HSK 4 Grammar 11: Sentence Patterns — Comparison

HSK 4 以 … 为 … and its set phrases, taught from the reviewed topic handout; classroom examples, not official exam items.

The frame: take A as B

以 A 为 B means “take / regard A as B” — your basis, standard or focus, in an elegant, formal frame.

- Semi-classical, written register.
- It powers a family of set phrases.

The frame in action

Basis, standard, focus

我们公司以亚洲市场为主。(Wǒmen gōngsī yǐ Yàzhōu shìchǎng wéi zhǔ.) — Our company focuses mainly on the Asian market.

许多企业发展很快，以麦当劳为例。(Xǔduō qǐyè fāzhǎn hěn kuài, yǐ Màidāngláo wéi lì.) — Many firms have grown fast — take McDonald's as an example.

Try it: the essay example

1. **The writing task** In an essay sentence, name a city that stands for China's long history.
2. **Choose the set phrase 以 … 为例** — take … as an example.
3. **Build it 以西安为例，中国历史非常悠久。**(Yǐ Xī'ān wéi lì, Zhōngguó lìshǐ fēicháng yōujiǔ.)
4. **Check the register** An essay sentence — exactly where the formal frame belongs.

Decision

Take Xi'an as an example: China's history is very long.

The casual twin: 把 A 当作 B

Formal, written

我们以质量为标准。(Wǒmen yǐ zhìliàng wéi biāozhǔn.) — We take quality as our standard.

Casual, spoken

我把这里当作自己的家。(Wǒ bǎ zhèli dàngzuò zìjǐ de jiā.) — I treat this place as my own home.

Watch out: two boundaries

- 以 … 为 … is formal and written — save it for essays, reports and signs.
- Learn the set phrases whole: the frame is fixed and the exam tests the pairing.
- In conversation, 把 … 当作 … carries the same idea naturally.

Quick check

Your turn

Which set phrase means “take … as an example”?

A. 以 …… 为例
B. 以 …… 为主

Check yourself

Your turn

What is the spoken equivalent of 以 A 为 B?

A. 把 A 当作 B
B. 对 A 感兴趣