

# Grammar and Vocabulary Practice

# **Grammar and Vocabulary Practice**

**Elsa Hillier**

COLLINS ELT

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Thanks are also due to the following for their permission to reproduce the extracts in this book.

Mrs N Evans: The function of sleep

Barbara Ward: Menace of the urban explosion

Fielden Hughes: Defence of the young

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George Allen & Unwin (Publishers) Ltd, **How Things Work**: Incubators, Vertical takeoff and landing, Submarines, Mining, Prospecting for minerals, Foam plastics, Landing the first men on the moon, Cartography, Video tape recording, Mixing of materials, The modern cowshed.

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Pelham Books Ltd, **Pears Cyclopaedia**: What do we look for in leisure? Wines and winemaking, The problem of war.

Extract from **Roads, Bridges and Tunnels**

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## TO THE TEACHER

**Grammar and Vocabulary Practice** is designed for students wishing to attain the JMB Test in English (Overseas). The book is also relevant to students who hope to study scientific subjects through the medium of English.

The exercises are based on uncontrolled passages taken from various printed sources, including past JMB examination papers. The passages were chosen as examples of the expository style of English, often used for description, narrative and instruction in further and higher education.

*The book is in three parts:*

### **Part One – Completion exercises**

In these exercises, the student has to work out *where* a word is omitted, as well as the appropriate word to insert. (Except the first two exercises in which the position of the missing words is indicated.)

Students should be advised to skim-read each passage first, noting words which immediately seem to be missing.

Students of English as a foreign or second language will usually encounter difficulties. They will reach a point when the 'sense' of the passage does not help them to work out the omissions. Their next strategy is to consider the passage as a series of structures, sub-structures or grammatical patterns. This will test their understanding of English grammar, as they check whether each structure is complete. Parts of speech must also be considered – is the missing word a preposition or an adverb, for example. When students discover the missing word, their knowledge of word order will help them to insert it correctly.

For some students there is an added difficulty. They are primarily studying, or intending to study, science or technology, and may only have a scant knowledge of the terminology of English grammar or of the concepts involved. They need practice and guidance to ask the right questions. It is therefore strongly recommended that after each completion test there should be a group or class discussion. Students should be encouraged to discuss how they reached decisions and share their experiences of success and failure. In this way they develop effective strategies for solving completion exercises.

*Example:*

- 1 The climate in the tropics is hot that
- 2 many Europeans adapt to it.

If the sense of the sentence does not help a student to discover the missing words, he can consider it grammatically. He will then recognise a common structure – a ~~that clause~~, which should be preceded by 'so' or 'such' to imply an outcome or result. Trial and error will show that 'is so' is the correct solution for line 1. The sense of the sentence then suggests that the word missing from line 2 is a negative. Two possibilities are 'Europeans **cannot**' and 'Europeans **never**'. The student must then consider the context of the whole passage to decide which is correct.

*The range of grammatical items tested are listed on page 68.*

## Part Two – Substitution exercises

This type of exercise is excellent for increasing vocabulary and for making students aware of the function of words and phrases in a passage. For instance, a single word used to qualify a noun may be substituted by a phrase or adjectival clause. Conversely, a phrase or clause may be substituted by a single word. It is important to point out to the student that the *whole* phrase, or clause must be replaced or substituted.

### *Examples:*

although	in spite of the fact that
likewise	in just the same way
known as	which we now call

When words or phrases are substituted, the sentence must be grammatically correct, as well as leaving the meaning unchanged.

Sentence connectives can also be usefully taught by this method.

### *Example:*

In spite of the fact that the sun does not make rocks on the earth's surface red hot, those which are not protected by soil and plants become warm enough to expand.  
(although)

Students should know the relation between 'in spite of' and 'although' but may not be familiar with the grammatical terms 'preposition' and 'conjunction'. To make a correct substitution in the above sentence, 'although' replaces the whole phrase 'in spite of the fact that' and not only 'in spite of'.

Prepositions can also be taught using substitution exercises.

### *Example:*

In prehistoric times man's occupation consisted almost entirely of hunting for food.  
(was confined to)



Students should be reminded that prepositions are sometimes separated from the verbs with which they are associated, by an adverbial phrase. In this example the adverbial phrase is 'almost entirely'. So, the correct choice is 'consisted of', not 'consisted' or 'consisted almost entirely of'.

### **Part Three – Dictionary exercises**

#### **A Passages**

In this section students are asked to choose the correct dictionary definition for italicised words in each passage. It should be pointed out that in an English dictionary:

- a Nouns are defined in the singular form, so that any irregular plurals must be known.
- b Verbs are found in the infinitive form. Therefore any verb derivatives in italics in these exercises, are defined in the infinitive form.

There are more definitions than necessary to encourage students to deduce the meanings of unfamiliar words, from their association with known vocabulary. It is advisable to explain the difference between this type of exercise and that of Part 2.

### **Part Three – Dictionary exercises**

#### **B Diagrams**

In this section diagrams and drawings are used instead of text to help students identify the parts defined.

Students should carefully consider the definitions and the core words used in them. Cross references, from one definition to another, help students make classifications relating to size, shape, function and relative location. When a definition has been found to correspond with a number on the diagram, then the name can be used to label the part.