

Part 2: Open Cloze

Description

In this part of the Use of English you are given a short text with gaps. You have to think of a word which fills the gap correctly. You must write only **one** word. Some gaps may have more than one possible answer.

This part of the exam focuses on both vocabulary and grammar and the following areas are frequently tested:

1. Fixed phrases and collocations

You have to complete a fixed phrase. A fixed phrase is a group of words whose meaning as a whole is different from the meaning of the individual words, for example '**get in touch with**' means 'contact'.

You have to complete a collocation. A collocation is a combination of words which are often used together, for example you '**take photos**' or you have a '**spectacular view**'.

2. Phrasal verbs

You have to complete a phrasal verb. A phrasal verb is made up of two or three words: a verb and a preposition or an adverb, for example '**look after**', '**come across**', '**take up**'.

Phrasal verbs can be tested in three different ways:

- just the verb, for example '**look**'
- just the preposition or adverb, for example '**after**'

3. Grammatical structures

You have to use a grammatical structure, for example auxiliary verbs, pronouns, verb tenses or verb forms.

Examples

Below you will find an example for each of the areas described before. First read the example and think of the word which best fits the gap. Then read the feedback, which will show you the correct answer and explain why this answer is correct:

1.1 Fixed phrases

The hotel offers a number of activities that children can take _____ in.

Feedback:

The correct answer is **'part'**.

'Take part in' is a fixed phrase and means 'do an activity together with other people'.

1.2 Collocations

I can really recommend this hotel. The employees _____ their best to make you feel comfortable.

Feedback:

The correct answer is **'do'** or **'try'**.

The phrase 'your best' collocates with 'do' or 'try'. If you **'do / try your best'**, you 'try as hard as you can' to do something.

2.1 Phrasal verbs

When her father retired, Alice _____ over the family business.

Feedback:

The correct answer is **'took'**.

The context tells you that Alice 'got control of' the family business after her father retired, and **'took over'** expresses this meaning.

2.2 Phrasal verbs

It is believed that it was Benjamin Franklin who first came up _____ the idea of daylight saving in 1784.

Feedback:

The correct answer is **'with'**.

The context tells you that Benjamin Franklin first 'thought of' the idea of daylight saving, and **'came up with'** expresses this meaning.

3. Grammatical structures

3.1 Articles ('the', 'a' or 'an')

I've always dreamed of learning to play _____ piano.

Feedback:

The correct answer is **'the'**.

You use the definite article **'the'** when you are talking about what type of musical instrument someone plays.

3.2 Auxiliary verbs ('be', 'do' or 'have')

Charlene _____ been involved in charity work since she was sixteen.

Feedback:

The correct answer is **'has'**.

The context tells you that Charlene started to be involved in charity work when she was sixteen and she is still involved in it today. You use the **present perfect** for actions or situations which started in the past and are still happening now. The present perfect is formed with **'have'** or **'has'** and the **past participle** ('been').

3.3 Comparisons ('more', 'rather than', 'most', etc.)

There were far fewer people at this year's event _____ there had been in previous years.

Feedback:

The correct answer is **'than'**.

Note that **'fewer'** is a comparative and you use the word **'than'** after comparatives.

3.4 Degree words ('so', 'such' or 'too')

It was _____ a bad film that we left the cinema after the first half.

Feedback:

The correct answer is **'such'**.

The context tells you that the film was really bad and therefore you decided to leave. The structure **'such ... that'** expresses this meaning. You use the word **'such'** before **nouns** (**'such a bad film'**).

3.5 Determiners ('every', 'any', 'many', etc.)

It's been a very busy week. I've hardly had _____ time for myself.

Feedback:

The correct answer is **'any'**.

The word **'hardly'** has a negative meaning and you often use it with **'any'**.

3.6 Emphatic structures

_____ I like most about my job is that I can help people.

Feedback:

The correct answer is **'What'**.

"What ... is (that) ..." is an emphatic structure. You use it to give emphasis to certain information in the sentence, in this case 'I can help people'.

3.7 Linking words and phrases ('even though', 'if', 'in order to', etc.)

The city offers _____ only history and culture, but also great restaurants and a wide range of shopping facilities.

Feedback:

The correct answer is **'not'**.

The context tells you that 'in addition to' history and culture the city offers great restaurants and a wide range of shopping facilities. The linking phrase **'not only ... but also'** expresses this meaning.

3.8 Modal verbs ('can', 'may', 'must', etc.)

You really _____ do something about your backache.

Feedback:

The correct answer is **'should'** or **'must'**.

The speaker in this sentence is giving advice about someone's back. You can use both **'should'** and **'must'** to give **advice**. Note that **'must'** gives **strong advice**.

3.9 Negatives ('no' or 'not')

There can be _____ doubt that she is one of the most popular writers today.

Feedback:

The correct answer is 'no' or 'little'.

The context tells you that it is 'certain' that she is one of the most popular writers today. You use the words 'no' or 'little' before the noun 'doubt' to express this meaning ('no doubt' or 'little doubt').

3. 10 Possessives ('my', 'mine', etc.)

After a busy day I enjoy being on _____ own and reading a good book.

Feedback:

The correct answer is 'my'.

You use a possessive with the expression 'on ... own', for example 'on my own', 'on his own' or 'on their own'. This expression means 'alone'.

3.11 Prepositions ('at', 'from', 'like', etc.)

There are a number of things you can do to practise English outside the classroom _____ watching films in English or reading English websites.

Feedback:

The correct answer is 'like'.

The context tells you that there are several things you can do outside the English classroom, 'for example' watching films in English or reading English websites. The preposition 'like' here means 'for example'.

This documentary provides a fascinating insight _____ the behaviour of sharks.

Feedback:

The correct answer is 'into'.

The noun 'insight' is usually followed by the preposition 'into'.

3.12 Pronouns ('it', 'this', 'there', etc.)

Staff complained that _____ was a lack of respect from the management.

Feedback:

The correct answer is **'there'**.

The context tells you that a lack of respect from the management 'existed'. The structures **'there is'** or **'there are'** express this meaning.

3.13 Relative pronouns ('who', 'that', 'whose', etc.)

The film is based on a true story, _____ happened in the 80s.

Feedback:

The correct answer is **'which'**.

The relative pronoun **'which'** is used to refer to **things** in a relative clause. Note that this is a **non-defining relative clause** because there is a comma after 'story'. This means that only **'which'** is possible.

3.14 Verb tenses and verb forms (be – was – been – being)

She _____ up horse-riding when she was twelve.

Feedback:

The correct answer is **'took'**.

The phrasal verb **'take up'** here means 'start' an activity. You need the past simple **'took'** in this context because the sentence refers to a past time ('when she was twelve').

A firefighter needs to _____ able to stay calm in dangerous situations.

Feedback:

The correct answer is **'be'**.

The structure **'be able to'** means 'can'. You need the form **'be'** after the preposition **'to'**.



Tips to score!

How to approach the task

Here are some tips to help you deal successfully with this task:

- **Read the text.** Before you begin to work on the gaps, look at the title and read the whole text quickly to get a general idea of what the text is about. This will make it easier to find the missing words.
- **Read the sentence.** Read the whole sentence and pay particular attention to the language before and after the gap before you decide what the missing word is. Ask yourself:
 - 1) Is the missing word part of a fixed phrase, a collocation or a phrasal verb?
 - 2) Which grammatical structure is tested? Do you need, for example, an auxiliary verb or a relative pronoun?
- **Understand the context.** Remember that sometimes you need to read the context before or after the sentence with the gap to help you make your choice.
- **Write only one word.** Some gaps may have different possible answers, but make sure that you write only one word. In this example from above, both 'should' and 'must' are possible:

*You really **should** do something about your backache.*

OR

*You really **must** do something about your backache.*

- **Don't write contractions.** Contractions count as two words, for example 'didn't' = 'did not'. The only exception is 'can't' (= 'cannot'), which counts as one word.
- **Check spelling.** Check that your spelling is correct.
- **Make sure it makes sense.** When you have finished, read the whole text quickly again to make sure that your answers make sense in the context.