

## Exercise walk-through

Grammar, vocabulary and checking your work ■ 2.3

eXercise

## You must be able to

- use tenses, articles and subject-verb agreement accurately
- replace a vague word with a precise one
- check a piece of writing systematically rather than reading it through once

## Method — The errors that cost most marks

- **Subject-verb agreement:** *The list of names ~are~ **is** on the door.* The subject is *list*, not *names*.
- **Articles:** English needs *a*, *an* or *the* before most singular countable nouns. *I bought ~car~ **a car**.*
- **Tense consistency:** do not drift between past and present within one account.
- **Plural after a number:** *three ~student~ **students**, but a three-year ~courses~ **course**.*
- **Prepositions:** *depend **on**, interested **in**, arrive **at** a place, arrive **in** a city, good **at** a subject.*

## Method — Precision beats length

| <b>Vague</b>      | <b>Precise</b>                  |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| a nice place      | a quiet, well-lit place         |
| very big          | enormous / spacious             |
| said              | explained / admitted / insisted |
| a lot of problems | three recurring problems        |
| good at maths     | confident with algebra          |

A precise word earns vocabulary credit. A long word used wrongly loses it — so use words you are sure of.

## Method — Checking, in three passes

- 1 **Verbs.** Is every verb in the right tense, and does it agree with its subject?
- 2 **Nouns.** Does every singular countable noun have an article? Are plurals marked?
- 3 **Full stops.** Read each sentence alone. Does it have a subject and a verb, and does it end?

Three quick passes find far more than one slow read-through, because each pass looks for one thing.

## Practice 2.1 ■ 1 mark

Correct the error in each sentence.

- (a) Each of the students have a locker.
- (b) I am living here since 2019.
- (c) She is very interested on history.
- (d) There is many reasons to visit.
- (e) He said me that the bus was late.

## Solution 2.1

### Worked steps

(a) Each of the students **has** a locker **B1**. (b) I **have been living** here since 2019 **B1**. (c) interested **in** history **B1**. (d) There **are** many reasons **B1**. (e) He **told** me that / He **said to** me that **B1**.

## Practice 2.2 ■ 1 mark

Replace the underlined word with a more precise one.

- (a) The room was very *big*.
- (b) The film was *good*.
- (c) He *said* that he had not taken it.

## Solution 2.2

Method: Precision beats length

### Worked steps

Any precise alternative: (a) spacious / enormous / cavernous **B1**. (b) gripping / moving / hilarious **B1**. (c) denied / insisted / claimed **B1**.

## Exam-style 3.1 ■ 5 marks

This paragraph contains five errors. Rewrite it correctly.

*Last summer I have visited my aunt in Kuala Lumpur. She live in a apartment near the station, and every mornings we walked to the market together. The food there were amazing.*

## Solution 3.1

### Worked steps

One mark per correction **B5**: “Last summer I **visited** my aunt in Kuala Lumpur. She **lives** in **an** apartment near the station, and every **morning** we walked to the market together. The food there **was** amazing.”

## Exam-style 3.2 ■ 3 marks

A student writes: “The teacher gave us a very interesting and enjoyable and useful lesson about the environment which was good.” Rewrite the sentence more effectively and explain what you changed.

## Solution 3.2

### Worked steps

Rewrite **B1**, for example: “The teacher gave us an unusually useful lesson on the environment.” Changes explained **B2**: the three adjectives joined by repeated “and” are replaced by one precise adjective, which is stronger than a list; and the vague ending “which was good” adds nothing and is removed.