

Comparing similar functions

HSK 4

Use the examples with their context and limits. Recall a sentence before reading the model. Original teaching additions accompany examples adapted from Chinese Grammar Wiki (AllSet Learning, CC BY-NC-SA); see the course reference provenance.

反而 vs 相反 (instead vs on the contrary)

■ A reversal differs from a contrasting proposition

- An explanation was expected to help but instead made things less clear.
- 解释后, 我反而更糊涂了。 – 反而 marks a result opposite to the expected improvement.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 反而 vs 相反 (instead vs on the contrary). Locate it in the original interlinear examples below.
- Keep the words in their demonstrated positions; the pattern must fit the intended situation as well as the sentence form.

病反而更重了。

bìng fǎn ér gèng zhòng le

Word guide: 病 – illness; 反而 – instead; 更 – more; 重 – serious.

■ Read examples in context

相反, 我同意。

xiāng fǎn wǒ tóng yì

Word guide: 相反 – on the contrary; 我 – I; 同意 – agree.

- In the opening example, 解释后, 我反而更糊涂了。: 反而 marks a result opposite to the expected improvement.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- 相反 can open a contrasting statement or describe opposite properties.
- In this frame 反而 modifies the predicate, rather than merely naming any difference.

■ Use the distinction

- 反而 marks a result opposite to the expected improvement.
- 相反 can open a contrasting statement or describe opposite properties. In this frame 反而 modifies the predicate, rather than merely naming any difference.

■ Try it with help closed

An explanation was expected to help but instead made things less clear. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 解释后，我反而更糊涂了。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 相反 can open a contrasting statement or describe opposite properties.
- In this frame 反而 modifies the predicate, rather than merely naming any difference.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

肯定 vs 确定 vs 一定 (sure / certain)

■ Confidence differs from confirming a detail

- A friend predicts an arrival, while you have not confirmed the time.
- 他一定会来；我还没确定时间。 – 一定 expresses a confident prediction and 确定 refers to confirming the time.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 肯定 vs 确定 vs 一定 (sure / certain). Locate it in the original interlinear examples below.
- Keep the words in their demonstrated positions; the pattern must fit the intended situation as well as the sentence form.

他一定会来。

tā yí dìng huì lái

Word guide: 他 – he; 一定 – certainly; 会 – will; 来 – come.

■ Read examples in context

我还没确定。

wǒ hái méi què dìng

Word guide: 我 – I; 还 – yet; 没 – not; 确定 – confirm.

- In the opening example, 他一定会来；我还没确定时间。: 一定 expresses a confident prediction and 确定 refers to confirming the time.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- 肯定 can also express confidence, and it has verb uses such as 肯定成绩.
- Word class depends on the construction; confident wording is not proof of the future.

■ Use the distinction

- 一定 expresses a confident prediction and 确定 refers to confirming the time.
- 肯定 can also express confidence, and it has verb uses such as 肯定成绩. Word class depends on the construction; confident wording is not proof of the future.

■ Try it with help closed

A friend predicts an arrival, while you have not confirmed the time. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 他一定会来; 我还没确定时间。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 肯定 can also express confidence, and it has verb uses such as 肯定成绩.
- Word class depends on the construction; confident wording is not proof of the future.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

适合 vs 合适 (to suit vs suitable)

■ Use the object with the right suitable-word

- A job suits someone's abilities.
- 这个工作适合你。 – 适合 takes 你 as its object in the suitability relation.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 适合 vs 合适 (to suit vs suitable). Locate it in the original interlinear examples below.
- Keep the words in their demonstrated positions; the pattern must fit the intended situation as well as the sentence form.

这个工作适合你。

zhè ge gōng zuò shì hé nǐ

Word guide: 这 – this; 个 – (measure word); 工作 – job; 适合 – suit; 你 – you.

■ Read examples in context

这个价格很合适。

zhè ge jià gé hěn hé shì

Word guide: 这 – this; 个 – (measure word); 价格 – price; 很 – very; 合适 – suitable.

- In the opening example, **这个工作适合你。**: 适合 takes 你 as its object in the suitability relation.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- 合适 instead functions as an adjective, as in 对你很合适.
- Shared meaning does not allow the same word order everywhere.

■ Use the distinction

- 适合 takes 你 as its object in the suitability relation.
- 合适 instead functions as an adjective, as in 对你很合适. Shared meaning does not allow the same word order everywhere.

■ Try it with help closed

A job suits someone's abilities. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 这个工作适合你。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 合适 instead functions as an adjective, as in 对你很合适.
- Shared meaning does not allow the same word order everywhere.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.