

# Exercise walk-through

Building vocabulary ■ 11.1

eXercise

## You must be able to

- record a word with the information you will actually need
- use collocation and word families to multiply what one word gives you
- choose a precise word instead of a vague one plus an adverb

## Method — Record more than the translation

A word list of English and Chinese alone will not help you write. Record four things:

| Word      | Part of speech | Collocation                             | Your sentence                            |
|-----------|----------------|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| reluctant | adjective      | <i>reluctant <b>to</b> do something</i> | She was reluctant to admit she was lost. |
| decline   | verb           | <i>decline <b>an invitation</b></i>     | He declined the invitation politely.     |

The **collocation** is what stops you writing *reluctant of doing*. The preposition is part of the word.

## Method — Word families multiply one word

*decide (v) → decision (n) → decisive (adj) → decisively (adv) → indecisive (adj)*

Learning the family costs a few minutes and gives you five words, plus the ability to vary a sentence: *He decided quickly → He was decisive.*

## Method — Precision beats intensifiers

| <b>Vague + intensifier</b> | <b>Precise</b> |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| very tired                 | exhausted      |
| very hungry                | starving       |
| very surprised             | astonished     |
| very big                   | enormous       |
| very small                 | tiny           |
| very good                  | excellent      |

## Method — Precision beats intensifiers

An examiner sees *very* many times a day. A precise word is what earns the vocabulary credit.

## Method — Learn words from your own reading

The words worth learning are the ones you meet in something you were reading anyway. A word met in context, in a sentence you understood, is remembered; a word from a list of fifty is not.

## Practice 2.1 ■ 4 marks

Replace each phrase with one precise word.

- (a) very cold
- (b) very happy
- (c) very frightened
- (d) very interesting

## Solution 2.1

Method: Precision beats intensifiers

### Worked steps

(a) freezing **B1**. (b) delighted / overjoyed **B1**. (c) terrified **B1**. (d) fascinating / gripping **B1**.

## Practice 2.2 ■ 3 marks

Complete the word family.

(a) succeed (v) → \_\_\_\_\_ (n) → \_\_\_\_\_ (adj)

(b) strong (adj) → \_\_\_\_\_ (n) → \_\_\_\_\_ (v)

(c) analyse (v) → \_\_\_\_\_ (n) → \_\_\_\_\_ (adj)

## Solution 2.2

Method: Word families multiply one word

### Worked steps

(a) success, successful **B1**. (b) strength, strengthen **B1**. (c) analysis, analytical **B1**.

## Practice 2.3 ■ 3 marks

Give the correct preposition.

- (a) It depends \_\_\_\_\_ the weather.
- (b) She is good \_\_\_\_\_ chemistry.
- (c) He apologised \_\_\_\_\_ being late.

## Solution 2.3

### Worked steps

(a) on **B1**. (b) at **B1**. (c) for **B1**.

## Exam-style 3.1 ■ 4 marks

Rewrite this paragraph, replacing every vague word with a precise one.

*The trip was very good. We saw some very nice buildings and the guide was very interesting. It was a very long day but we were all very happy.*

## Solution 3.1

Method: Precision beats intensifiers

### Worked steps

One mark per successful replacement, up to four **B4**, e.g. “The trip was memorable. We saw several magnificent buildings and the guide was genuinely knowledgeable. It was an exhausting day, but we came back delighted.”

## Exam-style 3.2 ■ 2 marks

Explain why recording only the English word and its translation is not enough to be able to use the word.

## Solution 3.2

Method: Record more than the translation

### Worked steps

A translation does not tell you the grammar the word needs — its preposition, whether it takes a noun or a verb after it, or which words it normally goes with — so the word is likely to be used incorrectly **B1**. It also gives no sense of register or of the situations the word suits, so a word may be technically right but wrong for the context **B1**.