

There was a pause while the waiter refilled their glasses, and Maya used the interruption to look at her old friend properly for the first time since they'd sat down. He seemed lighter than she remembered, less coiled, though she couldn't have said precisely what had changed beyond the obvious things - the grey at his temples, the unassuming cotton shirt in place of the tailored suits she associated with him.

"So what convinced you to actually quit?" she asked. "Because thinking about quitting and quitting are two very different exercises, and most people never manage the second one."

"Complacency, mostly. Or rather, the fear of it. I watched two senior partners at my firm coast through their last decade doing work they'd stopped believing in, and I thought: I refuse to let that happen to me. So I gave

notice, retrained as a landscape architect, and spent eighteen months broke and genuinely happy for the first time in years."

"I did something almost identical, though it took me longer to admit why. I told myself for two years that I was simply 'between opportunities.' Then a friend, quite bluntly, asked whether I actually wanted a different job in the same field or a different life altogether. I hadn't considered the second option seriously until she asked."

"And which was it?"

"The second one, obviously, or I wouldn't be running a pottery studio now instead of managing a client account." Maya smiled, a little wistful. "I don't regret the advertising years entirely - they taught me things I still use - but I wouldn't go back, not for twice the salary."

"Neither would I. Not for three times mine." Julian leaned back. "Do you ever wonder, though, whether we were unusually lucky, or whether more people could do this if they weren't so afraid?"

"I think so, honestly. Fear of instability keeps a lot of people in jobs that are slowly hollowing them out. I don't say that to sound smug - I was terrified too, for months. But once the first client paid me for a set of bowls I'd made with my own hands, something shifted. I stopped being purely pragmatic about money and started being pragmatic about time instead."

"That's a good way of putting it. I hope you don't mind me stealing that line for my own retellings."

"Steal away. Everyone steals from everyone at this table anyway - that's basically what dinner is."

They ordered a second bottle of wine, and the conversation drifted, as reunions do, into smaller and stranger corners of their lives: sleep, exercise, the idiosyncrasies of ageing bodies neither of them had expected quite so soon.

"I run every morning now," Julian said. "Before six. I never thought I'd become one of those people."

"So do I, actually - not quite as early as you, but close. It started as a way to manage stress after I left the agency, and now I can't function without it. My husband thinks it's slightly insane."

"Mine says the same about me. Though he's started joining me twice a week, so I suspect the insanity is contagious."

"Does he run the trails or the roads?"

"The trails, mostly. He says the road runners are missing something, though I've never fully understood what."

"I know exactly the ones he means," Maya said, laughing. "My neighbour is a road runner, and my other neighbour is a trail one, and the two of them have never once agreed on anything about the sport, despite otherwise being remarkably similar people."

"That tracks. I've noticed the same divide among my own running friends. It's practically tribal."

The waiter arrived with the main courses, offering a brief reprieve from the sheer volume of things they were trying to fit into a single evening, and the conversation swerved, as it inevitably does among people who spend all day tethered to screens, into complaints about technology.

"I deleted every social media app from my phone about a year ago," Maya said. "I thought I'd feel deprived. I didn't. If anything, I feel like I got several hours of my week back."

"So did I, more or less. I kept one, out of professional necessity, and even that I check twice a day now, at fixed times, like a chore rather than a compulsion."

"Does it actually work, limiting it like that?"

"Surprisingly well. My assistant thought I was being precious about it at first. She doesn't any more - she's started doing something similar herself."

"My studio manager did too, once she saw how much calmer I seemed by the end of a normal week without the constant pinging."

"It's strange how contagious a small discipline can be, once someone nearby actually commits to it."

"I know exactly what you mean. My husband used to roll his eyes at my nine o'clock phone curfew. Now he keeps one too, though he'd never admit I talked him into it."

"Neither would mine, probably, though I suspect he'd deny influencing anyone at all if you asked him directly."

They laughed, and Julian topped up both glasses before the conversation shifted again, this time toward money - specifically, toward the leap of walking away from a reliable salary for something as uncertain as a fledgling business.

"Were you frightened, financially, when you started the studio?" Julian asked.

"Terrified. We'd saved for two years specifically so that I could fail quietly for a while if I needed to. My husband was more confident about the whole venture than I was, if I'm honest."

"Mine was too, when I told him I wanted to retrain. He'd already worked out the sums before I'd even finished explaining the idea, which annoyed me slightly at the time, though I'm grateful for it now."

"That's exactly the kind of thing that would have annoyed me as well, and exactly the kind of thing I'd thank him for a year later."

"Precisely. Such is marriage, apparently - being quietly rescued by the very habits that irritate you most."

Maya laughed properly at that, the kind of laugh that seems to surprise the person producing it. "I'm going to steal that line too, along with the pragmatic one."

"Steal freely. I clearly can't stop you, and honestly, I wouldn't want to."

Later, over coffee, the tone shifted, briefly, into something more candid. Julian mentioned, without much preamble, that his marriage had nearly ended three years earlier, and that the process of nearly losing it, and then rebuilding it, had taught him more about resilience than any professional setback ever had.

"I went through something similar," Maya said quietly. "Not quite the same shape, but similar weight. I don't often tell people that part of the story."

"Nor do I, if I'm honest. It doesn't fit neatly into the version of my life I usually present at dinners like this."

"Mine doesn't either. But I'm glad you told me. It makes the rest of tonight feel less like a highlight reel and more like an actual conversation."

"So am I. I was half-expecting us to spend the whole evening comparing our best moments, the way people do at these things, and I would have found that exhausting."

"I would have too. Though I suspect we'd have both been too polite to admit it until dessert."

They both laughed, and for a moment the fifteen years between them collapsed into something almost negligible - not because nothing had changed, but because so much of what had changed turned out, unexpectedly, to rhyme.

"Do you think we'll actually keep in touch this time?" Maya asked as the bill arrived. "Or will this become one of those reunions people mention wistfully every few years without repeating?"

"I hope not - the second one, I mean. I'd like to think we're both a bit more deliberate now than we were at twenty-two."

"So would I. Deliberate enough, at least, to make an actual plan rather than a vague promise."

"Agreed. Same table, six months from now?"

"Same table. Same wine, if it's still on the menu."

"I'll drink to that," Julian said, raising his glass. "To slow discoveries, and to the strange comfort of finding out someone else made them too."

"Cheers to that," Maya replied. "Truly. Cheers."

Reading Comprehension – True or False

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

1. Maya and Julian had not seen each other in fifteen years. ____ (T / F)
2. Julian left his job as a lawyer to become an accountant. ____ (T / F)
3. Both Maya and Julian felt dread on Sunday nights before returning to their old jobs. ____ (T / F)
4. Julian's marriage ended permanently three years before the dinner. ____ (T / F)
5. Both friends now run regularly in the mornings. ____ (T / F)

Reading Comprehension – Multiple Choice

Read each question and choose the correct answer.

1. What did Maya and Julian both do before quitting their jobs?

- A) They lay awake on Sunday nights dreading Monday
- B) They complained about their salaries constantly
- C) They asked their bosses for promotions
- D) They took long vacations to think it over

2. Why did Julian finally decide to quit his job as a lawyer?

- A) He was fired unexpectedly
- B) He feared falling into complacency like senior colleagues
- C) His salary was cut
- D) His wife insisted he change careers

3. What does Maya do for work now?

- A) She manages advertising accounts
- B) She teaches landscape architecture
- C) She runs a pottery studio
- D) She works as a lawyer

4. What personal difficulty does Julian reveal over coffee?

- A) A serious illness
- B) A financial crisis
- C) That he lost a close friend
- D) That his marriage nearly ended

5. What do Maya and Julian agree to do at the end of the dinner?

- A) Meet again at the same restaurant in six months
- B) Never discuss their pasts again
- C) Go into business together
- D) Introduce their spouses immediately

Key Vocabulary

High-frequency and advanced words and expressions (Oxford 3000/5000, New General Service List, Academic Word List and Brown Corpus), filtered by topic relevance and C1 level. Meanings are in the Dictionary at the end of the book.

1–10	11–20	21–30	31–40
1. rapport	11. affinity	21. congruent	31. reconcile
2. candour	12. divergence	22. disparate	32. empirical
3. discern	13. convergence	23. antithesis	33. anecdotal

4. concur	14. empathy	24. counterpart	34. mutual
5. reciprocity	15. skepticism	25. parallel	35. kinship
6. nuance	16. conviction	26. juxtapose	36. solidarity
7. anecdote	17. ambivalence	27. corroborate	37. disparity
8. digression	18. deference	28. refute	38. temperament
9. camaraderie	19. discrepancy	29. contend	39. introspective
10. disposition	20. rapprochement	30. concede	40. validate

Vocabulary Practice

Choose the correct option to complete each sentence.

1. In the reading, "trajectory" most nearly means:

- A) a path or course of development over time
- B) a fixed salary
- C) a legal document
- D) a type of restaurant

2. "Complacency" refers to:

- A) a strong desire for change
- B) self-satisfaction that leads to a lack of effort or awareness
- C) a feeling of deep sadness
- D) financial instability

3. An "unassuming" person is one who:

- A) is arrogant and demanding
- B) constantly boasts about achievements
- C) is modest and not inclined to draw attention to oneself
- D) is highly aggressive in negotiations

4. "Wistful" best describes a feeling of:

- A) angry and frustrated
- B) purely joyful and excited
- C) completely indifferent
- D) gently nostalgic, tinged with longing or sadness

5. To be "candid" means to be:

- A) openly honest and direct, even about difficult topics
- B) evasive and secretive
- C) overly formal and distant
- D) confused and hesitant

6. "Resilience" is best defined as:

- A) the tendency to avoid all hardship
- B) the capacity to recover from difficulty and adapt to setbacks
- C) permanent indifference to emotion
- D) the ability to win every argument

7. Someone being "pragmatic" about money is being:

- A) reckless and impulsive
- B) obsessed with saving every cent
- C) practical, focused on what works rather than on ideals
- D) indifferent to financial matters

8. "Idiosyncrasies" are:

- A) shared traditions among a large group
- B) legal contracts
- C) financial losses
- D) particular habits or quirks distinctive to an individual

9. If something is "negligible," it is:

- A) so small as to be not worth considering
- B) extremely significant
- C) dangerous and threatening
- D) permanent and unchangeable

10. A "preamble" is:

- A) a final conclusion
- B) an introductory statement made before the main point
- C) a type of legal punishment
- D) a formal apology

Grammar Focus: Ellipsis and Substitution for Cohesion

In spoken and written English discourse, speakers routinely avoid repeating an entire verb phrase once it has already been established by the previous speaker, relying instead on ellipsis and substitution to keep exchanges economical and cohesive. The most common device for this is the agreement structure formed with *so* or *neither/nor* followed by an auxiliary verb and the subject, in inverted order: *So + auxiliary + subject* expresses agreement with an affirmative statement ("I enjoy running." "So do I."), while *Neither/Nor + auxiliary + subject* expresses agreement with a negative one ("I don't regret it." "Neither do I."). The auxiliary chosen must match the tense and person of the auxiliary (or the dummy auxiliary *do/does/did*) used in the original statement, and subject-auxiliary order is inverted, unlike in a normal affirmative clause. A related but distinct pattern uses *too* and *either* in non-inverted final position ("I did too." / "I didn't either.") to express the same agreement without inversion; both patterns are fully interchangeable at this level,

though the inverted so/neither forms are somewhat more common in spoken register and carry a slightly more emphatic, conversational tone.

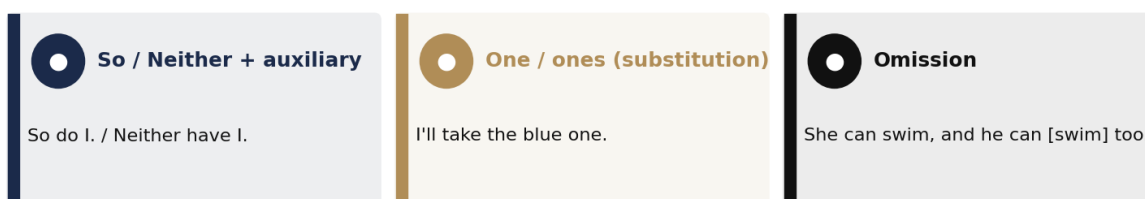
Ellipsis and substitution extend well beyond simple agreement. After verbs that report belief, hope, or supposition - think, hope, suppose, guess, believe, be afraid - English speakers frequently substitute an entire preceding clause with so (for an affirmative idea) or not (for a negative one), producing compact responses such as "I think so," "I hope not," and "I'm afraid so," rather than repeating the full proposition. Elsewhere, cohesion is achieved through nominal substitution: one and its plural ones replace a previously mentioned countable noun to avoid repeating it ("the red one," "the trail ones"), while such functions as a substitute for an entire quality, state, or predicate already introduced in the discourse, often carrying a slightly formal or intensifying flavour ("Such resilience is rare"). Mastery of these devices distinguishes genuinely fluent, cohesive discourse from writing or speech that merely repeats itself; recognising which device fits which grammatical context - verb agreement, clausal substitution, or nominal substitution - is therefore central to producing natural, C1-level English.

Figure 7

1. Sentence structure



2. Forms and examples



Reference Table: Ellipsis and Substitution for Cohesion

So + auxiliary + subject	Agrees with an affirmative statement, avoiding repetition of the verb phrase	"I quit my job." "So did I."
Neither/Nor + auxiliary + subject	Agrees with a negative statement, avoiding repetition of the verb phrase	"I don't regret it." "Neither do I."
Verb of opinion + so/not	Substitutes a whole clause after verbs like think, hope, suppose, guess	"Will they stay friends?" "I think so."

One/ones	Replaces a previously mentioned countable noun to avoid repeating it	"Which runner do you mean, the road one or the trail one?"
Such	Substitutes an entire quality, state, or predicate referred to earlier	"He showed real resilience; such strength surprised even him."

Examples

1. Julian quit law to escape complacency, and so did Maya, though neither of them admitted it for years.
2. "I hated my job." "So did I."
3. "I don't tell people about my marriage troubles." "Nor do I."
4. "Will you keep in touch this time?" "I hope so."
5. Maya's road-running neighbour and her trail-running one could never agree, though both were equally stubborn.
6. Julian rebuilt his marriage after a difficult year; such resilience, Maya realised, was rarer than either of them liked to admit.

English Usage

Learn and practice these useful expressions.

- I couldn't agree more
emphatic, wholehearted agreement
- I'd have to beg to differ
polished, courteous disagreement
- That's not quite how I see it
soft, partial disagreement
- There's something in what you say
conceding partial validity
- That resonates with me completely
strong personal agreement
- I see where you're coming from, but...
acknowledging a view before contrasting
- We're clearly on the same page
signalling shared understanding
- That's a fair point, though
qualified concession

Sample Dialogue

A: I've always thought remote work makes people more productive, not less.

B: I couldn't agree more, actually. So do I, and I used to think the opposite entirely.

A: Really? What changed your mind?

B: A colleague ran the numbers properly, and I'd have to beg to differ with my own old assumptions now.

A: That resonates with me completely. I read something similar just last year.

B: Did you? I hadn't seen that particular one, but I'm not surprised.

A: Mind you, I still think open-plan offices have their place.

B: There's something in what you say, though I'd argue the quiet ones - the small meeting rooms - matter more than people admit.

A: That's a fair point, though I'm not fully convinced yet.

B: Neither am I, if I'm honest. It depends enormously on the team.

A: We're clearly on the same page about that much, at least.

B: I think so too. Such nuance rarely gets discussed properly.

A: Do you think attitudes will keep shifting?

B: I hope so. Though I suspect some managers never will.

A: Neither will mine, probably.

B: Mine either, though he'd never admit it.

Practice

Choose the best expression for each situation.

1. Which phrase best expresses emphatic, wholehearted agreement?

- A) That's a fair point, though
- B) I couldn't agree more
- C) I'd have to beg to differ
- D) There's something in what you say

2. Which expression is a polished, courteous way of disagreeing?

- A) I couldn't agree more
- B) That resonates with me completely
- C) I'd have to beg to differ
- D) We're clearly on the same page

3. Which phrase concedes partial validity to someone else's view without fully agreeing?

- A) There's something in what you say
- B) I couldn't agree more
- C) That resonates with me completely
- D) I'd have to beg to differ

4. Complete the exchange naturally: "____, but I still think the risks outweigh the benefits."

- A) I couldn't agree more
- B) We're clearly on the same page
- C) That resonates with me completely
- D) That's a fair point, though

5. Which phrase signals that two speakers already share the same outlook, rather than just reaching agreement on one point?

- A) I'd have to beg to differ
- B) That resonates with me completely
- C) We're clearly on the same page
- D) There's something in what you say

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've never regretted leaving my job." "___ have I."

- A) Neither
- B) So
- C) Too
- D) Such

2. "I'm moving to the coast next year." "___ am I!"

- A) Neither
- B) So
- C) Too
- D) Either

3. "Do you think they'll still be friends in ten years?" "I ___ so."

- A) am
- B) wish
- C) think
- D) would

4. "She didn't enjoy the film, and ___."

- A) so didn't I
- B) I did too
- C) so did I
- D) neither did I

5. Choose the word closest in meaning to "trajectory" as used in the reading.

- A) course of development
- B) salary
- C) restaurant
- D) marriage

6. "I hated my old job." "___."

- A) Neither did I

- B) So did I
- C) So do I
- D) I do too

7. "He's not going to the reunion." " ____."

- A) So is she
- B) I hope so
- C) Neither is she
- D) So does she

8. "Which trainers do you mean - the red ____ or the blue ____?"

- A) one / one
- B) it / it
- C) some / some
- D) ones / ones

9. "I don't think they should get back together." "I hope ____."

- A) not
- B) so
- C) neither
- D) too

10. Choose the correct substitution: "My brother is a road runner, and my neighbour is a trail ____."

- A) it
- B) one
- C) so
- D) such

11. "I'm exhausted." " ____, actually. This week has been relentless."

- A) Neither am I
- B) So am I too
- C) So am I
- D) I am so

12. "He didn't tell anyone about the divorce." " ____."

- A) So didn't she
- B) I did too
- C) So did she
- D) Nor did she

13. "Complacency," as used in the reading, refers to:

- A) self-satisfaction that prevents further effort
- B) financial ruin
- C) romantic nostalgia

D) physical exhaustion

14. "I would never quit without a plan." " ____."

- A) So would I
- B) Neither would I
- C) I would too
- D) So did I

15. "I can't stand small talk at parties." " ____."

- A) So can I
- B) I can too
- C) Neither can I
- D) Neither can't I

16. "Do you think it will rain?" "I'm afraid ____."

- A) not
- B) neither
- C) too
- D) so

17. "I've already read that book." " ____."

- A) So have I
- B) Neither have I
- C) So do I
- D) I did too

18. Choose the correct sentence.

- A) "She's moving abroad, and so I am."
- B) "She's moving abroad, and so am I."
- C) "She's moving abroad, and I so am."
- D) "She's moving abroad, and am so I."

19. "Resilience" most nearly means:

- A) fragility
- B) indifference
- C) the ability to recover from difficulty
- D) financial wealth

20. "I'm not going to apologise first." " ____."

- A) So am I not
- B) Neither am I too
- C) So aren't I
- D) Neither am I

21. "My uncle says the trail runners are missing something, and ____ mine."

- A) so does
- B) neither does
- C) so did
- D) neither did

22. "I suppose they'll patch things up eventually." "I suppose ____ too."

- A) not
- B) so
- C) neither
- D) such

23. "Which apartment did you choose, the smaller ____ or the bigger ____?"

- A) it / it
- B) some / some
- C) one / one
- D) ones / one

24. An "unassuming" person, as described in the reading, is one who is:

- A) boastful
- B) intimidating
- C) demanding
- D) modest and unobtrusive

25. "He showed remarkable calm under pressure." "____ composure surprised everyone who knew him."

- A) Such
- B) So
- C) One
- D) Neither

UNIT 8

A Blessing in Disguise

Objective (CEFR C1): to understand and use expressions related to describing setbacks, resilience, and unexpected positive outcomes through idiomatic language, and to express ideas fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions, using language flexibly and effectively for social, academic, and professional purposes.

Reading: The Pink Slip That Paid Off

For eleven years, Elena Marsh had climbed the corporate ladder at Halloway & Finch, a mid-sized advertising agency in Manchester, until the rung beneath her simply gave way. The redundancy email arrived on a grey Tuesday morning, and although she had sensed for months that the writing was on the wall — budgets slashed, headcount frozen, her department's projects quietly reassigned to other teams — the news still hit her like a bolt from the blue. She had poured her heart and soul into every campaign, gone the extra mile on pitches nobody else wanted, and built a reputation as the one person who could be trusted to deliver under pressure. None of that, it turned out, counted for much once a private equity firm decided the agency needed "restructuring." Elena sat in her car in the car park for a full twenty minutes, utterly unable to come to terms with what had just happened, before she finally allowed herself to cry.

The weeks that followed were bleak. She fired off dozens of applications, each one swallowed by silence, and the initial shock gradually curdled into a bitter disappointment that coloured every waking hour.

Well-meaning friends offered the usual consolations — every cloud has a silver lining, things happen for a reason — and Elena, through gritted teeth, resisted the urge to snap at them. Her savings, never generous to begin with, dwindled at an alarming rate, and she began to wonder how on earth she would make ends meet if nothing turned up soon. Twice she came agonisingly close to landing a role, only to be told at the eleventh hour that the position had gone to an internal candidate. One rejection in particular stung more than the others: a role at a smaller agency that she had genuinely coveted, for which she had sailed through three rounds of interviews only to be told, apologetically, that the hiring freeze had come down from head office overnight. She remembers driving home that evening convinced she had missed the boat entirely, that her best years in the industry were already behind her. It would have been easy, at that point, to throw in the towel and accept whatever ill-fitting job came along, but something stubborn in her refused to settle.

Determined not to spiral into self-pity, Elena forced herself into a routine: the gym at seven, applications by nine, a brisk walk at lunch to clear her head. A former colleague, now working in outplacement services, urged her to keep her chin up and to treat the redundancy as a temporary storm to be weathered rather than a life sentence. At his suggestion, she attended a networking breakfast she would ordinarily have skipped, hoping simply to get a foot in the door somewhere, anywhere. Nothing concrete came of the event itself, and yet the exercise forced her to articulate, out loud and for the first time, what she actually wanted from her career rather than what she assumed she was supposed to want. It was a small shift in perspective, but it planted a seed that would later prove decisive.

It was her sister, Marion, who first floated the idea that changed everything. Marion ran a small bakery and had long complained that she hadn't the faintest idea how to market it beyond a handful of half-hearted social media posts. Half in jest, she asked Elena to "have a look" in exchange for a few loaves of sourdough. Elena, with time on her hands and precious little to lose, decided to bite the bullet and take the request seriously. She drew up a proper strategy, redesigned the shop's online presence, and within six weeks foot traffic had risen so sharply that Marion had to hire an extra pair of hands on Saturdays. Word of mouth did the rest: another local shop owner, impressed by what he had heard, asked whether Elena might do the same for his struggling bookshop.

That second project hit a snag almost immediately. The bookshop's owner, a proud and somewhat old-fashioned man named Desmond, was deeply sceptical of anything that smacked of "trendy nonsense," and the pair clashed repeatedly over strategy. Rather than burn her bridges by simply walking away, Elena took a deep breath, listened patiently to his objections, and found a middle ground that respected his instincts while still modernising the shop's outreach. Within three months, the bookshop had turned a corner it hadn't seen in years, and Desmond — grudgingly, then wholeheartedly — became one of her most vocal advocates. It was a small but telling victory, proof that she had a genuine knack for this sort of work, not merely a temporary distraction from her job search.

By this point, Elena found herself at a crossroads. She could keep hunting for a conventional position, cap in hand, or she could take the plunge and set herself up as an independent consultant. The prospect terrified her: no steady salary, no safety net, no guarantee that the trickle of clients would ever become a reliable stream. Yet she could not shake the nagging sense that redundancy, for all its cruelty, had shown her something she might never have discovered otherwise — a genuine talent, and a genuine appetite, for building small businesses from the ground up. After weeks of sleepless deliberation, she registered her own consultancy, put out feelers among her old contacts, and braced herself for whatever came next.

The first year was gruelling. She learned the ropes of invoicing, taxes, and client management largely by trial and error, and there were months when the numbers barely balanced. But against all odds, the business began to gain a modest, steady momentum. Clients recommended her to other clients; a chance meeting at a trade fair led to her biggest contract yet, rebranding a regional chain of cafés that had lost its way amid fierce competition from bigger, flashier names. That job, in particular, forced her to rise to the occasion: the deadline was punishingly tight, the client's expectations sky-high, and failure would have meant losing her only sizeable account. She met the deadline with two days to spare, and the rebrand generated such widespread praise on social media that two further branches in the chain signed on within a month. Elena approached the project with the same fierce determination that had once made her indispensable at Holloway & Finch, except now every ounce of credit, and every ounce of profit, was hers alone. Looking back on that period, she is quick to point out that steady growth of that kind rarely happens overnight; it was built, month by month, on unglamorous fundamentals — prompt invoicing, honest communication with anxious clients, and a willingness to redo work at her own expense whenever a first draft simply missed the mark.

Two years after that grey Tuesday morning, Elena's consultancy employed three people and turned over more in a single quarter than her old salary had paid in a year. In an almost poetic turn of events, Holloway &

Finch — battered by the very restructuring that had once seemed so ruthless — approached her, cap in hand, to ask whether she might handle a rebrand of their own flagging agency. Elena allowed herself a quiet, private smile at the thought of turning the tables so completely, though in the end she accepted the contract with the same professionalism she brought to every client, harbouring no grudge and burning no bridges of her own.

When friends now going through redundancy come to her for advice, she tells them, gently, that there is no shame in feeling as though the rug has been pulled out from under you, and that pulling oneself together rarely happens overnight. She confesses that on her darkest days she seriously considered giving up on the whole enterprise and returning to full-time employment, and that only sheer stubbornness, not any grand vision, carried her through the worst of it. What she resists, always, is the temptation to package her story as a tidy formula, a step-by-step guide to turning disaster into triumph, because she knows perfectly well that plenty of equally hard-working people hit the very same snag and never manage to turn the tables in quite the same way. Luck, she readily admits, played its part too.

Looking back, Elena is candid about how close she came to giving up entirely, and equally candid that she would never wish redundancy on anyone as a shortcut to success. Still, she has come to see that single devastating morning as, in every meaningful sense, a blessing in disguise. Had she not been forced out of a job she had genuinely loved, she might never have taken stock of what she truly wanted, nor discovered the sheer nerve it took to bet on herself. "I don't think I chose this path," she says now. "I think it chose me, the moment the one I was on disappeared beneath my feet." In the long run, what felt at the time like the worst day of her career turned out, against all odds, to be the very day she finally came out on top.

Reading Comprehension – True or False

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

1. Elena worked at Halloway & Finch for eleven years before losing her job. ____ (T / F)
2. Marion first suggested that Elena try consulting for the local bookshop. ____ (T / F)
3. Desmond, the bookshop owner, immediately embraced Elena's marketing ideas without objection. ____ (T / F)
4. Halloway & Finch eventually hired Elena's consultancy to rebrand their own agency. ____ (T / F)
5. Elena believes that luck played no part whatsoever in her eventual success. ____ (T / F)

Reading Comprehension – Multiple Choice

Read each question and choose the correct answer.

1. What had Elena sensed for months before her redundancy?

- A) That she was about to be promoted
- B) That her department's budget and staff were being reduced
- C) That the agency was moving to a new office
- D) That she would be transferred abroad

2. How did Elena first get involved in helping her sister's bakery?

- A) A recruitment agency placed her there
- B) She was hired through a formal job posting
- C) Marion paid her a full consulting fee upfront
- D) Marion asked her half-jokingly to help in exchange for bread

3. What was Desmond's initial attitude toward Elena's marketing ideas?

- A) Skeptical and resistant, viewing them as "trendy nonsense"
- B) Enthusiastic and immediately supportive
- C) Indifferent, since he had no interest in growing the bookshop
- D) Interested but unable to afford them

4. What ultimately convinced Elena to register her own consultancy?

- A) A guaranteed contract from a large corporation
- B) Pressure from her family to become self-employed
- C) The realization that she had a genuine talent for helping small businesses grow
- D) Encouragement from Desmond alone

5. What happened when Halloway & Finch approached Elena two years later?

- A) She refused to work with them out of resentment
- B) She accepted the contract professionally, without holding a grudge
- C) She demanded a public apology before accepting
- D) She declined because she was too busy

Key Vocabulary

High-frequency and advanced words and expressions (Oxford 3000/5000, New General Service List, Academic Word List and Brown Corpus), filtered by topic relevance and C1 level. Meanings are in the Dictionary at the end of the book.

1–10	11–20	21–30	31–40
1. a blessing in disguise	11. miss the boat	21. rise to the occasion	31. back to the drawing board
2. read the writing on the wall	12. throw in the towel	22. gain momentum	32. a stepping stone
3. a bolt from the blue	13. keep your chin up	23. lose your way	33. hit rock bottom
4. pour your heart and soul into something	14. get a foot in the door	24. cap in hand	34. bounce back
5. go the extra mile	15. bite the bullet	25. turn the tables	35. a wake-up call
6. come to terms with something	16. burn your bridges	26. have the rug pulled out from under you	36. a golden opportunity
7. every cloud has a silver lining	17. turn a corner	27. hit a snag	37. land on your feet

8. dwindle	18. take the plunge	28. come out on top	38. snatch victory from the jaws of defeat
9. make ends meet	19. learn the ropes	29. a silver lining	39. a diamond in the rough
10. at the eleventh hour	20. against all odds	30. weather the storm	40. a new lease of life

Vocabulary Practice

Choose the correct option to complete each sentence.

1. "A blessing in disguise" means something that:

- A) causes immediate happiness with no complications
- B) seems bad at first but turns out to be beneficial
- C) is disguised as a gift but is actually harmful
- D) brings only temporary relief

2. If a project "hits a snag," it:

- A) finishes ahead of schedule
- B) receives unanimous praise
- C) encounters an unexpected problem
- D) is cancelled entirely

3. "Against all odds" means:

- A) despite there being very little chance of success
- B) because of overwhelming support
- C) according to plan
- D) without any effort at all

4. To "come to terms with" something means:

- A) to argue against something
- B) to postpone dealing with a problem
- C) to celebrate an achievement
- D) to accept a difficult situation after a struggle

5. To "bite the bullet" means:

- A) to avoid a difficult decision indefinitely
- B) to force oneself to face something difficult or unpleasant
- C) to celebrate a small victory
- D) to blame someone else for a mistake

6. To "burn one's bridges" means:

- A) to build strong professional relationships
- B) to travel to a new location for work
- C) to destroy any chance of returning to a previous situation or relationship

D) to complete a project successfully

7. To "make ends meet" means:

- A) to have just enough money to cover basic expenses
- B) to earn a substantial profit
- C) to save money for retirement
- D) to spend money carelessly

8. To "throw in the towel" means:

- A) to win a competition decisively
- B) to start a new project enthusiastically
- C) to ask a friend for help
- D) to give up on something difficult

9. To "get a foot in the door" means:

- A) to be rejected from an opportunity
- B) to gain an initial opportunity that could lead to more
- C) to close off future possibilities
- D) to enter a building without permission

10. To "come out on top" means:

- A) to lose despite trying hard
- B) to remain unaffected by a situation
- C) to succeed or win, especially after a struggle
- D) to withdraw from a competition early

Grammar Focus: Advanced Idiomatic Expressions and Collocations

At the C1 level, fluent and natural-sounding English depends heavily on the accurate use of idiomatic expressions — fixed or semi-fixed phrases whose overall meaning cannot be deduced simply by adding up the meanings of their individual words. An idiom such as "a blessing in disguise" or "read the writing on the wall" carries meaning that is deeply embedded in shared cultural experience and convention; a learner who understands every word in the phrase but has never encountered the expression as a whole will still be lost as to what a speaker actually means. Idioms function as a kind of shorthand between speakers who share a common linguistic culture, compressing a whole narrative or judgment — an unexpected problem that turns out well, an obviously approaching failure — into a handful of memorable words. Mastering them signals not just vocabulary range but a genuine familiarity with how native speakers actually think and talk.

Equally important, though far less visible, is collocation: the tendency of certain words to occur together far more naturally than their apparent synonyms would. English speakers describe tea as "strong," never "powerful," while an argument may be "powerful" but sounds distinctly odd described as "strong"; a decision is "made," never "done," and rain is "heavy," never "strong." These pairings cannot reliably be

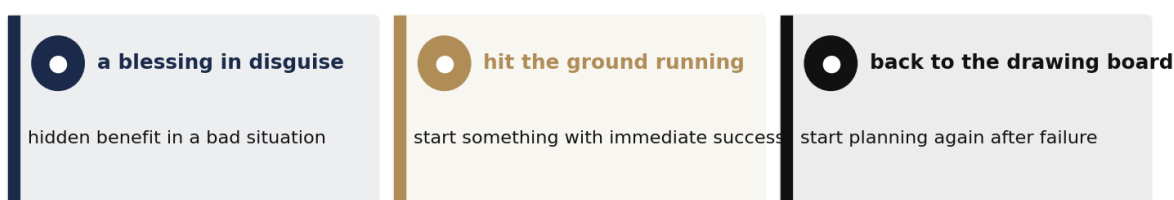
predicted from grammar or logic alone, which is why advanced learners are wise to learn collocations as whole chunks rather than as isolated words to be recombined freely. Effective strategies include recording idioms and collocations in the full phrases in which they naturally occur, paying close attention to register — an expression like "bite the bullet" suits an informal conversation or a lively feature article far better than a formal report — and testing new phrases against a dictionary, corpus, or native-speaker source before assuming they can be transplanted safely into any context.

Figure 8

1. Sentence structure



2. Forms and examples



Reference Table: Advanced Idioms and Collocations

bite the bullet	to force oneself to do something difficult or unpleasant	She finally bit the bullet and registered her own business.
read the writing on the wall	to recognize that something bad is about to happen	Employees had read the writing on the wall for months before the layoffs.
get a foot in the door	to gain an initial opportunity that may lead to further success	Attending the breakfast helped her get a foot in the door.
come out on top	to succeed or win, especially after a struggle	Despite the setbacks, she eventually came out on top.
word of mouth	reputation or information spread informally between people	New clients found her consultancy purely through word of mouth.

Examples

1. Losing her job turned out to be a blessing in disguise. (something that seemed unfortunate at first actually brought unexpected benefits)

2. The second project hit a snag when the bookshop owner resisted her ideas. (ran into an unexpected problem or obstacle)
3. Elena allowed herself a quiet smile at the idea of turning the tables on her former employer. (reversing a situation so the person who had the advantage no longer does)
4. Against all odds, her fledgling consultancy began to thrive. (despite there being very little chance of success)
5. It took her weeks to come to terms with being made redundant. (to accept a difficult situation after a period of struggle)
6. Rather than burn her bridges, she chose to find a compromise with Desmond. (to act in a way that destroys any possibility of returning to a previous relationship or situation)

English Usage

Learn and practice these useful expressions.

- It turned out to be a blessing in disguise.
used to say a bad situation had unexpected benefits
- Looking back, I wouldn't change a thing.
expresses full retrospective acceptance of how events unfolded
- At the time, it felt like the end of the world.
emphasizes how devastating a setback initially seemed
- Everything happens for a reason.
consoling phrase implying hidden purpose behind misfortune
- It was a blessing that things fell through.
expresses relief that an original plan collapsed
- I hit rock bottom before things turned around.
marks the lowest point right before recovery began
- In hindsight, that setback was the best thing that ever happened to me.
strong retrospective reframing of a negative event
- Every cloud has a silver lining.
proverb reassuring that good can emerge from bad

Sample Dialogue

A: You'll never believe this, but getting laid off turned out to be a blessing in disguise.

B: Seriously? At the time it felt like the end of the world for you, didn't it?

A: Absolutely. I hit rock bottom before things turned around, barely leaving the house for weeks.

B: So what changed?

A: A friend nudged me toward freelancing, and honestly, everything happens for a reason — I'd never have taken the leap otherwise.

B: I suppose every cloud has a silver lining, as they say.

A: Exactly. In hindsight, that redundancy was the best thing that ever happened to me professionally.

B: Do you ever wish you'd stayed at the old company instead?

A: Not for a second. Looking back, I wouldn't change a thing.

B: What about that job offer you turned down right before you got laid off?

A: Funny you mention it — it was a blessing that things fell through with that one too; the company folded within a year.

B: Wow, talk about dodging a bullet.

A: Tell me about it. Sometimes the setbacks we dread most are exactly what set us on the right path.

Practice

Choose the best expression for each situation.

1. A friend says, "Honestly, at the time it felt like the end of the world, but now I see it differently." What is she describing?

- A) A minor inconvenience she barely noticed
- B) A joyful celebration
- C) An event that initially seemed devastating
- D) A neutral, unremarkable day

2. Which expression best conveys full retrospective satisfaction with how events unfolded, even the difficult ones?

- A) Looking back, I wouldn't change a thing.
- B) It hit a snag.
- C) I threw in the towel.
- D) It was touch and go.

3. Someone says, "It was a blessing that things fell through with that deal." What does this imply?

- A) They are furious the deal collapsed
- B) They closed the deal successfully
- C) They never heard back about the deal
- D) They are relieved the deal did not go through

4. "I hit rock bottom before things turned around" most likely introduces which kind of story?

- A) A story about steady, uneventful success
- B) A story about reaching the lowest point before recovering
- C) A story about a minor setback with no real consequences
- D) A story about giving up entirely

5. Which proverb-like expression reassures someone that good can emerge from a bad situation?

- A) Every cloud has a silver lining.
- B) The writing was on the wall.
- C) He threw in the towel.
- D) She missed the boat.

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 company's failure to adapt meant the writing was ____ the wall long before the layoffs."

- A) on
- B) in
- C) at
- D) through

2. "After months of searching, she finally decided to ____ the bullet and start her own business."

- A) throw
- B) bite
- C) break
- D) catch

3. "Both sides eventually had to ____ a compromise to avoid further conflict."

- A) do
- B) make
- C) reach
- D) take

4. "Even though the odds were heavily against them, the small team ____ and won the contract."

- A) gave up the ghost
- B) let the cat out of the bag
- C) missed the boat
- D) rose to the occasion

5. "It's important to pay ____ attention to detail when proofreading a contract."

- A) close
- B) strong
- C) heavy
- D) deep

6. Which idiom best fits: "to consider a situation carefully before deciding what to do"?

- A) burn the midnight oil
- B) take stock of the situation
- C) jump on the bandwagon
- D) let sleeping dogs lie

7. "By the time the report is submitted, all the data ____."

- A) will analyze
- B) will have analyzed
- C) will have been analyzed

D) is analyzing

8. "The CEO's decision had a ____ impact on staff morale."

- A) strong
- B) heavy
- C) hard
- D) profound

9. "She decided not to ____ with her former employer, even though the split had been painful."

- A) burn her bridges
- B) spill the beans
- C) miss the boat
- D) cut corners

10. Original: "I have finished the project," she said. Reported speech: She said that she ____ the project.

- A) has finished
- B) had finished
- C) finishes
- D) will finish

11. "Entrepreneurs must be willing to ____ risks if they want their businesses to grow."

- A) do
- B) make
- C) take
- D) have

12. Which idiom means "to give up completely on an effort"?

- A) go the extra mile
- B) get a foot in the door
- C) come out on top
- D) throw in the towel

13. "If she ____ redundant, she might never have started her own business."

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

14. "The team worked hard to ____ the deadline despite the setbacks."

- A) do
- B) meet
- C) make
- D) take

15. "Word ____ mouth was the main reason new clients found her consultancy."
A) at
B) in
C) of
D) by
16. "The bookshop owner, ____ was initially skeptical, later became her biggest advocate."
A) that
B) which
C) whom
D) who
17. Which idiom means "to remain calm and optimistic during a difficult period"?
A) keep one's chin up
B) let off steam
C) jump the gun
D) drag one's feet
18. "She has always shown a ____ interest in small-business marketing."
A) strong
B) keen
C) hard
D) deep
19. "She couldn't help ____ how different her life had become."
A) to notice
B) notice
C) noticing
D) noticed
20. "Only sheer determination allowed her to ____ the storm of that difficult first year."
A) miss
B) catch
C) break
D) weather
21. "Despite the fierce ____, her consultancy managed to attract new clients."
A) competition
B) opposition
C) resistance
D) fight
22. "Rather than avoid the difficult conversation, she chose to ____ and address it directly."
A) let the cat out of the bag

- B) take the bull by the horns
- C) beat around the bush
- D) jump on the bandwagon

23. "Not only ____ her job, but she also lost her sense of direction."

- A) she lost
- B) she did lose
- C) did she lose
- D) lose she did

24. "The rebrand received ____ praise on social media."

- A) heavy
- B) strong
- C) big
- D) widespread

25. Which idiom means "an unexpected event that ultimately proves beneficial"?

- A) a blessing in disguise
- B) a drop in the ocean
- C) a storm in a teacup
- D) a shot in the dark

UNIT 9

On the One Hand...

Objective (CEFR C1): to understand and use expressions related to presenting balanced arguments and hedging claims about workplace policy debates, and to express ideas fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions, using language flexibly and effectively for social, academic, and professional purposes.

Reading: The Four-Day Week: Progress or Illusion?

For more than a century, the five-day, forty-hour week has stood as the default architecture of working life in industrialized economies. In recent years, however, a growing number of companies, policymakers, and academics have begun to question whether this arrangement is either necessary or desirable. The four-day workweek—typically structured as four eight-to-ten-hour days with no reduction in pay—has moved from the margins of labour economics into mainstream policy debate. Proponents argue that it represents a long-overdue paradigm shift in how societies think about productivity, wellbeing, and time itself. Sceptics, meanwhile, contend that the model is, at best, a partial solution suited to a narrow band of industries, and, at worst, a well-intentioned experiment whose benefits have been considerably overstated. Weighing the evidence on both sides reveals a picture that is considerably more nuanced than either camp's rhetoric tends to suggest.

On the one hand, the case in favour of a shortened week rests on an increasingly substantial body of empirical research. Large-scale pilot programmes conducted in the United Kingdom, Iceland, and parts of continental Europe have reported outcomes that many found genuinely surprising: participating organisations recorded reductions in staff turnover, marked declines in self-reported burnout, and, in a considerable number of cases, output that remained stable or even improved. Furthermore, advocates point out that the standard eight-hour day was itself a historical compromise, engineered for an industrial economy built around repetitive manual labour, rather than an immutable law of nature. It could be argued, therefore, that clinging to a schedule designed for factory floors a century ago is itself the more radical and less defensible position, not the reverse. To a certain extent, the pandemic-era experiment with remote and flexible arrangements accelerated this reappraisal: having discovered that rigid attendance was not, after all, indispensable to organisational functioning, many employees and employers alike became considerably more receptive to rethinking the working week in its entirety.

There is, moreover, a wellbeing dimension that proponents regard as at least as important as any productivity metric. Compressed or shortened schedules, it is argued, grant workers additional time for family responsibilities, further education, physical exercise, and rest—all factors plausibly linked to longer-term health outcomes and, by extension, to a more sustainable and less precarious relationship between employees and their employers. Arguably, an economy that measures its success purely in terms of hours logged, rather than value created, has been asking the wrong question all along. Seen in this light, the four-day week is not merely a perk to be bargained over but a genuinely different way of organising economic life around human needs rather than around the clock.

On the other hand, a range of serious and not easily dismissed objections complicates this optimistic narrative. Critics note, first and foremost, that many of the most widely cited pilot studies were self-selected: organisations that volunteered to participate were, almost by definition, already inclined toward flexible, employee-centred management, which makes it difficult to disentangle the effect of the shortened week itself from the effect of simply working somewhere more progressive to begin with. Nevertheless, supportive researchers respond, the consistency of results across otherwise dissimilar sectors and countries lends the findings a degree of credibility that cannot be waved away entirely. Even so, sceptics maintain that the scalability of these results to less favourable conditions remains, at best, unproven.

A further and arguably more fundamental objection concerns the nature of the work itself. In sectors characterised by fixed schedules and continuous coverage—healthcare, manufacturing, retail, hospitality, and public transport, to name only the most obvious examples—a four-day week is not simply a matter of employer goodwill; it typically requires additional hiring, more complex shift patterns, and higher wage costs, none of which is trivial to arrange. In contrast, the pilot programmes that generated the most encouraging headlines were disproportionately drawn from knowledge-intensive, white-collar industries such as technology, marketing, and professional services, where tasks can more readily be compressed, reorganised, or automated. It could reasonably be argued, then, that much of the public conversation surrounding the four-day week has quietly generalised from a fairly narrow and privileged slice of the labour market to the workforce as a whole, a move that risks overstating how broadly applicable the model genuinely is.

There is also a question of what economists sometimes call intensification: the possibility that a shorter week, rather than reflecting a genuine reduction in workload, simply compresses the same volume of tasks into fewer days, generating stress and fatigue that are functionally indistinguishable from the burnout the policy was meant to alleviate. Sceptics point out that self-reported wellbeing surveys, however encouraging, are inherently susceptible to a kind of novelty effect: employees granted a new benefit are, understandably, inclined to view their circumstances favourably, at least in the initial period following its introduction, irrespective of whether their underlying working conditions have improved in any durable sense. Whether these gains persist once the novelty fades is a question that longer-term, more rigorously controlled studies have yet to answer conclusively.

Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to treat these objections as an outright refutation of the four-day week, any more than the pilot studies constitute definitive proof of its universal merit. To some extent, both sides of this debate are talking about somewhat different things: proponents are frequently describing what is achievable in professional, output-based, and reasonably well-resourced organisations, while critics are, not unreasonably, drawing attention to the considerably more constrained circumstances of shift-based and frontline industries. Arguably, the more productive question is not whether the four-day week should be adopted universally and immediately, but under what conditions, and with what safeguards, it can be implemented without simply displacing the underlying pressures onto a smaller number of working days or a shrinking pool of colleagues who must cover the gap.

Furthermore, it seems likely that any large-scale shift of this kind will be gradual and uneven rather than sudden and comprehensive, proceeding sector by sector and negotiated, in many cases, through collective

bargaining rather than imposed uniformly by government mandate. Some industries may adopt genuine four-day schedules within a decade; others, constrained by the practical realities of continuous service delivery, may instead pursue more modest reforms, such as additional flexibility around when and where the standard hours are worked, without reducing the total number of days.

The role of technology in this debate deserves further comment, since it complicates a picture that is already far from simple. On the one hand, advances in automation, artificial intelligence, and workflow software are frequently cited by proponents as precisely what will make a shorter week increasingly feasible across a broader range of occupations: tasks that once demanded lengthy manual effort can, at least to some extent, now be delegated to systems that operate considerably faster and with fewer errors than a human workforce labouring under fatigue. On the other hand, sceptics counter that the same technologies could just as easily be deployed to intensify monitoring and raise output expectations, effectively cancelling out any gains in free time with a corresponding rise in pressure to perform. It could be argued, in other words, that technology is not an independent force pushing labour markets in one particular direction, but rather a tool whose effects depend almost entirely on how, and by whom, it is implemented. Employers who view a shorter week as an opportunity to redesign workflows more thoughtfully may indeed achieve the win-win outcome that advocates describe; those who simply expect the same output compressed into less time are more likely to reproduce, in a new guise, precisely the burnout the policy was ostensibly designed to address.

A related consideration, seldom given the attention it arguably deserves, concerns organisational size. Large corporations, with substantial human-resources departments, sophisticated scheduling software, and the financial cushion to absorb an experimental period, are considerably better placed to trial a four-day week than smaller businesses operating on tighter margins. Nevertheless, some of the most compelling pilot results have, somewhat counterintuitively, emerged from small and medium-sized enterprises, where managers report having greater flexibility to redesign processes without navigating the layers of bureaucracy that can slow such initiatives in larger organisations. This apparent contradiction suggests that organisational size alone is a poor predictor of whether a shortened week will succeed; culture, leadership commitment, and the nature of the work itself would all seem to matter considerably more.

Finally, it is worth acknowledging the international dimension of this discussion, since attitudes toward working time vary considerably from one national context to another and are shaped by factors well beyond the four-day week itself. Countries with strong traditions of collective bargaining and comparatively generous statutory leave, for instance, have tended to approach the question rather differently from those in which working hours are governed primarily by individual employer discretion. To this extent, generalising confidently about the merits of the four-day week across radically different labour-market institutions is, arguably, a riskier undertaking than either its most enthusiastic champions or its harshest detractors tend to acknowledge.

In conclusion, neither the enthusiastic embrace nor the wholesale dismissal of the four-day workweek does full justice to the available evidence. On balance, the model appears to offer real and, in certain contexts, well-documented benefits for particular kinds of organisations and occupations, while remaining considerably more difficult to implement, and correspondingly less proven, in others. What can be said with somewhat greater confidence is that the conversation itself has been valuable, prompting employers across

a wide range of industries to examine long-unquestioned assumptions about how work ought to be organised, measured, and rewarded. Whether this scrutiny ultimately produces a genuinely shorter working week for the majority of employees, or simply a more flexible and more thoughtfully designed version of the existing one, remains, for now, an open question—and, arguably, one whose answer will look rather different from one industry to the next.

Reading Comprehension – True or False

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

1. The five-day workweek has been the standard model in industrialized economies for over a century. ____ (T / F)
2. All pilot programmes testing the four-day week reported worse productivity. ____ (T / F)
3. Critics note that many pilot studies involved organisations that volunteered and were already progressive. ____ (T / F)
4. According to the text, shift-based industries like healthcare can adopt a four-day week as easily as office-based industries. ____ (T / F)
5. The text concludes that adoption of the four-day week is likely to be gradual and uneven across sectors. ____ (T / F)

Reading Comprehension – Multiple Choice

Read each question and choose the correct answer.

1. According to the text, why do proponents argue that the traditional eight-hour day is not an immutable law of nature?

- A) It was invented by modern technology companies.
- B) It was a historical compromise designed for industrial-era manual labour.
- C) It has never been legally mandated in any country.
- D) It was created specifically to reduce employee wellbeing.

2. What is the main criticism regarding the pilot studies mentioned in the reading?

- A) They were too short to produce any data.
- B) They were conducted only in Iceland.
- C) They involved organisations that self-selected and were already progressive.
- D) They excluded knowledge-intensive industries entirely.

3. What does the text identify as "intensification"?

- A) Compressing the same workload into fewer days, potentially increasing stress.
- B) Increasing salaries to compensate for shorter weeks.
- C) The process of automating manual labour.
- D) A government policy mandating a four-day week.

4. Which industries does the text cite as facing particular difficulty in adopting a four-day week?

- A) Technology and marketing.
- B) Professional services and consulting.

- C) Software development.
- D) Healthcare, manufacturing, retail, and public transport.

5. What is the text's overall conclusion about the four-day workweek?

- A) It should be dismissed as an impractical experiment.
- B) Its value depends on the sector and conditions, and change is likely to be gradual.
- C) It has been definitively proven to work in every industry.
- D) Governments should mandate it immediately and universally.

Key Vocabulary

High-frequency and advanced words and expressions (Oxford 3000/5000, New General Service List, Academic Word List and Brown Corpus), filtered by topic relevance and C1 level. Meanings are in the Dictionary at the end of the book.

1–10	11–20	21–30	31–40
1. counterargument	11. mitigate	21. compressed schedule	31. scalability
2. proponent	12. entail	22. work-life balance	32. incremental
3. opponent	13. dichotomy	23. overarching	33. detractor
4. contentious	14. nuanced	24. proviso	34. substantiate
5. empirical evidence	15. polarizing	25. viable	35. plausible
6. anecdotal	16. productivity	26. skeptic	36. contingent on
7. corroborate	17. burnout	27. advocate	37. inconclusive
8. refute	18. presenteeism	28. discretionary	38. trade-off
9. concede	19. attrition	29. entrenched	39. holistic
10. underscore	20. stakeholder	30. pilot scheme	40. status quo

Vocabulary Practice

Choose the correct option to complete each sentence.

1. "Empirical" most nearly means:

- A) based on observation or experiment rather than theory alone
- B) based purely on personal opinion
- C) impossible to test or verify
- D) legally binding

2. "Disentangle" most nearly means:

- A) to combine two things together
- B) to separate or clarify something that is complicated or confused
- C) to hide something intentionally
- D) to strengthen an argument

3. "Intensification" most nearly means:

- A) a gradual decrease
- B) a complete cancellation
- C) an increase in the intensity, degree, or strength of something
- D) a change in physical location

4. "Safeguards" most nearly means:

- A) financial penalties
- B) unnecessary restrictions
- C) formal complaints
- D) measures taken to protect someone or something from harm

5. "Precarious" most nearly means:

- A) not securely held or in an uncertain, potentially unstable position
- B) extremely stable and secure
- C) highly profitable
- D) legally protected

6. "Rigorous" most nearly means:

- A) careless and superficial
- B) thorough, careful, and exact
- C) optional and flexible
- D) outdated and irrelevant

7. "Credibility" most nearly means:

- A) financial value
- B) legal authority
- C) the quality of being trusted and believed
- D) physical strength

8. "Mandate" (as a noun, in a policy context) most nearly means:

- A) a casual suggestion
- B) a financial reward
- C) a temporary delay
- D) official authorization or instruction to do something

9. "Scrutiny" most nearly means:

- A) close and careful examination
- B) complete indifference
- C) financial investment
- D) public celebration

10. "Constrained" most nearly means:

- A) fully free and unrestricted
- B) limited or restricted
- C) widely praised
- D) financially rewarded

Grammar Focus: Discourse Markers and Hedging Language

In academic and professional writing, discourse markers act as signposts that guide the reader through the logical architecture of an argument, particularly when two contrasting positions must be weighed against one another. The pairing on the one hand / on the other hand is used specifically to frame two sides of a single issue as genuinely comparable, signalling from the outset that neither perspective will be dismissed outright. Markers such as furthermore and moreover, by contrast, are additive: they build upon a point already made, strengthening a single line of reasoning rather than introducing an opposing one. However and nevertheless both introduce contrast, but with a subtle difference in emphasis: however typically pivots to a new or qualifying point, while nevertheless more strongly concedes the force of what has just been said before insisting that it does not settle the matter. Choosing the right marker, and placing it correctly within or between sentences, is what allows a writer to construct an argument that reads as balanced and well-reasoned rather than as a simple list of assertions.

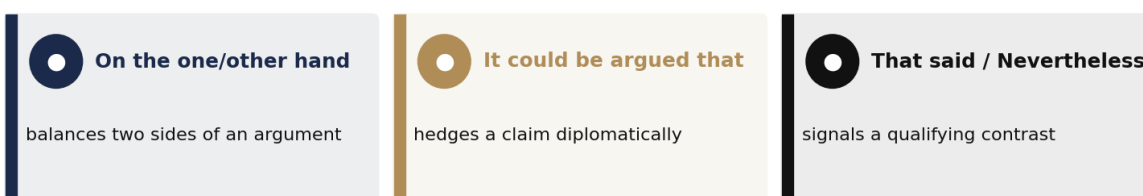
Hedging serves a complementary but distinct purpose: it allows a writer to make a claim while explicitly signalling its degree of certainty, thereby avoiding the appearance of overstating evidence that is genuinely partial, contested, or provisional. Expressions such as arguably, it could be argued that, and to some extent soften an assertion without weakening it into irrelevance; they present a claim as a reasoned position open to legitimate debate, rather than as an established fact or, conversely, as a mere guess. This distinction matters enormously in academic and professional registers, where overconfident claims can undermine a writer's credibility just as surely as excessive vagueness can. A sentence beginning it seems likely that or seemingly commits the writer to a plausible interpretation of the evidence while leaving room for further findings to refine or revise that interpretation. Mastering hedging, in short, is less about expressing doubt and more about calibrating the precise strength of a claim to match the strength of the evidence that actually supports it.

Figure 9

1. Sentence structure



2. Forms and examples



Reference Table: Discourse Markers and Hedging Language

On the one hand / On the other hand	Presenting two contrasting sides of an argument as equally worth considering	On the one hand, remote work increases flexibility; on the other hand, it can weaken team cohesion.
Furthermore / Moreover	Adding a further point that supports and strengthens the same line of reasoning	Furthermore, the pilot studies reported lower staff turnover across several sectors.
Nevertheless / However	Introducing a contrast or exception without discarding the previous point entirely	The results were promising; nevertheless, several limitations remain unaddressed.
Arguably / It could be argued that	Presenting a claim as a defensible, debatable opinion rather than an established fact	Arguably, the traditional workweek was never as efficient as commonly assumed.
To a certain extent / To some extent	Limiting the scope of a claim to avoid overgeneralization	To some extent, the pandemic accelerated employers' willingness to experiment with flexible schedules.

Examples

1. On the one hand, a shorter week may reduce burnout; on the other hand, it could increase pressure during the days actually worked.
2. Furthermore, several pilot programmes reported that productivity remained stable despite the reduced schedule.
3. Nevertheless, critics maintain that the long-term effects of compressed schedules have not been rigorously tested.
4. Arguably, the eight-hour day was never as scientifically grounded as its long history might suggest.

5. It could be argued that shift-based industries face structural obstacles that white-collar sectors simply do not encounter.
6. To a certain extent, the debate reflects two fundamentally different visions of what work is ultimately for.

English Usage

Learn and practice these useful expressions.

- On the one hand... on the other hand...
contrasting two sides of an argument
- It could be argued that...
hedging when introducing a debatable claim
- By and large,
generalizing cautiously before making a point
- This is not to say that...
qualifying or limiting a previous statement
- There is a strong case for...
presenting one side of an argument favorably
- Be that as it may,
conceding a point before pivoting to another
- It remains to be seen whether...
hedging about an uncertain future outcome
- All things considered,
summarizing a discussion after weighing both sides

Sample Dialogue

A: Have you seen the proposal to pilot a four-day week across the company?

B: I have. On the one hand, it could genuinely reduce burnout; on the other hand, I worry about client coverage on Fridays.

A: That's a fair concern. It could be argued, though, that productivity often rises when employees are better rested.

B: By and large, I'd agree with that in creative roles. This is not to say it would work identically in client-facing departments, though.

A: Sure, but there is a strong case for at least running a pilot scheme before committing to anything permanent.

B: Be that as it may, some stakeholders are still entrenched in the traditional five-day model.

A: True, and it remains to be seen whether a shorter week would actually improve retention rates long-term.

B: Do you think the data from other companies is convincing?

A: Somewhat. The evidence so far is largely anecdotal rather than based on rigorous, controlled studies.

B: All things considered, I think a limited trial is the most sensible way forward.

A: Agreed. Let's draft a proposal and present it to leadership next week.

B: Sounds good. I'll pull together the productivity figures we discussed earlier.

Practice

Choose the best expression for each situation.

1. Which phrase is used to concede a point before pivoting to a different argument?

- A) All things considered
- B) Be that as it may
- C) It could be argued that
- D) By and large

2. Which expression is best used to introduce a generalization cautiously?

- A) By and large
- B) There is a strong case for
- C) It remains to be seen whether
- D) This is not to say that

3. Which phrase signals uncertainty about a future outcome?

- A) There is a strong case for
- B) On the one hand
- C) It remains to be seen whether
- D) All things considered

4. Which phrase is typically used to qualify or limit a previous statement?

- A) It could be argued that
- B) Be that as it may
- C) There is a strong case for
- D) This is not to say that

5. Which phrase is most appropriate for summarizing a balanced discussion at its conclusion?

- A) It could be argued that
- B) All things considered
- C) On the one hand
- D) By and large

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. "____, remote work has clear benefits for employees; ____, it can create challenges for team cohesion."

- A) On the one hand / on the other hand
- B) Furthermore / furthermore
- C) Nevertheless / however
- D) Arguably / to some extent

2. Choose the best hedging expression: "___ automation will eliminate certain job categories within the next decade."

- A) Obviously
- B) It seems likely that
- C) Definitely
- D) Without question

3. "The proposal received strong support from the committee. ___, several members raised concerns about funding."

- A) Furthermore
- B) Moreover
- C) Nevertheless
- D) In addition

4. Which word/phrase best introduces an additional point that supports a previous statement?

- A) However
- B) Nevertheless
- C) On the other hand
- D) Furthermore

5. "___ it could be argued that stricter regulation would stifle innovation, the long-term benefits to consumer safety may outweigh this risk."

- A) While
- B) Furthermore
- C) Moreover
- D) In addition

6. Choose the correct hedge: "The policy has, ___, reduced costs, although not as dramatically as initially predicted."

- A) definitely
- B) to some extent
- C) absolutely
- D) undeniably

7. Which discourse marker signals a strong contrast between two clauses?

- A) Furthermore
- B) In addition
- C) In contrast
- D) Similarly

8. "Arguably, the most significant change of the decade ___"

- A) is definitely the rise of remote work.
- B) is certainly the rise of remote work.

- C) has been proven beyond doubt to be the rise of remote work.
- D) is the rise of remote work, though this claim remains open to debate.

9. Vocabulary: "entrenched" (as in "an entrenched belief") most nearly means:

- A) firmly established and difficult to change
- B) newly formed
- C) flexible and adaptable
- D) publicly criticized

10. "It could be argued that ____" is typically followed by:

- A) a fact that is universally accepted
- B) a claim presented as one possible interpretation, not an absolute truth
- C) a direct command
- D) a statistical certainty

11. Choose the sentence that correctly uses "on the other hand":

- A) On the other hand, furthermore, the results were mixed.
- B) On the other hand results were positive.
- C) The results were positive; on the other hand, several limitations remain.
- D) The on the other hand results were mixed.

12. Vocabulary: "proponents" most nearly means:

- A) opponents
- B) investigators
- C) bystanders
- D) supporters or advocates

13. Choose the hedge indicating partial truth:

- A) to a certain extent
- B) without exception
- C) beyond all doubt
- D) categorically

14. "Furthermore" is best used to:

- A) introduce a contrasting idea
- B) add supporting information to a previous point
- C) summarize the entire argument
- D) express uncertainty

15. Vocabulary: "sceptics" most nearly means:

- A) people who strongly support a claim
- B) people who are indifferent
- C) people who doubt or question a claim
- D) people who fund research

16. "Nevertheless" is closest in meaning to:

- A) furthermore
- B) for example
- C) in other words
- D) despite this

17. Choose the correct pair for balanced argumentative writing: "___ the four-day week may boost morale, ___ it may not suit every industry."

- A) On the one hand / on the other hand
- B) Furthermore / furthermore
- C) Nevertheless / nevertheless
- D) In addition / in addition

18. Vocabulary: "disproportionately" most nearly means:

- A) equally distributed
- B) in a way that is too large or small in relation to something else
- C) randomly
- D) accurately

19. Which sentence demonstrates appropriate academic hedging?

- A) This proves that the policy works in all cases.
- B) The policy definitely works.
- C) It seems likely that the policy contributed to improved outcomes, although other factors may have played a role.
- D) There is no doubt the policy is effective.

20. "In contrast" is used to:

- A) add a similar idea
- B) conclude an argument
- C) hedge a claim
- D) highlight a difference between two things

21. Vocabulary: "immutable" most nearly means:

- A) unable to be changed
- B) changeable
- C) temporary
- D) uncertain

22. "The data, ___, suggest a positive trend, though further research is needed to confirm this."

- A) undoubtedly
- B) to some extent
- C) certainly
- D) without question

23. Which discourse marker pair is typically used to structure a balanced, two-sided argument?

- A) Furthermore ... moreover
- B) For example ... for instance
- C) On the one hand ... on the other hand
- D) In other words ... that is

24. Vocabulary: "scalability" in the context of business or policy most nearly refers to:

- A) the cost of a single unit
- B) the aesthetic appeal of a design
- C) the legal status of a company
- D) the ability to be expanded or applied more broadly

25. "It could be argued that" is a useful phrase because it:

- A) makes a claim while acknowledging it is open to debate
- B) proves a claim beyond doubt
- C) avoids making any claim at all
- D) is only used in casual conversation

UNIT 10

As Far As I'm Concerned

Objective (CEFR C1): to understand and use expressions related to expressing personal stance and degrees of certainty when debating contentious workplace issues, and to express ideas fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions, using language flexibly and effectively for social, academic, and professional purposes.

Reading: The Five-Day Fallacy: Rethinking the Modern Workweek

As far as I'm concerned, the five-day, forty-hour workweek is one of the least examined assumptions of modern life. We inherited it, we rarely question it, and we organise entire decades of our existence around it, yet almost nobody can explain why five days rather than four, or why eight hours rather than six, constitute the "natural" unit of a working life. From my point of view, the workweek is not a law of nature at all; it is a historical artefact, forged in a specific industrial context and preserved, largely out of institutional inertia, long after the conditions that produced it have disappeared.

The standard week we take for granted emerged in the early twentieth century, when manufacturers such as Henry Ford discovered, somewhat to their own surprise, that shorter hours could be matched with equal or greater output. Ford's decision to move to a five-day week in 1926 was, apparently, driven less by philanthropy than by the observation that exhausted workers made costly mistakes on the assembly line. That insight, arguably the single most consequential piece of labour-market data of the last century, has been sitting in plain sight for a hundred years, and yet it took until the past decade for anyone to test it seriously at scale.

The most rigorous of these tests took place in the United Kingdom, where more than sixty companies took part in a six-month trial of a four-day week on full pay. The results, published by researchers who had tracked the participating firms throughout, were striking: revenue held steady or rose at the overwhelming majority of companies, and almost none reverted to a five-day schedule once the pilot ended. Presumably, if a policy this disruptive produced no measurable benefit, most employers would have abandoned it the moment the trial concluded rather than making it permanent. The fact that they did not, at least to my mind, tells us something the sceptics would prefer to ignore.

Iceland ran an earlier, and in some ways even more ambitious, version of this experiment between 2015 and 2019, testing shorter hours across a range of public-sector workplaces that together employed roughly one percent of the country's entire working population. Apparently, productivity and service provision remained stable or improved across almost every workplace involved, while reported levels of stress and burnout fell measurably. Trade unions subsequently renegotiated contracts, and today the overwhelming majority of Iceland's workforce either works shorter hours or has the right to request them. Japan, too, has experimented in this territory, most visibly when a well-known technology firm's local subsidiary closed its offices every Friday for a month in 2019 and, according to the company's own figures, saw productivity rise by nearly forty percent, alongside sharp falls in electricity and paper consumption. Presumably, results this

dramatic invite scepticism, and they should; a single month at a single subsidiary is not a controlled, peer-reviewed study, and generalising too eagerly from it would be its own kind of error. Still, taken together with the Icelandic and British evidence, the pattern becomes considerably harder to dismiss as mere coincidence.

None of this is to say the case is closed. Detractors have raised a number of objections that deserve to be taken seriously rather than dismissed out of hand. Some critics have alleged that certain firms simply redistributed the same workload across fewer days, producing a compressed schedule rather than a genuinely reduced one; workers, allegedly, ended up putting in the same number of hours, just squeezed into four days instead of five, which would hardly count as progress. Others point out that client-facing industries, healthcare among them, cannot simply switch off for a day without someone, somewhere, paying the price in delayed care or diminished service. These are not trivial concerns, and for all intents and purposes they amount to a reasonable case for caution rather than wholesale adoption.

What troubles me more than the practical objections, though, is the moral framing that so often accompanies them. There persists a deeply entrenched cultural assumption, seldom stated outright but audible in every dismissive remark about "wanting something for nothing," that time itself must be earned through visible exertion, and that any reduction in hours is, by definition, a form of cheating. This is, in my view, a conflation of two entirely separate things: the hours a person spends at a desk, and the value that person actually produces. Arguably, the entire history of technological progress has been an exercise in decoupling those two variables, and it would be strange indeed if the office were the one domain exempt from that logic.

I say this as someone who has, admittedly, experienced the shift from the inside. Two years ago, the small research team I worked with adopted a compressed four-day arrangement on a trial basis, largely because our director was tired of watching Friday afternoons dissolve into a haze of unanswered emails and half-finished tasks. The change was not, initially, popular; several colleagues were openly sceptical, predicting missed deadlines and disgruntled clients. What actually happened, as far as I could tell, was closer to the opposite. Meetings that had once sprawled across an hour were, out of sheer necessity, compressed into twenty focused minutes. Presumably because everyone knew Friday was no longer available as a safety net, the remaining four days acquired a seriousness that had simply not existed before.

Skeptics will, understandably, point to the limits of anecdotal evidence, and they are right to do so; my own experience proves nothing on a statistical level, and I would be the first to concede that a sample size of one small office is worthless as data. What it does illustrate, however, is something the aggregate figures from the larger trials corroborate: the relationship between hours worked and value produced is far weaker, and far less linear, than the traditional workweek's design implicitly assumes. For all intents and purposes, we have been optimising for the wrong variable for a very long time, mistaking hours logged for work accomplished.

There is also a subtler point here that rarely enters the debate: the traditional week was designed for a labour force that was, overwhelmingly, doing physical, repetitive tasks whose output scaled reasonably well with time on the clock. An assembly-line worker who stayed an extra hour genuinely produced, roughly, an

extra hour's worth of parts. A knowledge worker drafting a report, negotiating a contract, or debugging a piece of software does not obey the same arithmetic; past a certain point, additional hours produce diminishing, and eventually negative, returns, as fatigue erodes judgement and creativity alike. Presumably nobody designed the modern workweek with software engineers or policy analysts in mind, since neither profession existed when the standard was set, which makes its uncritical application to today's economy look less like a considered choice and more like an accident of historical timing.

None of this means the four-day week is a panacea, and I would be doing the argument a disservice if I pretended otherwise. Certain sectors will, for entirely legitimate operational reasons, require different arrangements, and any transition would have to be handled with far more care than a single blog post could possibly capture. But the burden of proof, as far as I'm concerned, has quietly shifted. It is no longer self-evident that five days is the correct default from which any deviation must justify itself; arguably, it is the five-day standard itself that now requires justification, given how much evidence has accumulated against its supposed necessity.

What I find genuinely puzzling is not that the idea is contested, since any change to something this entrenched should be scrutinised, but that so much of the resistance to it is dressed up in the language of economic necessity when, on closer inspection, it is really about something closer to cultural anxiety. We have, for the better part of a century, equated a full workweek with moral seriousness, and unwinding that equation feels, to many people, like a genuine loss even when the numbers say otherwise. Allegedly rational institutions turn out, on this question at least, to be driven by something considerably less rational: a discomfort with the idea that less time might, in fact, be enough.

I do not expect this piece to change anyone's mind who has already settled the question in the opposite direction, and that is fine; reasonable people can weigh the same evidence differently. But from my point of view, the accumulating data, my own admittedly limited experience, and the sheer historical arbitrariness of the standard week all point in the same direction. For all intents and purposes, the case against reflexively defending the five-day week has become considerably stronger than the case for it, and pretending otherwise, at this stage, requires ignoring rather more than it requires believing.

Reading Comprehension – True or False

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

1. The writer claims the five-day workweek was scientifically designed to maximise long-term productivity. ____ (T / F)
2. Henry Ford reportedly moved to a five-day week partly because tired workers made costly errors. ____ (T / F)
3. According to the reading, most UK companies that trialled a four-day week reverted to five days afterward. ____ (T / F)
4. Critics have alleged that some companies simply compressed the same workload into fewer days. ____ (T / F)
5. The writer argues that hours worked and value produced are always directly proportional for knowledge workers. ____ (T / F)

Reading Comprehension – Multiple Choice

Read each question and choose the correct answer.

1. According to the writer, the traditional five-day workweek is best described as

- A) a historical artefact preserved by institutional inertia
- B) a scientifically optimised system
- C) a legal requirement in most countries
- D) a recent invention with no clear origin

2. What did Henry Ford apparently discover about shorter working hours?

- A) They reduced worker loyalty
- B) They could match or exceed previous output
- C) They had no effect on output
- D) They increased manufacturing costs significantly

3. What was one criticism raised against the four-day week trials?

- A) Companies lost too much revenue
- B) Employees demanded higher pay
- C) Some workloads were simply compressed rather than reduced
- D) The trials lasted too long to be useful

4. In the writer's own workplace experience, what changed after adopting a four-day schedule?

- A) Meetings became longer and more frequent
- B) Colleagues immediately supported the change
- C) Client deadlines were consistently missed
- D) Meetings became shorter and more focused

5. What does the writer suggest about resistance to the four-day week?

- A) It is largely driven by cultural anxiety rather than pure economics
- B) It is based entirely on solid economic data
- C) It comes only from healthcare workers
- D) It has completely disappeared in recent years

Key Vocabulary

High-frequency and advanced words and expressions (Oxford 3000/5000, New General Service List, Academic Word List and Brown Corpus), filtered by topic relevance and C1 level. Meanings are in the Dictionary at the end of the book.

1–10	11–20	21–30	31–40
1. as far as I'm concerned	11. stand by (a claim)	21. qualify a statement	31. compelling evidence
2. for what it's worth	12. categorically	22. hedge (verb)	32. plausible
3. be that as it may	13. unequivocally	23. tentative claim	33. contentious issue

4. by the same token	14. ostensibly	24. sweeping generalization	34. nuanced perspective
5. on balance	15. arguably	25. entrenched position	35. polarizing debate
6. all things considered	16. purportedly	26. devil's advocate	36. vested interest
7. be inclined to think	17. conceivably	27. concede a point	37. one-sided argument
8. hold the view that	18. presumably	28. counterargument	38. reservations about
9. subscribe to the notion	19. in all likelihood	29. underlying assumption	39. skeptical of
10. take issue with	20. in no uncertain terms	30. unsubstantiated	40. wholeheartedly endorse

Vocabulary Practice

Choose the correct option to complete each sentence.

1. In the reading, "entrenched" (as in "entrenched cultural assumption") most nearly means

- A) firmly established and hard to change
- B) recently invented
- C) officially banned
- D) widely misunderstood

2. "Conflation" (as in "a conflation of two entirely separate things") means

- A) a clear separation
- B) a mistaken combining of distinct things into one
- C) a formal agreement
- D) a gradual improvement

3. "Detractors" refers to people who

- A) strongly support an idea
- B) remain neutral on an issue
- C) criticise or speak against something
- D) study a subject professionally

4. "Corroborate" (as in "figures... corroborate") means to

- A) contradict or disprove
- B) exaggerate for effect
- C) ignore deliberately
- D) confirm or support with evidence

5. "Anecdotal" (as in "anecdotal evidence") describes evidence that is

- A) based on personal accounts rather than systematic data
- B) based on large-scale statistical data
- C) legally certified
- D) mathematically proven

6. "Diminishing returns" refers to a situation where

- A) results increase at a constant rate
- B) additional effort produces steadily smaller benefits
- C) profits double every year
- D) costs disappear entirely

7. "Sceptical" (British spelling of skeptical) describes someone who

- A) believes everything without question
- B) strongly agrees with a proposal
- C) doubts or questions a claim
- D) has no opinion at all

8. "Inertia" (as in "institutional inertia") refers to

- A) rapid, enthusiastic change
- B) a sudden collapse
- C) careful long-term planning
- D) a tendency to continue as before without changing

9. "Panacea" means

- A) a universal remedy or solution for all difficulties
- B) a serious problem
- C) a legal contract
- D) a temporary setback

10. "Reflexively" (as in "reflexively defending the five-day week") means

- A) after careful, deliberate analysis
- B) automatically, without much conscious thought
- C) only in emergencies
- D) with strong scientific backing

Grammar Focus: Stance and Epistemic Language

Advanced stance and epistemic language allows a speaker or writer to signal, precisely and economically, how confident they are in a claim, where the information supposedly comes from, and how far a statement reflects verified fact rather than personal judgement. Epistemic adverbs sit near the front of this system: "apparently" indicates that information has been reported by others and is presented at one remove from direct verification (it seems to be the case, based on what is said); "presumably" signals a reasonable inference the speaker has drawn from available evidence or logic, without claiming certainty; and "allegedly" flags a claim, often a negative or contested one, that has been asserted but not proven, distancing the speaker from responsibility for its truth. Choosing among these three is rarely interchangeable: describing a

company's layoffs as "allegedly" mismanaged carries legal and rhetorical weight that "apparently" or "presumably" simply do not, since it implies an accusation still open to dispute.

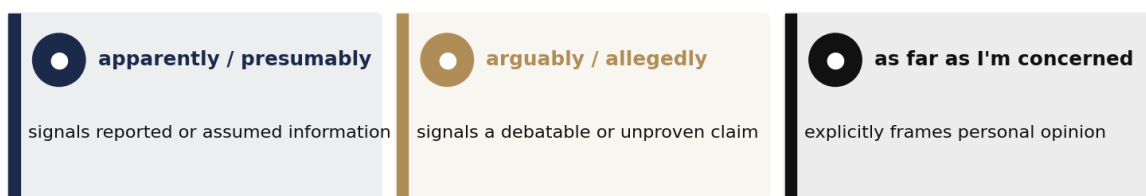
A second cluster of expressions exists specifically to frame a statement as personal opinion rather than established fact, which is essential in argumentative and academic writing where overclaiming can undermine credibility. Phrases such as "as far as I'm concerned," "from my point of view," and "in my view" all explicitly mark what follows as the speaker's own perspective, inviting disagreement without pretending to universal authority. "For all intents and purposes," by contrast, functions differently: it does not mark opinion at all but rather signals that, although something may not be technically or literally true in every respect, it is close enough to be treated as true for practical purposes. Mastering the distinction between epistemic hedges (apparently, presumably, allegedly), which comment on the reliability of information, and stance markers (as far as I'm concerned, from my point of view, for all intents and purposes), which frame the speaker's evaluative position, is what separates fluent, nuanced C1 argumentation from writing that sounds either naively certain or vaguely evasive.

Figure 10

1. Sentence structure



2. Forms and examples



Reference Table: Stance and Epistemic Language

Apparently	Information reported by others; not personally verified	Apparently, the trial reduced absenteeism significantly.
Presumably	A reasonable inference drawn from evidence or logic	Presumably, rested employees make fewer costly errors.
Allegedly	An unproven or disputed claim, often negative	The firm allegedly inflated its productivity figures.
As far as I'm concerned / From my point of view	Explicitly frames a statement as personal opinion	As far as I'm concerned, the policy deserves wider adoption.

For all intents and purposes	Not literally exact, but close enough to be treated as true	For all intents and purposes, the debate is settled.
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Examples

1. Apparently, several companies in the trial saw productivity rise rather than fall after shortening the workweek.
2. Presumably, employees work more efficiently when they know a whole day is no longer available as a buffer.
3. Some critics have allegedly manipulated their internal metrics to make the four-day trial look more successful than it was.
4. As far as I'm concerned, the traditional workweek deserves far more scrutiny than it typically receives.
5. From my point of view, tying moral seriousness to hours logged rather than work completed is fundamentally misguided.
6. For all intents and purposes, the five-day standard now requires justification rather than the other way around.

English Usage

Learn and practice these useful expressions.

- As far as I'm concerned,...
opening a firm personal opinion
- I'm inclined to think that...
softening a claim as tentative
- There's no denying that...
asserting an undeniable fact before an opinion
- I'd stop short of saying..., but...
limiting the strength of a claim
- To play devil's advocate for a moment,...
introducing a deliberately opposing view
- It would be remiss of me not to mention...
flagging a point too important to omit
- I take your point, but...
conceding briefly before countering
- On balance, I'd say...
summarizing an overall judgment after weighing sides

Sample Dialogue

A: As far as I'm concerned, the four-day week should be the default by now; the pilot data speaks for itself.

B: I take your point, but isn't it a bit premature to generalize from a handful of trials?

A: I'd stop short of saying it works for every sector, but for knowledge work, the productivity figures are compelling.

B: There's no denying that morale improved in those trials. My reservations are more about client-facing industries.

A: To play devil's advocate for a moment, couldn't the same flexibility be achieved just by trimming meeting hours?

B: Conceivably, yes, though I'm inclined to think that wouldn't shift the underlying culture of overwork.

A: Fair enough. It would be remiss of me not to mention the risk of compressed hours just intensifying the same workload.

B: Exactly, and that's a contentious issue in itself. Some firms have arguably just relabelled a five-day grind as four.

A: On balance, I'd say the model works when it's paired with a genuine redesign of workflows, not just a shorter calendar.

B: I'd wholeheartedly endorse that nuanced version. Categorically rejecting or embracing the idea both seem shortsighted.

A: Presumably we'll see clearer evidence once more national trials report their results next year.

B: In all likelihood, yes. Until then, I'll hold a tentative position rather than an entrenched one.

Practice

Choose the best expression for each situation.

1. Which phrase best introduces a strong, clearly stated personal opinion?

- A) I guess maybe...
- B) As far as I'm concerned,...
- C) Whatever people think...
- D) It's kind of true that...

2. A speaker wants to concede a point briefly before disagreeing. Which phrase fits best?

- A) I take your point, but...
- B) Obviously you're wrong.
- C) Never mind that.
- D) Who cares about that?

3. Which expression is most suitable for deliberately arguing the opposing side of a debate?

- A) I completely agree with everyone.
- B) To play devil's advocate for a moment,...
- C) That's just silly.
- D) Let's not talk about it.

4. Which phrase signals a claim the speaker holds only tentatively, not with full confidence?

- A) It is an absolute fact that...
- B) Everyone knows that...
- C) I'm inclined to think that...
- D) There is zero doubt that...

5. Which phrase best summarizes an overall judgment after weighing both sides of an argument?

- A) On balance, I'd say...

- B) Whatever, I don't know.
- C) Just pick one, it doesn't matter.
- D) I refuse to decide.

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. "Apparently, the meeting has been postponed until Friday." This sentence suggests the speaker

- A) is reporting secondhand information
- B) witnessed the postponement directly
- C) is certain the meeting will happen
- D) disagrees with the decision

2. Which word best signals that a claim is unproven and potentially controversial?

- A) presumably
- B) allegedly
- C) apparently
- D) undoubtedly

3. "Presumably, she left early because she wasn't feeling well." Here, "presumably" indicates

- A) confirmed fact
- B) a direct quotation
- C) a reasonable guess based on available information
- D) an official statement

4. Choose the correct phrase to introduce a personal opinion in formal writing.

- A) It is a proven fact that
- B) According to official records
- C) Scientists have confirmed that
- D) As far as I'm concerned

5. "For all intents and purposes, the project is finished." This means the project is

- A) essentially complete, even if not literally 100% done
- B) completely abandoned
- C) not yet started
- D) officially cancelled

6. "The company allegedly ignored safety warnings before the accident." The word "allegedly" here shows that

- A) the claim has been legally proven
- B) the claim is an accusation, not a confirmed fact
- C) the writer fully supports the company
- D) the accident never happened

7. Which sentence correctly uses an epistemic adverb?

- A) Apparent he left the building around midnight.
- B) He apparent left the building around midnight.
- C) Apparently he was seen leaving the building around midnight.
- D) Apparently, that he left around midnight.

8. "From my point of view, remote work has improved my quality of life." This phrase signals

- A) an objective scientific finding
- B) a government regulation
- C) a universally accepted truth
- D) a subjective, personal perspective

9. In the reading, the four-day week trial in the UK is described as

- A) largely successful, with most companies keeping it
- B) a failure that most companies abandoned
- C) never actually completed
- D) limited to a single company

10. "Arguably, this was the most important decision of the decade." "Arguably" here suggests

- A) an undisputed fact
- B) a claim that is debatable but has reasonable support
- C) a false statement
- D) an official ruling

11. Choose the word closest in meaning to "entrenched."

- A) temporary
- B) forbidden
- C) deeply established
- D) accidental

12. "Presumably, the flight was delayed because of the storm." What is the speaker doing?

- A) Stating a confirmed cause
- B) Quoting an official announcement
- C) Expressing doubt about the storm's existence
- D) Making a logical inference

13. Which of the following best distances the speaker from responsibility for a claim's truth?

- A) Allegedly
- B) It is certainly true that
- C) Without a doubt
- D) It has been proven that

14. "In my view, the policy needs revision." This sentence is an example of

- A) a scientific conclusion
- B) a stance marker introducing personal opinion
- C) reported speech
- D) a legal statement

15. According to the reading, Henry Ford's move to a shorter workweek was motivated mainly by

- A) government pressure
- B) worker demands via strikes
- C) the observation that tired workers made costly mistakes
- D) a decline in product demand

16. Choose the correct meaning of "diminishing returns" as used in the reading.

- A) profits that increase indefinitely
- B) a sudden increase in productivity
- C) a fixed, unchanging outcome
- D) benefits that shrink as more effort is added

17. "Detractors argue that healthcare cannot simply switch off for a day." Here, "detractors" are

- A) critics of the four-day week
- B) supporters of the four-day week
- C) neutral researchers
- D) government officials

18. Which sentence best demonstrates "for all intents and purposes"?

- A) For all intents and purposes, water boils at 100 degrees Celsius at sea level.
- B) For all intents and purposes, the debate is officially over, even though a few details remain unresolved.
- C) For all intents and purposes, I completely disagree with you.
- D) For all intents and purposes, nobody has ever studied this topic.

19. "Skeptics will, understandably, point to the limits of anecdotal evidence." What does "anecdotal" mean here?

- A) based on rigorous statistical analysis
- B) legally certified
- C) based on personal stories rather than systematic data
- D) mathematically impossible

20. Which pair of expressions both function as epistemic hedges about certainty?

- A) as far as I'm concerned / from my point of view
- B) for all intents and purposes / in my view
- C) arguably / as far as I'm concerned
- D) apparently / presumably

21. "Allegedly, the firm inflated its productivity data." A more neutral paraphrase would be:

- A) It has been claimed, but not confirmed, that the firm inflated its data.

- B) It is proven that the firm inflated its data.
- C) The firm definitely did not inflate its data.
- D) The firm officially admitted to inflating its data.

22. Which sentence uses "arguably" correctly?

- A) Arguably, two plus two equals four.
- B) Arguably, this is the strongest evidence presented so far.
- C) Arguably that the sky is blue.
- D) He arguably to the meeting late.

23. In the reading, the writer's own workplace experience is presented as

- A) statistically conclusive proof
- B) the only evidence provided
- C) limited, anecdotal support alongside larger studies
- D) completely irrelevant to the argument

24. Which phrase would most likely introduce an inference rather than a confirmed fact?

- A) It has been officially confirmed that
- B) The data conclusively shows that
- C) It is a scientific law that
- D) Presumably

25. Overall, the writer's stance on the four-day workweek, as far as can be judged from the text, is

- A) cautiously in favour, while acknowledging valid counterarguments
- B) firmly and uncritically supportive with no reservations
- C) entirely opposed
- D) indifferent and undecided

Answer Key

Below are the correct answers to all reading comprehension, vocabulary, English Usage and practice-quiz exercises in each unit.

Unit 1: Had I Known...

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. A

Vocabulary: 1. B 2. C 3. A 4. D 5. B 6. A 7. D 8. C 9. B 10. D

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 2: Little Did I Know

True/False: 1. T 2. F 3. T 4. T 5. F

Reading Comprehension (multiple choice): 1. A 2. B 3. C 4. D 5. A

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. 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 3: I Should Have Told You

True/False: 1. F 2. T 3. F 4. T 5. F

Reading Comprehension (multiple choice): 1. B 2. A 3. C 4. B 5. D

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. 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: Getting Things Done

True/False: 1. T 2. F 3. T 4. F 5. T

Reading Comprehension (multiple choice): 1. A 2. C 3. B 4. D 5. A

Vocabulary: 1. A 2. B 3. C 4. D 5. A 6. B 7. D 8. B 9. C 10. C

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 5: It Is Said That...

True/False: 1. T 2. F 3. T 4. F 5. T

Reading Comprehension (multiple choice): 1. A 2. C 3. B 4. D 5. B

Vocabulary: 1. C 2. A 3. D 4. B 5. A 6. D 7. C 8. A 9. B 10. D

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: In Other Words...

True/False: 1. T 2. F 3. T 4. F 5. T

Reading Comprehension (multiple choice): 1. A 2. C 3. D 4. C 5. B

Vocabulary: 1. A 2. B 3. D 4. A 5. B 6. D 7. A 8. C 9. C 10. B

English Usage – Practice: 1. B 2. C 3. D 4. A 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 7: Neither Do I

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. A

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. A 4. D 5. C

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: A Blessing in Disguise

True/False: 1. T 2. F 3. F 4. T 5. F

Reading Comprehension (multiple choice): 1. B 2. D 3. A 4. C 5. B

Vocabulary: 1. B 2. C 3. A 4. D 5. B 6. C 7. A 8. D 9. B 10. C

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 9: On the One Hand...

True/False: 1. T 2. F 3. T 4. F 5. T

Reading Comprehension (multiple choice): 1. B 2. C 3. A 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. A 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 10: As Far As I'm Concerned

True/False: 1. F 2. T 3. F 4. T 5. F

Reading Comprehension (multiple choice): 1. A 2. B 3. C 4. D 5. A

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. C 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

Dictionary

Meaning of all key words and expressions in the book, organized by unit. (Meanings are given in Spanish.)

Unit 1: Had I Known...

Word / expression	Meaning	Word / expression	Meaning
a bolt from the blue	sorpresa repentina	soul-searching	introspección
a calculated risk	riesgo calculado	to chart a new course	trazar un nuevo rumbo
a fork in the road	encrucijada	to come to terms with	aceptar
a leap of faith	salto de fe	to eke out a living	ganarse la vida a duras penas
a midlife reckoning	balance de mediana edad	to forgo	renunciar a
a nagging doubt	duda persistente	to forsake	abandonar
a safety net	red de seguridad	to gamble on	apostar por
a watershed moment	momento decisivo	to hanker after	anhelar profundamente
an epiphany	epifanía	to hedge one's bets	cubrirse las espaldas
an existential crisis	crisis existencial	to plough into	invertir en
an ill-considered decision	decisión imprudente	to reinvent oneself	reinventarse
burnout	agotamiento	to relinquish	renunciar
disenchanted	desencantado	to relish	disfrutar plenamente
disenchantment	desencanto	to second-guess	dudar de uno mismo
disillusionment	desilusión	to sever ties with	romper lazos con
disquiet	inquietud	to take stock of	hacer balance de
financial security	seguridad financiera	to walk away from	dejar atrás
hindsight	retrospectiva	to yearn for	anhelar
jaded	hastiado	unfulfilled	insatisfecho
precarious	precario	wistful	melancólico

Unit 2: Little Did I Know

Word / expression	Meaning	Word / expression	Meaning
aghast	horrorizado	portentous	de mal augurio
belatedly	tardíamente	providential	providencial

blindsided	tomado por sorpresa	reckoning	ajuste de cuentas
bombshell	bomba, noticia impactante	reticence	reticencia
circumspect	circunspecto	revelation	revelación
culmination	culminación	scruple	escrúpulo
denouement	desenlace	staggering	asombroso
disclosure	revelación, divulgación	startling	sorprendente
disconcerting	desconcertante	stupefied	estupefacto
dumbfounded	boquiabierto	thunderstruck	atónito
epiphany	epifanía	turning point	punto de inflexión
fateful	fatídico	unbeknownst	sin saberlo
flabbergasted	pasmado	unfathomable	insondable
foreboding	premonición, mal presagio	unforeseen	imprevisto
guardedness	cautela, reserva	unmasked	desenmascarado
harbinger	presagio, anuncio	unprecedented	sin precedentes
inadvertent	involuntario	upheaval	trastorno, conmoción
incongruous	incongruente	vigilance	vigilancia
incredulity	incredulidad	volte-face	giro de 180 grados
oblique	indirecto, oblicuo	watershed moment	momento decisivo

Unit 3: I Should Have Told You

Word / expression	Meaning	Word / expression	Meaning
accountability	rendición de cuentas	hindsight	retrospectiva
admonish	amonestar	misgivings	recelos
blunt	directo	negligence	negligencia
candid	franco	oversight	descuido
candor	franqueza	qualms	escrúpulos
complacency	complacencia	rapprochement	relación cordial
complicity	complicidad	rebuke	reprimenda
conciliatory	conciliador	reckoning	ajuste de cuentas
condone	consentir	remorse	remordimiento
contrition	contrición	reprimand	reprender
culpability	culpabilidad	resentment	resentimiento
deference	deferencia	reticence	reticencia

deflect	desviar	scrutiny	escrutinio
diplomacy	diplomacia	second-guess	dudar retrospectivamente
discretion	discreción	simmering	latente
equivocation	evasiva	subordinate	subordinado
fester	enconarse	tactful	diplomático
forbearance	tolerancia	undermine	socavar
grievance	agravio	unspoken	no dicho
hesitancy	vacilación	withhold	ocultar

Unit 4: Getting Things Done

Word / expression	Meaning	Word / expression	Meaning
accountability	rendición de cuentas	to commission	encargar
budget overrun	sobrecosto	to coordinate	coordinar
caterer	proveedor de banquetes	to delegate	delegar
compliance	cumplimiento	to entrust	encomendar
contingency plan	plan de contingencia	to expedite	agilizar
contractor	contratista	to finalize	finalizar
deliverable	entregable	to liaise (with)	coordinarse (con)
feasibility	viabilidad	to negotiate terms	negociar términos
inspection	inspección	to outsource	subcontratar
logistics	logística	to overhaul	renovar a fondo
milestone	hito	to oversee	supervisar
operational efficiency	eficiencia operativa	to procure	adquirir
permit	permiso	to refurbish	remodelar
project scope	alcance del proyecto	to renovate	renovar
quotation	cotización	to streamline	optimizar
stakeholder	parte interesada	to troubleshoot	resolver problemas
subcontractor	subcontratista	turnaround time	tiempo de respuesta
supervision	supervisión	vendor	proveedor
to allocate (resources)	asignar recursos	venue	recinto, sede
to authorize	autorizar	workflow	flujo de trabajo

Unit 5: It Is Said That...

Word / expression	Meaning	Word / expression	Meaning
allegation	acusación sin pruebas	implicate	implicar, involucrar
anomaly	anomalía	inconclusive	no concluyente
authenticate	autenticar	innuendo	insinuación
circumstantial	circunstancial	leak	filtración de datos
conjecture	conjetura	misattribute	atribuir mal
corroborate	corroborar	plausible	verosímil
cover-up	encubrimiento	probe	indagar, investigar
credibility	credibilidad	provenance	procedencia
debunk	refutar, desmentir	purported	supuesto, presunto
defamation	difamación	retraction	retractación
disclose	revelar	scrutiny	escrutinio
discredit	desacreditar	skeptic	escéptico
discrepancy	discrepancia	speculation	especulación
dubious	dudoso	substantiate	fundamentar, probar
exonerate	exonerar	testimony	testimonio
eyewitness	testigo ocular	unsubstantiated	sin fundamento
fabrication	invención, mentira	unverified	no verificado
fallacious	falaz, engañoso	veracity	veracidad
forgery	falsificación	verify	verificar
hearsay	rumor, oídas	whistleblower	denunciante

Unit 6: In Other Words...

Word / expression	Meaning	Word / expression	Meaning
biodegradable	biodegradable	paradigm shift	cambio de paradigma
byproduct	subproducto	planned obsolescence	obsolescencia programada
carbon footprint	huella de carbono	policy incentive	incentivo político
circular economy	economía circular	proliferation	proliferación
closed-loop system	sistema de circuito cerrado	regenerative design	diseño regenerativo
consumption pattern	patrón de consumo	remanufacturing	remanufactura
decoupling	desvinculación (crecimiento-recursos)	resource depletion	agotamiento de recursos
degradation	degradación	resource efficiency	eficiencia de recursos

downcycling	reciclaje degradante	scarcity	escasez
ecological footprint	huella ecológica	stakeholder	parte interesada
end-of-life product	producto al final de su vida útil	supply chain	cadena de suministro
extended producer responsibility	responsabilidad extendida del productor	sustainability	sostenibilidad
externality	externalidad	take-back scheme	esquema de devolución
finite resources	recursos finitos	throwaway culture	cultura del desecho
industrial symbiosis	simbiosis industrial	underpin	sustentar
life-cycle assessment	evaluación del ciclo de vida	unsustainable	insostenible
market mechanism	mecanismo de mercado	upcycling	revalorización creativa
material recovery	recuperación de materiales	value retention	retención de valor
mitigate	mitigar	viable alternative	alternativa viable
mounting evidence	evidencia creciente	waste stream	flujo de residuos

Unit 7: Neither Do I

Word / expression	Meaning	Word / expression	Meaning
affinity	afinidad	disparity	disparidad
ambivalence	ambivalencia	disposition	temperamento
anecdotal	anecdótico	divergence	divergencia
anecdote	anécdota	empathy	empatía
antithesis	antítesis	empirical	empírico
camaraderie	camaradería	introspective	introspectivo
candour	franqueza	juxtapose	yuxtaponer
concede	conceder, admitir	kinship	parentesco
concur	coincidir	mutual	mutuo
congruent	congruente	nuance	matiz
contend	sostener, argüir	parallel	paralelismo
convergence	convergencia	rapport	conexión, entendimiento
conviction	convicción	rapprochement	reconciliación
corroborate	corroborar	reciprocity	reciprocidad
counterpart	homólogo	reconcile	reconciliar
deference	deferencia	refute	refutar
digression	digresión	skepticism	escepticismo

discern	discernir	solidarity	solidaridad
discrepancy	discrepancia	temperament	carácter
disparate	dispar	validate	validar

Unit 8: A Blessing in Disguise

Word / expression	Meaning	Word / expression	Meaning
a blessing in disguise	bendición disfrazada	get a foot in the door	lograr una primera entrada
a bolt from the blue	algo totalmente inesperado	go the extra mile	esforzarse al máximo
a diamond in the rough	una joya sin pulir	have the rug pulled out from under you	quedarse sin apoyo de golpe
a golden opportunity	una oportunidad de oro	hit a snag	toparse con un obstáculo
a new lease of life	un nuevo impulso vital	hit rock bottom	tocar fondo
a silver lining	un lado positivo	keep your chin up	mantener el ánimo
a stepping stone	un trampolín, un escalón	land on your feet	caer bien parado
a wake-up call	una señal de alerta	learn the ropes	aprender los fundamentos
against all odds	contra todo pronóstico	lose your way	perder el rumbo
at the eleventh hour	en el último momento	make ends meet	llegar a fin de mes
back to the drawing board	volver a empezar de cero	miss the boat	perder la oportunidad
bite the bullet	afrontar lo inevitable	pour your heart and soul into something	dedicarse en cuerpo y alma
bounce back	recuperarse rápidamente	read the writing on the wall	ver venir lo inevitable
burn your bridges	quemar las naves	rise to the occasion	estar a la altura
cap in hand	con humildad, pidiendo ayuda	snatch victory from the jaws of defeat	arrancar la victoria a la derrota
come out on top	salir victorioso	take the plunge	dar el paso decisivo
come to terms with something	resignarse a algo	throw in the towel	tirar la toalla
dwindle	disminuir poco a poco	turn a corner	superar lo peor
every cloud has a silver lining	no hay mal que por bien no venga	turn the tables	voltear la situación
gain momentum	cobrar impulso	weather the storm	capear el temporal

Unit 9: On the One Hand...

Word / expression	Meaning	Word / expression	Meaning
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advocate	defensor	nuanced	matizado
anecdotal	anecdótico	opponent	oponente
attrition	rotación de personal	overarching	preponderante
burnout	agotamiento laboral	pilot scheme	programa piloto
compressed schedule	horario comprimido	plausible	plausible
concede	conceder	polarizing	polarizante
contentious	polémico	presenteeism	presentismo
contingent on	condicionado a	productivity	productividad
corroborate	corroborar	proponent	proponente
counterargument	contraargumento	proviso	condición, salvedad
detractor	detractor	refute	refutar
dichotomy	dicotomía	scalability	escalabilidad
discretionary	discrecional	skeptic	escéptico
empirical evidence	evidencia empírica	stakeholder	parte interesada
entail	conllevar	status quo	statu quo
entrenched	arraigado	substantiate	fundamentar
holistic	integral, holístico	trade-off	disyuntiva
inconclusive	no concluyente	underscore	subrayar
incremental	incremental	viable	viable
mitigate	mitigar	work-life balance	equilibrio vida-trabajo

Unit 10: As Far As I'm Concerned

Word / expression	Meaning	Word / expression	Meaning
all things considered	considerándolo todo	on balance	en definitiva
arguably	posiblemente, se podría argüir	one-sided argument	argumento parcial
as far as I'm concerned	en lo que a mí respecta	ostensibly	aparentemente
be inclined to think	tender a pensar	plausible	plausible
be that as it may	sea como fuere	polarizing debate	debate polarizador
by the same token	del mismo modo	presumably	presumiblemente
categorically	categoricamente	purportedly	supuestamente
compelling evidence	evidencia convincente	qualify a statement	matizar una afirmación
concede a point	conceder un punto	reservations about	reservas sobre
conceivably	concebiblemente	skeptical of	escéptico ante

contentious issue	tema polémico	stand by (a claim)	mantener (una afirmación)
counterargument	contraargumento	subscribe to the notion	suscribir la idea
devil's advocate	abogado del diablo	sweeping generalization	generalización excesiva
entrenched position	postura arraigada	take issue with	discrepar de
for what it's worth	por lo que valga	tentative claim	afirmación provisional
hedge (verb)	matizar, evitar comprometerse	underlying assumption	supuesto subyacente
hold the view that	sostener la opinión de que	unequivocally	inequívocamente
in all likelihood	con toda probabilidad	unsubstantiated	sin fundamento
in no uncertain terms	sin lugar a dudas	vested interest	interés personal (en algo)
nuanced perspective	perspectiva matizada	wholeheartedly endorse	respaldar sin reservas

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