

FREE PTE STUDY PDF

PTE Reading Fill in the Blanks PDF with Answers

25 Reading and Writing Fill in the Blanks items and 25 Reading Fill in the Blanks items with answers and explanations, plus the twelve grammar and collocation rules that solve most gaps.

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SECTION 1

The two Fill in the Blanks tasks

PTE Reading has two Fill in the Blanks question types. Both score Reading. The whole Reading part runs on one clock of 23 to 30 minutes, so aim for about two minutes per item.

	Reading and Writing: Fill in the Blanks (Dropdown)	Reading: Fill in the Blanks (Drag and Drop)
Text length	Up to 200 words	Up to 80 words
How you answer	Choose the best word from a drop-down list for each gap	Drag words from a box into the gaps; the box has more words than gaps
Items per test	5 to 6	4 to 5
What it tests	Grammar, word form and collocation in context	Vocabulary and meaning in context
Marking	Reading	Reading

Tip

Read the whole sentence before choosing.
The words after the gap decide the answer as often as the words before it.

Common mistake

Leaving a gap empty. There is no penalty for a wrong word in these two types, so always fill every gap.



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SECTION 2

Twelve rules that solve most gaps

Each rule comes with a gapped example; the answer is in brackets.

Rule	How it works	Example
Article + noun	A gap directly after a, an or the needs a noun (or an adjective followed by a noun). A or an is used with a singular countable noun, the with something specific.	The committee finally reached (a) decision after a long debate.
Adjective before a noun	A gap between an article or determiner and a noun needs an adjective. Reject the noun, verb and adverb forms of the same word.	Scientists recorded a (significant) rise in sea temperature.
Adverb before an adjective or verb	A gap that describes a verb, an adjective or a whole sentence needs an adverb, usually ending in ly.	The results were (remarkably) consistent across all the trials.
Preposition pairs	Many verbs, nouns and adjectives are fixed to one preposition. Learn the pair as a single unit: depend on, interested in, responsible for, lead to, account for.	Crop yields in this region depend heavily (on) summer rainfall.
Subject-verb agreement	A singular subject takes a singular verb and a plural subject takes a plural verb. Find the real subject, not the nearest noun.	The number of students taking the course (has) risen sharply.
Base verb after a modal	After can, could, may, might, must, should, will and would, the verb stays in its base form with no s, ing or ed.	Governments must (invest) more in renewable energy.
ing form after a preposition	A verb that follows a preposition (in, of, by, without, after, before) takes the ing form.	The company succeeded in (reducing) its costs by a fifth.
Collocations	Some words simply go together: conduct research, play a role, take advantage, reach a conclusion, raise awareness. A grammatically correct option can still be wrong if it does not collocate.	The team (conducted) an experiment to test the theory.
Parallel structure	Items in a list joined by and, or or rather than must have the same form: all nouns, all ing forms or all base verbs.	The course involves reading, writing and (speaking) in groups.

Rule	How it works	Example
Comparatives	Than signals a comparative (cheaper, more efficient, better). As ... as signals the plain adjective. The before an adjective with of all signals a superlative.	Electric cars are (cheaper) to run than petrol cars.
Relative clauses	Who refers to people, which to things and whose to possession. A gap before a verb that follows a noun is often a relative pronoun.	The scientist (who) led the study was awarded a prize.
Linking words	Decide the logic between two ideas first: contrast (however, whereas, although), result (therefore, consequently), addition (moreover, furthermore), example (for instance). Then check whether the gap needs a word that joins clauses or one that starts a new sentence.	Prices rose steeply; (however), demand remained strong.

Tip	Why it works
Read the whole passage once before touching any gap.	The topic, tone and logic of the text rule out many options at once, and a gap near the end often depends on an idea introduced at the start.
Decide the part of speech before you look at the options.	The words either side of a gap usually tell you whether a noun, verb, adjective, adverb or linking word is needed, which cuts four options down to one or two.
Check grammar clues: articles, prepositions, agreement and tense.	Most wrong options are the right word in the wrong form. A, an or the signals a noun; to or a modal signals a base verb; a plural subject rules out a verb ending in s.
Test the option by reading the full sentence with it in place.	If the sentence sounds awkward or changes the meaning, the option is almost certainly wrong, even if its form looks correct.
Learn collocations as pairs, not single words.	Phrases such as play a role, take advantage, account for and make a difference are tested constantly. Knowing the pair means you do not have to reason from scratch under time pressure.
Watch the linking words.	However, therefore, whereas, moreover and for example signal contrast, result, comparison, addition or illustration. Match the logic between the two ideas before choosing.

Tip	Why it works
In Drag and Drop, fill the certain gaps first and eliminate as you go.	The word bank always has more words than gaps. Every word you place with confidence shrinks the choice for the harder gaps, and you can drag a word back if you change your mind.
Manage your time across the Reading section.	Part 2 Reading has 23 to 30 minutes for all 5 question types with no per-question timer. Spend about two minutes on a Drag and Drop item and a little more on a Dropdown item, then move on; a single blank is never worth a whole minute of staring.

SECTION 3

Reading and Writing: Fill in the Blanks (25 items)

Choose the best option for each numbered gap. Answers with a one-line explanation follow each item.

Dropdown 1 · The Science of Sleep

Sleep is far more than a period of rest. During the night, the brain moves through several stages, each of which plays a distinct [1] in memory and repair. In the deepest stage, the body releases hormones that help tissue to grow and recover, while the brain clears away waste products that [2] during waking hours. Researchers have found that people who regularly sleep fewer than six hours are more [3] to illness, weight gain and poor concentration. Even a single night of short sleep can reduce reaction times to a level comparable with mild intoxication. Despite this evidence, many adults treat sleep as something that can be cut whenever work or entertainment demands more time. Doctors now recommend keeping a [4] bedtime, avoiding bright screens late in the evening and limiting caffeine after midday. These habits, although simple, have been shown to improve both the length and the quality of sleep. [5], the benefits extend well beyond feeling refreshed: good sleep supports learning, mood and long term heart health.

[1] role / rule / roll / goal

[2] accumulate / accumulates / accumulating / accumulated

[3] prone / capable / eager / willing

[4] consistent / consistency / consistently / consist

[5] Moreover / However / Otherwise / Instead

Answers: [1] role; [2] accumulate; [3] prone; [4] consistent; [5] Moreover. [1] Collocation: play a role in. [2] Plural subject (waste products) takes a plural present verb. [3] Prone to is the fixed pair; capable takes of, and eager or willing do not fit the meaning. [4] An adjective is needed between a and the noun bedtime. [5] The sentence adds a further benefit, so an addition linker is needed.

Dropdown 2 · Coral Reefs Under Pressure

Coral reefs cover less than one per cent of the ocean floor, yet they support about a quarter of all marine species. This extraordinary [1] makes them vital to fishing communities and to the tourism industries of many coastal nations. Reefs are built by tiny animals that live in partnership with algae. The algae provide food through photosynthesis and give the coral its colour. When sea temperatures rise even slightly, the coral expels the algae and turns white, a process [2] as bleaching. Bleached coral is not dead, but it is weakened, and if conditions do not improve it will starve. Scientists have recorded repeated bleaching events across tropical oceans, and some reefs have lost more than half of their living coral. Pollution from farms and cities, destructive fishing methods and coastal construction add [3] pressure. Protecting reefs therefore requires action [4] several levels: cutting carbon emissions, controlling run-off and creating marine reserves. Where such measures have been [5], reefs have shown an encouraging ability to recover.

[1] diversity / diverse / diversify / diversely

[2] known / called / named / referred

[3] further / farther / furthest / furthermore

[4] at / in / on / by

[5] implemented / implementing / implement / implements

Answers: [1] diversity; [2] known; [3] further; [4] at; [5] implemented. [1] A noun is needed after this extraordinary. [2] Known as is the fixed phrase; called and named take no as, and referred needs to. [3] Further means additional; farther is physical distance and furthermore is a sentence linker. [4] Action is taken at a level. [5] Have been plus past participle forms the passive.

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Dropdown 3 · The Printing Revolution

Before printing with movable type reached Europe, books were copied by hand, a slow and costly process that kept written knowledge in the hands of a small [1]. A single copy of a long text could take a scribe many months to complete. The arrival of the printing press changed this [2]. Within a few decades, presses were operating in hundreds of towns, and the price of books fell sharply. Ideas could now travel faster and further than ever before, and readers in distant cities could study [3] the same text. Historians argue that this had deep consequences for religion, science and politics. Reformers used cheap pamphlets to spread their views, scientists shared observations and corrected one another's errors, and governments found it harder to control what people read. Literacy rose as books became affordable, which in turn [4] demand for more printing. Some scholars caution against giving the press all the credit, pointing out that social and economic changes were already under way. [5], few would deny that the technology accelerated them.

[1] circle / circled / circular / circles

[2] dramatically / dramatic / drama / dramatise

[3] exactly / exact / exactness / exacting

[4] increased / increasing / to increase / increase

[5] Nevertheless / Therefore / Similarly / Meanwhile

Answers: [1] circle; [2] dramatically; [3] exactly; [4] increased; [5] Nevertheless. [1] A small takes a singular noun. [2] An adverb is needed to describe how the press changed things. [3] Exactly the same is the fixed phrase. [4] Which in turn needs a finite past verb to match rose. [5] The final sentence contrasts with the scholars' caution.

Dropdown 4 · Inflation and Everyday Life

Inflation is the general rise in prices over time, and it affects almost every decision a household makes. When prices rise faster than wages, people can buy less with the same income, so their [1] standard of living falls. Central banks try to keep inflation low and stable, usually by adjusting interest rates. Higher rates make borrowing more expensive, which [2] spending and slows the rise in prices. Lower rates have the [3] effect, encouraging people and businesses to spend and invest. Economists disagree about how quickly these tools work, but most accept that a small amount of inflation is healthy because it encourages spending rather than hoarding. Very high inflation, [4], can be destructive. Savings lose value, businesses struggle to plan and workers demand ever larger pay rises, creating a cycle that is difficult to break. Governments therefore watch price data closely and publish regular reports. For ordinary families, understanding inflation helps them to make [5] choices about saving, borrowing and large purchases.

[1] real / really / reality / realise

[2] discourages / discourage / discouraging / discouraged

[3] opposite / opposition / oppose / oppositely

[4] however / moreover / therefore / similarly

[5] informed / informing / information / inform

Answers: [1] real; [2] discourages; [3] opposite; [4] however; [5] informed. [1] An adjective is needed before the noun phrase standard of living. [2] Which refers to one fact, so a singular present verb is needed, matching slows. [3] The opposite effect is the collocation. [4] Very high inflation contrasts with a small amount being healthy. [5] Informed choices is the collocation; a participle adjective is needed.



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Dropdown 5 · How Vaccines Train the Body

The human immune system has a remarkable ability to remember. When a harmful microbe enters the body for the first time, the immune system takes several days to [1] a response, which is why we often feel ill before we recover. Once the threat has been defeated, special memory cells remain in the blood, ready to act quickly if the same microbe returns. Vaccines take [2] of this process. They introduce a harmless version or fragment of a microbe so that the body produces memory cells without suffering the disease itself. Should the real infection arrive later, the response is fast and strong, and in many cases the person never [3] symptoms at all. Vaccination programmes have led to the near disappearance of several diseases that once killed millions of children every year. Scientists continue to refine the technology, developing vaccines that are easier to store and that protect [4] a wider range of strains. Public confidence remains essential, however, because a vaccine that is not [5] used cannot protect a community.

[1] mount / climb / lift / rise

[2] advantage / benefit / profit / gain

[3] develops / develop / developing / development

[4] against / to / for / by

[5] widely / wide / width / widen

Answers: [1] mount; [2] advantage; [3] develops; [4] against; [5] widely. [1] Mount a response is the collocation. [2] Take advantage of is a fixed phrase. [3] The person is singular, so the present verb takes s. [4] Protect against is the preposition pair here. [5] An adverb is needed before the participle used.

Dropdown 6 · Machine Learning in Plain Terms

Machine learning is a branch of computing in which programs improve at a task by studying examples rather than following fixed instructions. A system designed to recognise handwriting, for instance, is shown thousands of samples [1] with the correct letter. Over time it adjusts its internal settings until its guesses become [2] accurate. The approach has proved powerful because many problems are too complex to describe with rules. Translating speech, detecting fraud and recommending films all involve patterns that humans find hard to put into words but that a system can [3] from data. The method has limits, however. A program is only as good as the examples it learns from, and if those examples contain bias, the program will repeat it. Large systems also [4] enormous amounts of electricity, raising environmental concerns. Researchers are therefore working on ways to make learning more efficient and to explain how a system reached a decision. Such transparency is likely to become a legal [5] in sectors such as banking and medicine.

[1] labelled / labelling / label / labels

[2] increasingly / increasing / increase / increased

[3] extract / extracting / extracted / extraction

[4] consume / consumes / consuming / consumption

[5] requirement / require / required / requiring

Answers: [1] labelled; [2] increasingly; [3] extract; [4] consume; [5] requirement. [1] A past participle describes the samples (samples that are labelled). [2] An adverb is needed before the adjective accurate. [3] After the modal can, the verb stays in its base form. [4] Large systems is plural, so no s on the verb. [5] A noun is needed after the adjective legal.



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Dropdown 7 · Why Languages Disappear

Linguists estimate that roughly seven thousand languages are spoken in the world today, and that nearly half of them could vanish within a century. A language dies when its last fluent speakers pass away without [1] it on to younger generations. This usually happens gradually. Parents stop using the language at home because they believe that a dominant national or global language offers their children better [2] in education and work. Within two or three generations, the older tongue survives only in songs, place names and the memories of the elderly. The loss matters for several reasons. Each language [3] a unique way of describing the world, including detailed knowledge of local plants, animals and weather that may exist nowhere else. Communities that lose their language often report a weaker sense of identity. Efforts to reverse the trend have had some success. Schools that teach [4] a local and a national language, recorded archives and community radio have all helped. The most important factor, [5], is whether young people themselves choose to speak it.

[1] passing / pass / passed / passes

[2] prospects / prospect / prospective / prospecting

[3] encodes / encode / encoding / encoded

[4] both / either / neither / each

[5] though / although / despite / whereas

Answers: [1] passing; [2] prospects; [3] encodes; [4] both; [5] though. [1] After the preposition without, the verb takes the ing form. [2] Better prospects is the plural collocation; a singular would need an article. [3] Each language is singular, so the verb takes s. [4] Both ... and is the correct pair. [5] Only though can sit between commas as an adverb; the others must begin a clause.

Dropdown 8 · The Rise of Remote Work

For most of the last century, work meant travelling to a fixed location and remaining there for set hours. Improvements in communication technology have made this [1] unnecessary for many office jobs. Employees can now attend meetings, share documents and manage projects from home, and a large number of companies have adopted hybrid arrangements that combine remote and on-site days. Supporters point to shorter commutes, lower office costs and greater flexibility for parents and carers. Surveys suggest that many workers would accept a lower salary [2] exchange for the freedom to choose where they work. Critics, however, warn that remote work can weaken team spirit, blur the line between work and private life and make it harder for junior staff to learn from [3] colleagues. There is also evidence that promotion decisions favour those who are physically present. The long term effects on city centres remain [4], as fewer commuters means less spending in shops, cafes and transport. What seems clear is that the office will not disappear, but its [5] is changing from a place of daily attendance to a place of occasional collaboration.

[1] arrangement / arranging / arrange / arranged

[2] in / on / at / for

[3] experienced / experience / experiencing / experiences

[4] uncertain / uncertainly / uncertainty / certainly

[5] purpose / purposely / purposeful / purposes

Answers: [1] arrangement; [2] in; [3] experienced; [4] uncertain; [5] purpose. [1] A noun is needed after this. [2] In exchange for is a fixed phrase. [3] An adjective is needed before the noun colleagues. [4] Remain is followed by an adjective; certainly is an adverb and reverses the sense. [5] Its is followed by a singular noun that agrees with is.

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Dropdown 9 · Soil: The Living Skin

Soil is often dismissed as mere dirt, yet a single handful contains more living organisms than there are people on the planet. Bacteria, fungi, worms and insects break down dead material and release the nutrients that plants [1] to grow. This hidden activity underpins nearly all food production. Healthy soil also stores vast quantities of carbon and absorbs rainfall, reducing both climate change and the risk of flooding. [2] its importance, soil is being lost at an alarming rate. Intensive farming, deforestation and construction strip away the fertile top layer, which can take hundreds of years to form but only a few seasons to destroy. Scientists estimate that a third of the world's farmland is already [3] degraded. Fortunately, the damage can be reversed. Farmers who rotate crops, plant cover crops in winter and reduce ploughing have seen their soils recover within a decade. Governments are beginning to reward such practices through subsidies and through rules on land use that are [4] than before. Treating soil as a living resource [5] than a dead surface may be one of the most important changes agriculture can make.

[1] need / needs / needing / needed

[2] Despite / Although / However / Because

[3] moderately / moderate / moderation / moderating

[4] stricter / strict / strictly / strictest

[5] rather / more / other / better

Answers: [1] need; [2] Despite; [3] moderately; [4] stricter; [5] rather. [1] Plants is plural, so the present verb has no s. [2] A preposition is needed before the noun phrase its importance; although needs a clause. [3] An adverb is needed before the participle degraded. [4] Than signals a comparative. [5] Rather than is the fixed phrase.

Dropdown 10 · The Mathematics of Music

The connection between mathematics and music was noticed thousands of years ago. Early thinkers observed that strings whose lengths formed simple ratios produced sounds that were pleasing when played [1]. A string half the length of another sounds the same note an octave higher, and a ratio of two to three gives the interval known as a fifth. These relationships form the [2] of nearly every musical scale in the world. Rhythm is equally mathematical. Composers divide time into regular beats and group them into patterns, and listeners feel tension when a pattern is broken and relief when it [3]. Modern research has gone further, showing that the brain responds to music using many of the same regions that handle number and language. Children who study an instrument often perform [4] than their peers in tests of spatial reasoning, although scientists debate whether the music itself is responsible or whether disciplined practice is the real cause. [5] the explanation, the ancient insight remains: music is organised sound, and organisation is a matter of number.

[1] together / apart / alone / separately

[2] basis / basic / basically / basing

[3] returns / return / returning / returned

[4] better / good / well / best

[5] Whatever / However / Whenever / Wherever

Answers: [1] together; [2] basis; [3] returns; [4] better; [5] Whatever. [1] Ratios between strings are heard when the strings are played together. [2] Form the basis of is the collocation; a noun is needed after the. [3] It is singular and the sentence is in the present tense. [4] Than requires a comparative. [5] Whatever the explanation means regardless of the explanation.



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Dropdown 11 · Antibiotic Resistance

Antibiotics are among the most important discoveries in medicine, turning once deadly infections into conditions that can be cured in days. Their success, however, has created a serious problem. Bacteria reproduce rapidly and occasionally mutate, and any mutation that allows a bacterium to [1] an antibiotic will spread quickly through the population because the drug kills its competitors. The more often antibiotics are used, the faster resistance [2]. Doctors prescribing the drugs for viral illnesses, on which they have no effect, and farmers adding them to animal feed have both accelerated the process. Some infections are now resistant to almost every available treatment. Health agencies warn that, without action, routine surgery could become dangerous because of the [3] of untreatable infection. The response must combine several measures: using antibiotics only when necessary, completing the full course so that no bacteria survive, and investing in new drugs. Pharmaceutical companies have been [4] to fund research because new antibiotics are used sparingly and earn little profit. Governments are therefore exploring ways to reward discovery [5] of sales volume.

[1] survive / survival / surviving / survived

[2] develops / develop / developing / development

[3] risk / risky / riskily / risked

[4] reluctant / reluctance / reluctantly / reluctances

[5] independently / independent / independence / depending

Answers: [1] survive; [2] develops; [3] risk; [4] reluctant; [5] independently. [1] After to, the verb takes its base form. [2] Resistance is singular, so the present verb takes s. [3] A noun is needed after the and before of. [4] Have been is followed by an adjective; reluctant is the pair. [5] Independently of means regardless of; an adverb is needed after the noun discovery.

Dropdown 12 · Teaching Critical Thinking

Schools have traditionally measured success by how much information students can [1] and reproduce in examinations. In an age when facts are available instantly on any device, many educators argue that this emphasis is misplaced. What students need, they say, is the ability to judge whether a claim is reliable, to spot weak arguments and to change their minds when the evidence [2]. These skills, grouped under the label of critical thinking, are harder to teach than facts because they cannot simply be memorised. Teachers who succeed tend to ask open questions, present [3] viewpoints on the same issue and reward students for explaining their reasoning rather than for reaching a particular answer. Research shows that such methods improve performance not only in humanities subjects but also in science and mathematics, where students must evaluate data and detect errors. Critics worry that critical thinking is sometimes taught [4] the expense of basic knowledge, pointing out that one cannot reason well about a topic one knows nothing about. The most effective classrooms, it seems, do both: they build a solid base of knowledge and then train students to [5] it.

[1] memorise / memory / memorable / memorably

[2] demands / demand / demanding / demanded

[3] competing / compete / competition / competed

[4] at / in / on / for

[5] question / questions / questioning / questioned

Answers: [1] memorise; [2] demands; [3] competing; [4] at; [5] question. [1] After can, a base verb is needed, parallel with reproduce. [2] The evidence is singular and the sentence is in the present tense. [3] Competing viewpoints is the collocation; an adjective form is needed before the noun. [4] At the expense of is a fixed phrase. [5] After train students to, the verb takes its base form.



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Dropdown 13 · The Silk Routes

The trade routes that connected the eastern and western ends of the ancient world were not a single road but a network of paths across mountains, deserts and seas. Merchants rarely travelled the [1] distance. Instead, goods passed from one trader to the next, changing hands many times before reaching their final market. Silk was the most famous product, but spices, glass, paper, horses and precious metals also moved along the routes, [2] with religions, technologies and diseases. Cities that lay on the network grew wealthy by taxing the caravans and offering lodging, water and protection. Their ruins, with their markets and caravanserais, still show how [3] the trade once was. The routes declined when sea travel became cheaper and safer, and when political instability made overland journeys too risky. Historians today stress that the exchange was never one way. Techniques for making paper and gunpowder travelled west, while glassmaking and certain crops travelled east. The modern world, [4] its global supply chains, is in many ways the [5] of a process that began on these dusty tracks.

[1] entire / entirely / entirety / entireness

[2] along / apart / among / beside

[3] prosperous / prosperity / prosper / prosperously

[4] with / by / at / on

[5] continuation / continue / continuous / continually

Answers: [1] entire; [2] along; [3] prosperous; [4] with; [5] continuation. [1] An adjective is needed between the and distance. [2] Along with means together with. [3] How plus adjective describes the trade; prosperity is a noun. [4] With its global supply chains describes a feature of the modern world. [5] A noun is needed after the and before of.

Dropdown 14 · Plastic in the Oceans

Every year, millions of tonnes of plastic enter the world's oceans, carried by rivers, blown from landfill sites or dumped directly from ships. Unlike natural materials, plastic does not decay. Instead, sunlight and waves break it into ever smaller fragments [1] as microplastics, which are now found in Arctic ice, deep sea sediment and the bodies of fish sold for human consumption. The effects on marine life are well documented. Turtles mistake bags for jellyfish, seabirds feed plastic pieces to their chicks and whales have been found with stomachs full of debris. The effects on human health are less certain, but the [2] of plastic particles in blood and organs has prompted urgent research. Solutions exist at every stage of the problem. Manufacturers can design packaging that is easier to recycle, governments can ban single use items and improve waste collection, and consumers can reduce the amount they [3]. Clean up projects that collect floating rubbish attract attention, but most experts agree that [4] plastic from entering the sea in the first place is far more effective than removing it [5].

[1] known / knowing / know / knew

[2] discovery / discover / discovered / discovering

[3] discard / discarding / discarded / discards

[4] preventing / prevent / prevented / prevention

[5] afterwards / beforehand / previously / earlier

Answers: [1] known; [2] discovery; [3] discard; [4] preventing; [5] afterwards. [1] Known as is the fixed phrase. [2] A noun is needed after the and before of. [3] They takes a plural present verb with no s. [4] The subject of is must be an ing form (preventing ... is); prevention would need of. [5] Removing plastic happens after it has entered the sea.

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Dropdown 15 · Supply and Demand

The price of almost everything, from bread to housing, is shaped by the relationship between how much people want and how much is available. When a product is scarce and many buyers compete for it, sellers can [1] higher prices. When supply exceeds demand, prices fall until buyers are tempted back. This simple idea explains why fresh strawberries cost more in winter and why hotel rooms are more expensive during holidays. Markets rarely stay in balance for long, [2], because conditions change constantly. A poor harvest, a new fashion or a change in interest rates can shift either side of the equation. Governments sometimes intervene by setting [3] prices or minimum wages, and economists debate the effects of such controls. A price cap on rent, for example, may help existing tenants but discourage landlords from offering new homes, [4] to shortages. Understanding supply and demand does not allow anyone to predict prices [5], but it provides a framework for thinking about why they move as they do.

[1] charge / cost / pay / spend

[2] however / therefore / moreover / instead

[3] maximum / maximise / maximally / maximised

[4] leading / led / lead / leads

[5] precisely / precise / precision / preciseness

Answers: [1] charge; [2] however; [3] maximum; [4] leading; [5] precisely. [1] Sellers charge prices; buyers pay them. [2] The sentence contrasts with the idea of balance. [3] Maximum prices pairs with minimum wages; a noun used as a modifier is needed. [4] A participle clause (leading to) shows the result. [5] An adverb is needed after the verb predict.

Dropdown 16 · Renewable Energy Storage

Wind turbines and solar panels now produce electricity more cheaply than coal in many parts of the world. Their great weakness is that they generate power only when the wind blows or the sun shines, which does not always [1] with when people need it. Storage is therefore the missing piece of the renewable puzzle. Batteries are the most familiar solution, and their cost has fallen dramatically, but they are best suited to [2] energy for a few hours rather than for days or weeks. Other methods are being developed. Pumped hydro uses surplus electricity to push water uphill into a reservoir, releasing it through turbines when demand rises. Some projects compress air in underground caverns, while others convert electricity into hydrogen that can be stored and later burned or fed into fuel cells. Each method has [3] in cost, efficiency and location. A mountainous country can rely on pumped hydro, [4] a flat one cannot. Engineers expect that a mix of technologies, rather than a single winner, will eventually make a grid powered [5] by renewables both reliable and affordable.

[1] coincide / coincidence / coincident / coincidental

[2] storing / store / stores / stored

[3] drawbacks / drawback / drawing / drawn

[4] whereas / because / unless / so that

[5] entirely / entire / entirety / entireness

Answers: [1] coincide; [2] storing; [3] drawbacks; [4] whereas; [5] entirely. [1] After does not always, a base verb is needed; coincide with is the pair. [2] Suited to is followed by a noun or ing form. [3] A plural noun is needed; a singular would need an article. [4] The two halves contrast, so whereas is needed. [5] An adverb is needed to describe the participle powered.



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Dropdown 17 · The Ageing Population

In most developed countries, people are living longer and having fewer children. The result is a population in which the [1] of older people is rising steadily. This shift brings both achievements and challenges. Longer lives reflect better nutrition, safer workplaces and advances in medicine, and many people now enjoy two or three decades of active retirement. At the same time, pensions and health services must be paid for by a shrinking number of workers. Governments have responded by raising the retirement age, encouraging immigration and [2] people to save more for their old age. Some economists argue that older workers should be seen as a resource rather than a burden, since they bring experience and often wish to remain [3] employed. Employers, however, are sometimes slow to adapt their workplaces. Care for the very old is another concern. Families are smaller and more dispersed, so the [4] on professional carers grows every year. Countries that plan early, by building suitable housing and training care staff, are likely to cope far better than [5] that wait for a crisis.

[1] proportion / proportional / proportionally / proportioned

[2] urging / urge / urged / urgent

[3] partly / part / partial / parts

[4] reliance / rely / reliant / reliable

[5] those / these / them / they

Answers: [1] proportion; [2] urging; [3] partly; [4] reliance; [5] those. [1] A noun is needed after the and before of. [2] The list is parallel: raising, encouraging and urging. [3] An adverb is needed before the adjective employed. [4] A noun is needed after the; reliance on is the pair. [5] Those that wait refers back to countries.

Dropdown 18 · The Chemistry of Cooking

Cooking is chemistry performed in a kitchen. When meat is heated, proteins on its surface react with sugars to produce hundreds of new compounds that give roasted food its brown colour and rich flavour. This reaction occurs only at high temperatures, which is [1] boiled meat tastes so different from grilled meat. Bread rises because yeast feeds on sugar and releases carbon dioxide, which is trapped by a stretchy network of proteins called gluten. Kneading strengthens this network, [2] bread with a chewy texture, while cakes are mixed gently to keep them soft. Even a simple act such as adding salt has chemical effects: it draws moisture from vegetables, tightens proteins in meat and [3] the perception of sweetness. Understanding these processes allows cooks to control results rather than relying on luck. A chef who knows that acid prevents fruit from browning can keep sliced apples fresh, and one who understands emulsions can rescue a sauce that has [4]. Science classrooms have begun to use cooking as a way of teaching chemistry, since students are far more [5] in a reaction they can eat.

[1] why / because / how / what

[2] giving / gives / gave / given

[3] enhances / enhance / enhancing / enhancement

[4] separated / separate / separating / separates

[5] interested / interesting / interest / interests

Answers: [1] why; [2] giving; [3] enhances; [4] separated; [5] interested. [1] Which is why introduces the result. [2] A participle clause is needed after the comma. [3] The list is parallel: draws, tightens and enhances. [4] Has plus past participle forms the present perfect. [5] Interested in describes people; interesting describes things.



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Dropdown 19 · Reading in a Digital Age

Children today encounter more written text than any previous generation, but much of it arrives in short bursts on screens rather than in books. Researchers have begun to ask whether this changes how young people read. Several studies suggest that readers [1] information slightly better from paper than from a screen, particularly when the text is long or complex. One explanation is that screens invite skimming, scrolling and constant switching between tasks, [2] a printed page encourages sustained attention. Another is that the physical layout of a book helps the memory: readers often recall where on a page a fact appeared. The differences are small, however, and they shrink when readers are [3] to the device. Digital reading also offers advantages that paper cannot match, including instant definitions, adjustable text size and access to vast libraries at no cost. Teachers therefore face a question of balance rather than a choice between two [4]. The most sensible advice is to match the medium to the purpose: screens for quick reference and discussion, paper for deep reading that [5] concentration.

[1] retain / retention / retentive / retained

[2] whereas / despite / however / otherwise

[3] accustomed / familiar / capable / likely

[4] extremes / extreme / extremely / extremity

[5] requires / require / requiring / required

Answers: [1] retain; [2] whereas; [3] accustomed; [4] extremes; [5] requires. [1] Readers is plural, so the present verb has no s. [2] Whereas joins two contrasting clauses; however would need a full stop or semicolon. [3] Accustomed to is the pair; familiar takes with. [4] Two is followed by a plural noun. [5] Reading is singular, so the verb takes s.

Dropdown 20 · Volcanoes and Climate

Volcanic eruptions are among the most dramatic events on Earth, and their effects reach far beyond the surrounding area. A large eruption throws enormous quantities of ash and gas high into the atmosphere. The ash falls back within days, but sulphur dioxide can remain in the upper air for years, where it forms tiny droplets that [1] sunlight back into space. The result is a cooling of the planet that can be measured in global temperature records. After one major eruption in the past, crops failed across several continents and the following summer was so cold that it became known as the year without a summer. Scientists study these episodes [2] because they offer a natural experiment in how the climate responds to changes in sunlight. Some engineers have even proposed copying the effect [3] by releasing particles into the stratosphere to offset global warming. Most climate researchers are [4] of this idea, warning that the side effects on rainfall and crops are poorly understood and that it would do nothing to reduce the carbon dioxide that causes the problem in the first [5].

[1] reflect / reflects / reflecting / reflection

[2] closely / close / closeness / closer

[3] deliberately / deliberate / deliberation / deliberated

[4] wary / weary / wearing / warning

[5] place / time / point / case

Answers: [1] reflect; [2] closely; [3] deliberately; [4] wary; [5] place. [1] Droplets is plural, so the present verb has no s. [2] An adverb is needed to describe how scientists study. [3] An adverb is needed after the noun phrase the effect. [4] Wary of means cautious about; weary means tired. [5] In the first place is a fixed phrase.

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Dropdown 21 · The Economics of Tourism

Tourism is one of the largest industries in the world, employing roughly one in ten workers and bringing foreign currency to countries that may have few other exports. For small island nations in particular, visitors can [1] for more than half of national income. The benefits spread widely: hotels buy food from local farms, tour operators hire guides and drivers, and craft makers find customers for their goods. Yet the industry has a darker side. Popular destinations can become so [2] that residents are priced out of housing, historic streets turn into rows of souvenir shops and fragile environments are trampled. Income may also leak away when hotels are owned by foreign companies and staffed by seasonal workers from abroad. Governments have begun to respond with visitor taxes, limits on cruise ships and campaigns that [3] travellers to less crowded regions. The aim is not to discourage tourism but to manage it so that the [4] are shared more fairly. Destinations that succeed tend to involve local communities in planning and to [5] long term protection of the places that attract visitors in the first place.

[1] account / count / amount / stand

[2] crowded / crowd / crowding / crowds

[3] direct / directly / direction / directed

[4] benefits / benefit / beneficial / beneficially

[5] prioritise / priority / prior / prioritised

Answers: [1] account; [2] crowded; [3] direct; [4] benefits; [5] prioritise. [1] Account for means make up a share of. [2] So is followed by an adjective here. [3] Campaigns is plural, so a base present verb is needed. [4] A plural noun is needed to agree with are. [5] After to, a base verb is needed, parallel with involve.

Dropdown 22 · The Human Microbiome

The human body is home to trillions of microbes, most of them living in the gut. Together they are known as the microbiome, and research over the past few decades has transformed our understanding of their [1]. Far from being passive passengers, these bacteria help to digest food, produce vitamins and train the immune system to tell friend from foe. Disturbances to the microbiome have been linked to allergies, obesity and even mood disorders, [2] scientists caution that many of these links are not yet proven to be causal. Diet is the strongest influence on which microbes thrive. A varied diet rich in fibre supports a diverse community, whereas a diet of processed food [3] diversity. Antibiotics, while sometimes essential, can wipe out beneficial species along with harmful ones, and it may take months for the community to recover. Some doctors now transplant gut bacteria from healthy donors to treat stubborn infections, with [4] results. The field is young, and many claims made by supplement sellers go well beyond the evidence. Still, the idea that we are partly shaped by the organisms we [5] is here to stay.

[1] importance / important / importantly / importing

[2] although / despite / because / unless

[3] reduces / reduce / reducing / reduction

[4] impressive / impression / impress / impressively

[5] host / hosts / hosted / hosting

Answers: [1] importance; [2] although; [3] reduces; [4] impressive; [5] host. [1] A noun is needed after their. [2] Although introduces a contrasting clause; despite needs a noun. [3] A diet is singular, so the present verb takes s. [4] An adjective is needed before the noun results. [5] We takes a base present verb.



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Dropdown 23 · Learning a Second Language

Adults often assume that children learn languages effortlessly while they themselves struggle. The truth is more complicated. Young children do acquire native-like pronunciation more easily, probably because the brain is still [1] to sounds it has never heard. Adults, on the other hand, learn grammar and vocabulary faster in the early stages because they can use reasoning, memory strategies and knowledge of their first language. What adults lack is usually not ability but time and opportunity. A child in a new country spends every day surrounded by the language, [2] an adult may hear it for only a few hours a week. Research into successful adult learners shows some common habits. They accept mistakes as a normal part of the process, they seek out conversation rather than avoiding it and they review material at [3] intervals so that it moves into long term memory. Motivation matters more than talent: learners with a clear reason to speak a language, such as a job or a partner, tend to [4] further than those studying out of general interest. The message is encouraging. There is no age [5] which learning becomes impossible.

[1] sensitive / sensitively / sensitivity / sensing

[2] whereas / despite / therefore / unless

[3] regular / regularly / regularity / regulate

[4] progress / progressive / progression / progressively

[5] beyond / during / since / until

Answers: [1] sensitive; [2] whereas; [3] regular; [4] progress; [5] beyond. [1] Is still is followed by an adjective; sensitive to is the pair. [2] The two situations contrast, so whereas is needed. [3] An adjective is needed before the noun intervals. [4] After tend to, a base verb is needed. [5] Beyond which means after which point.

Dropdown 24 · Honeybees and Pollination

Roughly one third of the food we eat depends on pollination by insects, and honeybees are among the most important of these workers. As a bee moves from flower to flower collecting nectar, pollen clings to its body and is [1] to the next plant, allowing fruit and seeds to form. Without this service, crops such as apples, almonds and berries would produce [2] smaller harvests, and some would fail altogether. In recent decades beekeepers in many countries have reported heavy losses of their colonies. No single cause has been identified. Instead, scientists point to a [3] of pressures: parasitic mites, viral diseases, loss of wild flowers and exposure to certain pesticides. Each weakens the colony, and together they can be fatal. Wild bees and other pollinators face the same threats, often with less attention. Farmers and gardeners can help by planting flowering hedges, leaving some land uncultivated and [4] chemicals during flowering periods. Several governments have restricted the pesticides most strongly suspected of harm, although manufacturers [5] the evidence. The health of these small insects, it turns out, is closely tied to our own.

[1] transferred / transfer / transferring / transfers

[2] far / very / highly / greatly

[3] combination / combine / combined / combining

[4] avoiding / avoid / avoided / avoidance

[5] dispute / disputes / disputing / disputed

Answers: [1] transferred; [2] far; [3] combination; [4] avoiding; [5] dispute. [1] Is plus past participle forms the passive. [2] Far strengthens a comparative; very cannot be used before smaller. [3] A noun is needed after a and before of. [4] The list is parallel: planting, leaving and avoiding. [5] Manufacturers is plural, so the present verb has no s.



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Dropdown 25 · Cities and Heat

Cities are hotter than the countryside around them, sometimes by several degrees. Concrete, asphalt and brick absorb the sun's energy during the day and release it slowly at night, while tall buildings trap warm air and block cooling winds. Vehicles, air conditioners and factories add [1] heat of their own. This urban heat island effect has serious [2] for health, especially during heatwaves, when the elderly and the very young are at greatest risk. It also increases electricity demand as residents turn up their cooling, which in turn produces more waste heat and more emissions. Planners have a growing toolkit for cooling cities. Trees provide shade and release moisture, parks break up the mass of hard surfaces and light coloured roofs reflect sunlight [3] than dark ones. Some cities require new buildings to include green roofs, and others have painted streets white. Water features, from fountains to restored rivers, also help. The [4] of these measures depends on climate and on how widely they are adopted, but studies suggest that a well planned city can be noticeably cooler than a [5] planned one.

[1] additional / addition / additionally / add

[2] consequences / consequent / consequently / consequence

[3] better / good / well / best

[4] effectiveness / effective / effectively / effect

[5] poorly / poor / poorer / poorest

Answers: [1] additional; [2] consequences; [3] better; [4] effectiveness; [5] poorly. [1] An adjective is needed before the noun heat. [2] A plural noun is needed; the singular would need an article. [3] Than requires a comparative. [4] A noun is needed after the and before of. [5] An adverb is needed before the participle planned, matching well planned.

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SECTION 4

Reading: Fill in the Blanks (25 items)

Drag the right word from the box into each gap. Three words in every box are distractors.

Drag and Drop 1 · The Water Cycle

Water moves constantly between the oceans, the air and the land. Heat from the sun causes water to [1] from lakes and seas. As the vapour cools, it condenses into clouds, and when the droplets grow heavy enough they fall as rain or snow. Rivers carry this water back [2] the sea, while some sinks into the ground. The cycle has no beginning and no end, and the total [3] of water on the planet remains almost [4].

quickly

shallow

evaporation

evaporate

constant

towards

amount

Answers: [1] evaporate; [2] towards; [3] amount; [4] constant. [1] After to, a base verb is needed. [2] Back towards the sea gives direction. [3] A noun is needed after the total. [4] Remains is followed by an adjective.

Drag and Drop 2 · Losing the Forests

Forests cover about a third of the land on Earth, yet they are being cleared at an alarming [1]. Trees are cut for timber, and land is burned to make room for cattle and crops. The loss has consequences far beyond the forest itself. Trees absorb carbon dioxide, so removing them [2] to climate change. They also hold soil in place, and without them heavy rain [3] away fertile ground. Many countries now pay landowners to keep forests [4].

standing

wooden

contribution

contributes

rate

rapidly

washes

Answers: [1] rate; [2] contributes; [3] washes; [4] standing. [1] At an alarming rate is the collocation. [2] Removing them is a singular subject; contributes to is the pair. [3] Heavy rain is singular, so the verb takes s. [4] Keep forests standing means prevent them being cut.

Drag and Drop 3 · The Invention of Paper

Before paper existed, people wrote on clay, stone and animal skins. These materials were heavy, costly or [1] to produce. Paper was first made in the East from plant fibres soaked in water, beaten into pulp and dried in thin sheets. The technique spread slowly westward along trade routes, [2] by merchants and prisoners of war. Cheap and light, paper made books [3] to copy and letters easier to send, and it [4] transformed government, trade and learning.

simpler

carrying

speed

carried

slow

simplicity

eventually

Answers: [1] slow; [2] carried; [3] simpler; [4] eventually. [1] An adjective is needed, parallel with heavy and costly. [2] A past participle is needed before by. [3] A comparative adjective is needed, parallel with easier. [4] An adverb is needed between it and the verb transformed.

Drag and Drop 4 · Interest Rates

When a central bank raises interest rates, borrowing becomes more expensive. Families [1] off buying homes and cars, and businesses delay new projects. Spending falls, and prices rise more slowly. Lower rates have the [2] effect: cheap loans encourage people to spend and invest. Setting the right rate is difficult because the full effect takes many months to [3]. Bankers must therefore act on forecasts rather than on [4] conditions, which is why their decisions are so often debated.

current

reversal

appear

reverse

currently

putting

put

Answers: [1] put; [2] reverse; [3] appear; [4] current. [1] Put off means postpone; a present plural verb is needed. [2] The reverse effect is the collocation; an adjective is needed before effect. [3] After to, a base verb is needed. [4] An adjective is needed before the noun conditions.

Drag and Drop 5 · Smartphones and Attention

The average person checks a phone dozens of times a day, often without a [1] reason. Each glance seems harmless, but researchers have found that even a silent phone on the desk reduces [2] on a difficult task. The brain spends effort resisting the urge to look. Students who leave their phones in another room [3] better on memory tests than those who keep them nearby. The simplest advice is also the most effective: put the device out of [4].

performance

score

performing

clear

sight

sighted

clearly

Answers: [1] clear; [2] performance; [3] score; [4] sight. [1] An adjective is needed between a and reason. [2] A noun is needed after reduces. [3] Students is plural, so a base present verb is needed. [4] Out of sight is a fixed phrase.

Drag and Drop 6 · The Homework Debate

Few topics divide parents and teachers as sharply as homework. Supporters argue that it [1] what was learned in class and teaches children to manage their time. Critics reply that young children gain little from it and that it eats into family life and play. Research offers some [2]: for older students, moderate amounts of homework are linked with better results, but the benefit disappears when the [3] becomes excessive. Quality, it seems, matters more than [4].

guided

quantify

reinforces

quantity

workload

guidance

reinforcing

Answers: [1] reinforces; [2] guidance; [3] workload; [4] quantity. [1] It is singular, so the present verb takes s, matching teaches. [2] A noun is needed after some. [3] A noun is needed after the. [4] A noun is needed to contrast with quality.

Drag and Drop 7 · Exercise and the Brain

Physical activity is praised for its effect on the heart, but it also benefits the brain. During exercise, blood flow to the brain [1], delivering oxygen and nutrients. Regular activity has been shown to improve memory and to lower the [2] of depression. Scientists believe that exercise stimulates the growth of new connections between brain cells. Even a brisk walk of twenty minutes can [3] mood for several hours, which is why doctors increasingly [4] it alongside medicine.

recommend

risky

increases

risk

recommendation

lift

increasing

Answers: [1] increases; [2] risk; [3] lift; [4] recommend. [1] Blood flow is singular, so the present verb takes s. [2] A noun is needed after the; risk of is the pair. [3] After can, a base verb is needed; lift mood is the collocation. [4] Doctors is plural, so a base present verb is needed.

Drag and Drop 8 · Festivals and Community

Festivals exist in every culture, and they serve purposes that go far beyond entertainment. Shared celebrations bring neighbours together, [1] traditions from one generation to the next and give people a sense of belonging. Preparing food, music and decorations requires cooperation, and the effort itself [2] bonds. Researchers who study wellbeing note that communities with strong festival traditions often report higher levels of trust. In an age of individual screens, such [3] gatherings may be more [4] than ever.

strengthens valuable value strength passage pass collective

Answers: [1] pass; [2] strengthens; [3] collective; [4] valuable. [1] The list is parallel: bring, pass and give. [2] The effort is singular, so the present verb takes s. [3] An adjective is needed before the noun gatherings. [4] More plus adjective forms the comparative before than.

Drag and Drop 9 · Earthquake Engineering

Earthquakes cannot be prevented, but their damage can be greatly [1]. Engineers design buildings that bend rather than break, using flexible steel frames and foundations that [2] the structure from the shaking ground. Strict building codes have saved countless lives: an earthquake that kills thousands in one region may cause only minor [3] in another. The difference lies not in the strength of the quake but in the [4] of the construction.

reduced injuries isolation qualified quality isolate reduction

Answers: [1] reduced; [2] isolate; [3] injuries; [4] quality. [1] Can be plus past participle forms the passive. [2] Foundations is plural, so a base present verb is needed. [3] A plural noun is needed after minor to contrast with thousands killed. [4] A noun is needed after the and before of.



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Drag and Drop 10 · The Minimum Wage

A minimum wage sets the lowest hourly pay an employer may legally [1]. Supporters say it protects workers from exploitation and lifts families out of poverty. Opponents warn that if the rate is too high, businesses will hire fewer people. Evidence from different countries is [2]: modest increases appear to have little effect on employment, while very large ones can cost jobs. Most economists therefore favour gradual rises [3] to local prices rather than a single national [4].

mixed mixture offer linking linked figure offering

Answers: [1] offer; [2] mixed; [3] linked; [4] figure. [1] After may legally, a base verb is needed. [2] Is is followed by an adjective; mixed evidence is the collocation. [3] A past participle is needed: rises that are linked to prices. [4] A singular noun is needed after a single national.

Drag and Drop 11 · The Migration of Birds

Every autumn, billions of birds fly thousands of kilometres to warmer regions. How they find their way remains partly a [1]. Experiments show that birds use the position of the sun and stars, and many can [2] the Earth's magnetic field. Young birds often make the journey without adult guidance, suggesting that the route is partly [3]. Climate change is now shifting the timing of migration, and some species arrive after the insects they depend on have already [4].

mysterious inheritance disappeared inherited mystery sense sensing

Answers: [1] mystery; [2] sense; [3] inherited; [4] disappeared. [1] A noun is needed after a. [2] After can, a base verb is needed. [3] Is partly is followed by a participle adjective. [4] Have already plus past participle forms the present perfect.

Drag and Drop 12 · Plague in Medieval Europe

The plague that swept across medieval Europe killed perhaps a third of the population within a few years. Doctors of the time had no [1] of its cause and relied on prayer, herbs and isolation. The [2] of so many workers changed society: labour became scarce, wages rose and peasants gained the power to [3] better conditions. Historians see it as a turning point that [4] the end of the feudal system.

loss understanding understood demanding hastened lose demand

Answers: [1] understanding; [2] loss; [3] demand; [4] hastened. [1] A noun is needed after no and before of. [2] A noun is needed after the. [3] After to, a base verb is needed. [4] A past tense verb is needed to match the rest of the sentence.

Drag and Drop 13 · Electric Vehicles

Electric cars produce no exhaust fumes, which makes them attractive to cities struggling with air pollution. Their batteries, however, raise [1] of their own. Mining the metals they contain damages landscapes, and recycling old batteries is still [2]. Charging also takes longer than filling a tank. As battery prices fall and charging networks [3], these problems are shrinking, but the [4] to electric transport will take decades.

expand

expansion

difficulty

difficult

transition

concerned

concerns

Answers: [1] concerns; [2] difficult; [3] expand; [4] transition. [1] A plural noun is needed after raise. [2] Is still is followed by an adjective. [3] Networks is plural, so a base present verb is needed, parallel with fall. [4] A noun is needed after the; transition to is the pair.

Drag and Drop 14 · Sugar and Health

Most of the sugar people eat is added to processed food and drinks. Health experts [1] that adults should get no more than a tenth of their daily energy from added sugar, and many consume twice that. Excess sugar is linked to tooth decay, weight gain and a higher [2] of diabetes. Several governments have [3] taxes on sugary drinks, and early results suggest that manufacturers respond by [4] the sugar content of their products.

likely

likelihood

introduced

advice

advise

introduction

cutting

Answers: [1] advise; [2] likelihood; [3] introduced; [4] cutting. [1] Experts is plural, so a base present verb is needed; advice is a noun. [2] A noun is needed after a higher. [3] Have plus past participle forms the present perfect. [4] After the preposition by, the ing form is needed.



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Drag and Drop 15 · Museums in the Digital Age

Museums once measured success by the number of visitors. Today many collections can be [1] online, where a single object may attract more viewers in a week than the building receives in a year. Curators debate whether this is a threat or an [2]. Digital images cannot replace the experience of standing before an original, but they can reach people who will never [3] the chance to travel. The wisest institutions treat the two as [4] rather than rivals.

explored

opportunity

exploring

partners

partly

opportune

have

Answers: [1] explored; [2] opportunity; [3] have; [4] partners. [1] Can be plus past participle forms the passive. [2] A noun beginning with a vowel sound is needed after an. [3] After will never, a base verb is needed; have the chance is the collocation. [4] A plural noun is needed to balance rivals.

Drag and Drop 16 · Glaciers in Retreat

Glaciers are rivers of ice that move slowly downhill. For thousands of years they have [1] water to the valleys below, feeding rivers that millions of people depend on. Almost everywhere they are shrinking. Warmer summers melt more ice than winter snow can [2], and some small glaciers have vanished entirely. The consequences reach far beyond the mountains: as the ice goes, river flows become less [3] and sea levels rise. Scientists monitor the retreat using satellites and [4] measurements.

replace

replacement

supply

ground

predictable

prediction

supplied

Answers: [1] supplied; [2] replace; [3] predictable; [4] ground. [1] Have plus past participle forms the present perfect. [2] After can, a base verb is needed. [3] Less is followed by an adjective here. [4] Ground measurements contrasts with satellites.

Drag and Drop 17 · The Gig Economy

Many people now earn their living from short tasks arranged through apps. Supporters praise the [1] this gives workers, who can choose when and how much to work. Critics point out that such workers rarely receive sick pay, holidays or pension contributions, and that their income can be [2]. Courts in several countries have been asked to decide whether these workers are [3] contractors or employees, and the answer has differed from one [4] to another.

depend

flexible

unstable

jurisdiction

independent

stability

flexibility

Answers: [1] flexibility; [2] unstable; [3] independent; [4] jurisdiction. [1] A noun is needed after the. [2] Can be is followed by an adjective. [3] An adjective is needed before contractors; independent contractor is the collocation. [4] From one ... to another needs a singular noun; a jurisdiction is a legal territory.

Drag and Drop 18 · Light Pollution

For most of human history, the night sky was filled with stars. Today, more than half the world's population lives under skies so bright that the Milky Way is [1]. The loss is not only aesthetic. Artificial light disturbs the [2] of migrating birds, confuses insects and disrupts human sleep. The fix is unusually simple: shielded lamps that point [3], dimmer bulbs and switching lights off when they are not [4].

need visibly behaviour needed invisible downward behave

Answers: [1] invisible; [2] behaviour; [3] downward; [4] needed. [1] Is is followed by an adjective; bright skies hide the stars. [2] A noun is needed after the and before of. [3] Lamps that point downward keep light out of the sky. [4] Are not plus past participle forms the passive.

Drag and Drop 19 · Examinations and Stress

Examinations are a familiar source of stress, and a moderate amount can actually [1] performance by sharpening focus. The trouble begins when anxiety becomes so strong that it [2] with memory and clear thinking. Teachers can help by setting regular low stakes tests so that the exam room feels [3], and students can help themselves by sleeping well, eating properly and testing themselves rather than simply rereading their [4].

familiar interferes familiarity interfering notes improve improvement

Answers: [1] improve; [2] interferes; [3] familiar; [4] notes. [1] After can actually, a base verb is needed. [2] It is singular, so the present verb takes s; interferes with is the pair. [3] Feels is followed by an adjective. [4] A plural noun is needed after their; rereading notes is the collocation.

Drag and Drop 20 · An Accidental Discovery

The first widely used antibiotic was discovered by accident. A scientist returning from holiday noticed that a mould growing on a dish had killed the bacteria [1] it. The mould produced a substance with powerful antibacterial [2], but he could not purify it. More than a decade later, a team of chemists found a way to produce it on a large [3], and the drug went on to save millions of lives during wartime and [4].

around

scale

surrounded

beyond

scaling

properly

properties

Answers: [1] around; [2] properties; [3] scale; [4] beyond. [1] A preposition is needed: the bacteria around it. [2] A plural noun is needed after antibacterial. [3] On a large scale is a fixed phrase. [4] During wartime and beyond means in the war and afterwards.

Drag and Drop 21 · The Nuclear Energy Debate

Nuclear power stations produce electricity without releasing carbon dioxide, which makes them [1] to governments. Yet they remain controversial. Accidents, although rare, can [2] land unusable for generations, and the waste stays dangerous for thousands of years. Supporters argue that modern designs are far safer and that no other low carbon source can supply [3] power day and night. The debate is likely to [4] for as long as the climate crisis does.

continually

rendering

steady

attraction

continue

render

attractive

Answers: [1] attractive; [2] render; [3] steady; [4] continue. [1] Makes them is followed by an adjective; attractive to is the pair. [2] After can, a base verb is needed; render something unusable is the collocation. [3] An adjective is needed before the noun power. [4] After likely to, a base verb is needed.

Drag and Drop 22 · Street Food Culture

In many cities, the best meals are found on the pavement. Street vendors serve dishes that have been [1] down through families for generations. For workers on low incomes, these stalls provide [2] food that would otherwise be out of reach. Authorities sometimes try to clear vendors away in the name of hygiene or traffic, but residents frequently [3] them. Several cities have responded by licensing stalls and providing clean water, [4] tradition with safety.

handed

defence

afford

defend

handing

balancing

affordable

Answers: [1] handed; [2] affordable; [3] defend; [4] balancing. [1] Have been plus past participle forms the passive; handed down is the phrase. [2] An adjective is needed before the noun food. [3] Residents is plural, so a base present verb is needed. [4] A participle clause is needed after the comma.

Drag and Drop 23 · Ocean Currents

The oceans are never still. Great currents carry warm water from the tropics towards the poles and bring cold water back, acting as a giant [1] system for the planet. Scientists fear that melting ice could [2] this flow by diluting the salty water that drives it. Even a partial slowdown would alter rainfall patterns on several [3], affecting farming and fisheries. Monitoring stations now track the current's [4] year by year.

warmth continental heating weaken strength weakly continents

Answers: [1] heating; [2] weaken; [3] continents; [4] strength. [1] Heating system is the collocation. [2] After could, a base verb is needed. [3] Several is followed by a plural noun. [4] A noun is needed after the possessive current's.

Drag and Drop 24 · Child Nutrition

The first thousand days of a child's life, from conception to the second birthday, are [1] for growth and brain development. Children who lack protein, iron and vitamins then may suffer lasting damage. Breastfeeding, varied family meals and clean water all make a measurable [2]. Governments that invest in early nutrition see returns many times larger than the [3] cost, because healthy children become productive adults. Few policies offer such a clear [4] of benefits over costs.

initial margin critical critically differ initially difference

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Answers: [1] critical; [2] difference; [3] initial; [4] margin. [1] Are is followed by an adjective; critical for is the pair. [2] Make a difference is the collocation. [3] An adjective is needed before the noun cost. [4] A noun is needed after a clear; a margin of benefits over costs.

Drag and Drop 25 · Space Debris

Thousands of satellites circle the Earth, along with millions of pieces of junk. Travelling at enormous speed, even a fleck of paint can [1] a working satellite. Each collision creates more fragments, raising the [2] of further collisions in a chain reaction. Space agencies now require new satellites to be [3] of leaving orbit at the end of their lives, and several companies are testing craft designed to [4] large pieces of debris.

capture

damage

probable

capable

probability

damaged

captured

Answers: [1] damage; [2] probability; [3] capable; [4] capture. [1] After can, a base verb is needed. [2] A noun is needed after the and before of. [3] Capable of is the pair; an adjective is needed after to be. [4] After designed to, a base verb is needed.

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