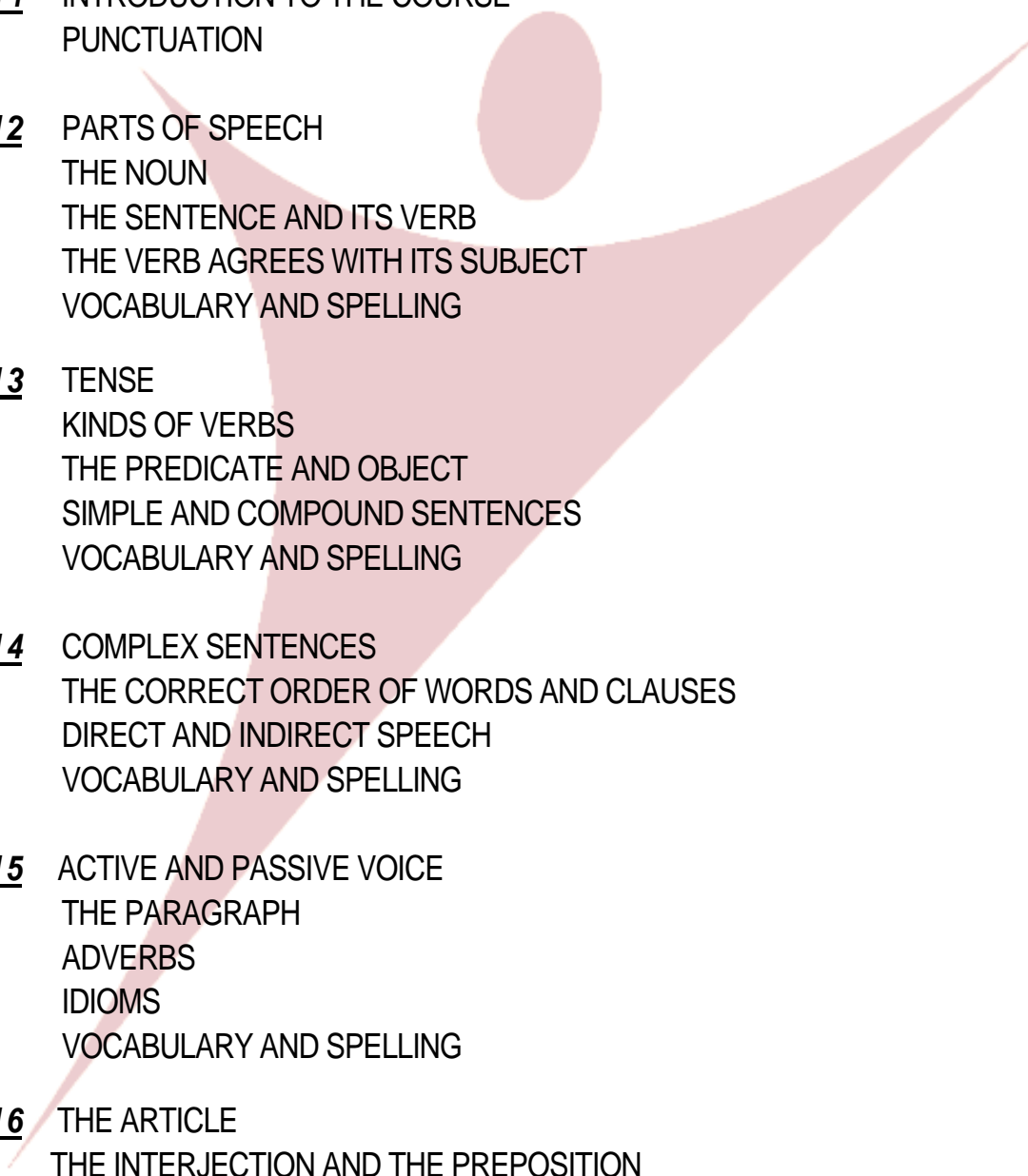


# Everyday English for Managers

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## **ENGLISH LESSON 1**

### **Content:**

INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE

PUNCTUATION

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE

"Anyone who wishes to become a good writer should endeavor.... to be direct, simple, brief, vigorous and lucid". So said the Fowler brothers, who were responsible for compiling the Concise Oxford Dictionary.

It would be worth your while to examine this quotation carefully, and even to memorize it, so that the aims of good writing are clearly set out in your mind when you yourself attempt to write. Do not think that these aims apply only to people who write books. No, they apply to anything that is written, whether it be a letter to a friend or an office report. Let us examine this quotation more carefully:

- a. Your writing must be direct. This means that you must get to the point of what you wish to say and not confuse your reader with details that are not to the point.
- b. Your choice of words should be simple. Now, that does not mean that you should write childishly. Far from it! Use a variety of words to give interest and life to your writing, but do not use difficult words just because you think it is clever. A reader likes to feel that he can understand what he is reading straight away without having to re-read the passage several times to get the meaning.
- c. You must be brief. This does not mean that you should leave a half of what you are trying to write. What it does mean is that you must leave out what is unnecessary. In other words, do not be "verbose". Do you know what "verbose" means? It means saying something in a lot of words when a few words would be quite enough.
- d. Be vigorous in your writing, make it alive and interesting to read, rather than dull and boring. Of course, you will need a lot of practice before you can write well, but dullness can always be avoided if you take the trouble to use a variety of words rather than to keep repeating the same ones. For example, if you are describing something that is "dark", you need not use this one word all the time, you can also use the words "gloomy" and "somber".

- e. Your writing should be clear, so that your reader immediately understands what you wish to tell him. You must be careful to plan your work so that the reader can follow the thread of your thoughts.

"Variety is the spice of life". A variety of words is also the spice of good writing. Now, how can you learn a variety of words so as to make your writing interesting?

First of all you can, and should, read anything you can get hold of that is worthwhile. Not comics! If you cannot always read good books and magazines, make a point of reading the newspaper every day. Newspaper writing is not always all it should be, but the articles will give you the opportunity to learn new words, besides giving you a wider general knowledge of everyday events.

However, there is one book that is absolutely essential to everyone and especially to a student of English. This is a **Dictionary**.

A dictionary not only gives you the meaning of words and how to spell them correctly, but is also gives alternative words which have nearly the same meaning. So, if you have difficulty in thinking of an alternative word which will make your writing more interesting, look in your dictionary for help. Of course, you have to be careful that the alternative applies to what you are writing about. For example,

let us suppose that you are writing about the building of your house. You have been talking about "bricks and cement" and you want to use another word for them. You could use the word "materials". but, in another context the word "material" can also mean "woven cloth" and, of course, that would not have the same meaning as "bricks and cement"!

Correct spelling in everything you write is most important and so easy if you take the trouble to consult your dictionary. A golden rule to follow is: "When in doubt, check with the dictionary". Mis-spelt words will not only lose you marks in an examination, but will count against you in your business career.

### **How to use a dictionary**

In case you do not know how to use a dictionary, this is how you go about it:

Look at the illustration, which is part of a page from a well-known dictionary. What do we learn

from it. First of all, you should read the introduction to your dictionary, because in this introduction the person who wrote it gives you information on the way he has set out the dictionary, what the various shortened forms mean and how you can get the most value out of the dictionary.

Study the illustration again and notice these points. See illustration on page 4.



- a. At the top of the page - on the extreme left and the extreme right you have the words "paddle" and "pail". This means that first word explained on that page is "paddle" and the last explained is "pail". Would it be any use looking on that: p for the word "paradox" or "possession"? No, it would not, because both these words do not fall alphabetically between "paddle" "pail". These key words which you find at the top of the list make your work of finding words so much easier because you should not look right down the page - you know at a glance whether word you need is contained between the two limits.
- b. Between these two key words, you may find other words with little marks over certain letters. These are to help you say the words correctly. Any words in the dictionary which contain the same marks over the letters are pronounced in the same way as those letters are. Most dictionaries give detailed lists of pronunciation in the front notes. You will notice in the illustration that all the words in heavy type have a word in italics behind them - this shows the pronunciation. This is very necessary in English because it is not a phonetic language. That is, words are not always pronounced as they are spelt. Take the word, "pheasant", for instance. The initial "ph" is pronounced as an "f", but you would never spell the word "finish" as "phinish".
- c. What else can be learnt from the illustration? Look at it again. After each of these words explained you will see some abbreviations such as "n", "v.i", "adj" and so on. Look, up in your introduction to see what these 'abbreviations mean. In this instance "n" means "noun", "v.i" means "verb intransitive" and "adj" means "adjective". So a dictionary can tell what part of speech a word is. There is a danger here, however, because often you can only find out what part of speech a word is by actually using it in a sentence. Take the word PLAY as an example and read these two sentences;

"I play soccer every Saturday afternoon".

"I saw a very good play on Television last night".

They both use the word "play" but, in the first sentence, it is a verb because it denotes an action, while in the second one it is a noun because it denotes a thing. A good dictionary will tell you if a word is used as more than one part of speech.

- d. Now we come to one of the most important items in a dictionary: the meaning of the word. A word often has more than one meaning and a good dictionary will give as

many meanings as seem to be necessary.

- e. Following the various meanings of the word, you find words derived from the original one; that is, which are formed from the original one.
- f. Finally, in this illustration you have the information contained within the square brackets. This is the Etymology. Do you know the meaning of this word? Look it up in your dictionary. It means the origin of the word and how it was formed. Look at the entry following "paddle". It states the word is a synonym and compared to the Scottish word "pattle".

When you use a dictionary, you seldom use it to find all the six words given above. At this stage you will only need to use it to find the meanings of the words and how to spell them correctly.

Have you understood the meaning of all the words used so far in this lesson? Your first Self-Help Exercise will be a check. If you find that you do not know the meanings of all the words, check in your dictionary and look at the answers at the end of the lesson. Then re-read this introduction with your new knowledge before you start studying the punctuation.

## SELF-HELP EXERCISE 1

Give the meanings of the following words:

- |              |                 |
|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. Compile   | 5. Intelligible |
| 2. Quotation | 6. Spice        |
| 3. Memorise  | 7. Essential    |
| 4. Variety   | 8. Context      |

## **PUNCTUATION**

It is quite easy to make our meaning clear when we talk to somebody, because our listener does not only hear the words we use, but has a great deal more than that to help him to understand our

meaning. We raise and lower our voices to give the correct expression to our words and we pause in our words, so grouping them to deal with the different parts of the matter we are discussing. By our tone of voice, our listener realises instantly whether we are making a statement, asking a question or making an exclamation of surprise, or anger or annoyance.

However, when we write to somebody we have none of the advantages mentioned above, because our reader cannot hear our voice: he can only read the actual words on paper. So, in order that he can imagine how those spoken words would sound, we use punctuation marks.

### **The full-stop**

When we speak, we lower our voices when we come to the end of a sentence. When we write, we produce the same effect by marking the end of the sentence with a full-stop, (.), written on the line. You *may* think that this is a very simple rule but it is surprising how many people fail to follow it. Consequently, the reader unknowingly reads on into a new sentence which may deal with quite a different idea or statement. The words fail to make sense to him, and he cannot understand what the writer is trying to tell him. This is a most serious error in an examination and would be penalised by the loss of marks.

### **The apostrophe**

This is a mark ( ' ) which is used to indicate either the possessive case or, that a word or words have been shortened by leaving out a letter or letters.

Let us see how we use the apostrophe to indicate the possessive case. As you know, the possessive case indicates "belonging to" something. For example, in the phrase, "The roots of the tree", the roots "belong to" the tree, and we can write this phrase in another way, using the apostrophe and without changing the meaning of the words, by saying, "The tree's roots". In this case we are talking about the roots of one tree, but what happens when we write about the roots "of the trees"? The noun "trees" is now in the plural and an "s" has already been added. We cannot write "the trees's roots" because the pronunciation would be clumsy, so we leave out the second "s" and just put in the apostrophe, thus: "the trees' roots".

This is a very easy rule to remember, but to make sure that you have understood it, we will summarise what we have learnt:

To change the name of a single thing, ie. a singular noun, to its possessive case, we add "apostrophe s", that is ('s).

To change the name of a number of things, ie. a plural noun, when the noun already ends in 's', we add an apostrophe only.

Here are a few examples showing how the apostrophe is used in these two ways:

- |      |  |                           |
|------|--|---------------------------|
| i.   | The kennel belonging to the dog:         | The dog's kennel,         |
| ii.  | The house belonging to Mr. Price:        | Mr. Price's house,        |
| iii. | The room belonging to the girls:         | The girls' room,          |
| iv.  | The residence belonging to the Governor: | The Governor's residence. |

Notice that the apostrophe is used to denote possession with nouns that refer to people and animals. We can say 'the dog's leg', but we cannot say 'the table's top'. Instead, we say 'the top of the table'.

There are certain well-known phrases in English in which an apostrophe is used with the name of a thing. You should learn these phrases - there are others, of course.

a stone's throw  
a week's journey  
a month's wages  
the heart's desire  
a hair's breadth  
the journey's end.

A country is often looked upon as a kind of a person, so the apostrophe is regularly used with the names of countries:

eg. England's cricket Team  
Zimbabwe's tourist attractions  
Russia's rulers  
South Africa's gold Industry.

Towns are often treated in the same way, so we speak of:

Damascus new mayor.

Syria's fine museum.

London show grounds.

Unfortunately not all nouns in English can be changed into their plural form by simply adding an "s", so the rule you have just learnt about plural nouns only having an apostrophe in the possessive case does not always apply. Here are some examples of nouns which do not become plural by merely adding an "s".

We say:	Oneman	but	two men.
	Onewoman	"	two women (1).
	Onechild	"	two children.
	Onedeer	and	two deer (no change at all).
	Onesheep	"	two sheep (no change at all).
	Oneradius	but	two radii.
	Oneaxis	"	two axes.
	Onemouse	"	two mice.
	Onefoot	"	two feet.

There are many nouns like these which have their own plural form, and which do not follow any definite rule to make them plural. Do not be alarmed that you might not remember them all. You will soon get to know them, especially if you make a habit of reading widely and using your dictionary. Now, you may ask, how do you put these plural nouns into their possessive form? The answer is quite, simple - you treat them as if they were singular nouns.

For example:	the men's clothing	(plural)
	the man's clothing	(singular)
	the sheep's wool	(singular and plural)

The easiest way to learn, where the apostrophe goes in the possessive form of a noun, is to always remember that you can never have "s's", because the pronunciation would be so difficult and clumsy.

Before we deal with the second use of the apostrophe let us see if you can do the following exercise.

## SELF-HELP EXERCISE 2

1. Rewrite the following phrases using the noun in the Possessive Case.

- a. The hoof of the horse.
- b. The uniform of The soldier.
- c. The laugh of the child.
- d. The dresses of the boys.
- e. The playground of the boys.

(1) Women: this word is pronounced 'wimmin'

2. In the blank spaces of the following sentences write the noun, which you see in brackets, in its possessive form. The first one is done for you.

- a. The children's work was carefully done. (children)
- b. The \_\_\_\_\_ feathers were coated with oil. (bird)
- c. The \_\_\_\_\_ sufferings were very great, (explorers)

3. In the following *passage*, some of the nouns in the possessive case are incorrectly written. Rewrite the passage, correcting any mistakes you find.

The company's premises were situated at the upper end of Orange Street. At the other end of the street there were residential properties whose owners were mostly employed in the towns' commercial life. The premises of the company were modern. The Manager's office was situated near the premises main entrance while the upper floors of the buildings were devoted to the clerks' and accountants. The directors of the company met regularly once a week in the Board Room. On the days of their visits, the members of the Board of Directors paused to admire the well kept lawns and gardens in front of the building. They were the Chairmans' special pride and joy.

### **Abbreviation and apostrophe**

We shall now learn the second use of the apostrophe, that is, "now a word can be shortened by leaving out a letter. But you must remember NEVER use such abbreviated or shortened words in writing reports or letters unless you are quoting the exact words used by the speaker. In that case, if the speaker abbreviated any words in speaking, you would abbreviate them in the same way when you quote them, but, as we shall see later, the words used by the speaker, are placed in "Inverted Commas" to show that an exact quotation is being given.

In speech, however, abbreviated words are frequently, and quite correctly used. Look at the following examples and note that the apostrophe marks the place where the missing letter has been omitted.

Do not	becomes	Don't
We are	"	We're
Are not	"	Aren't
Shall not	"	Shan't (not shalln't)
Can not	"	Can't
Were not	"	Weren't
Must not	"	Mustn't
I shall	"	I'll
You will	"	You'll

### **Inverted Commas**

These are commas, written in pairs above the line and placed at the beginning and the end of a quotation. Here are a few examples to show you how they are used and exactly where they are placed above the line.

- i. The sentry said to the approaching man, "Don't take another step forward".
- ii. "You mustn't waste any time on your journey", said the father to his departing son.
- iii. "We all know", he said to his friend, "that James can be trustee".

- iv. Turning to George, the captain said, "I hear you won't be able to play in the football match on Friday". "Then you've been misinformed", George replied.
- v. In his diary the stranded airman sheltering under the wing of his crashed aeroplane wrote, "This *is my* sixth day with no food nor water. I feel that I am rapidly weakening and I whether I shall survive for more than two more days. The *sun is* bad enough but the thirst is an agony. I can only of the joy it would be to swallow cold water".

Now, *let us* examine these examples more carefully:

In the first example we see that there must be a comma after the words which precede the quotation, that is, the actual words the sentry used. The first pair of inverted commas are placed at the beginning of the quotation and, although there is only a comma preceding it, the quotation begins with a capital letter. This is because the quotation is itself a sentence in the form of a command and, as you know, all sentences must begin with a capital letter. At the end of the quotation, you put a full stop to show that it is the end of the sentence and you follow the full stop with the second pair of inverted commas to indicate the end of the quotation.

In the second example, the quotation comes first but, although it is a sentence in itself, it is also a part of the main sentence which tells us what the father said to his son. Therefore, there must be a comma at the end of the quotation and NOT a full-stop. If you put a full-stop at the end of the quotation the rest of the sentence on its own would not make sense.

The third example shows what happens when a quotation is divided into two parts by words which are not part of the quotation, but which explains who spoke them. In this case, the first part of the quotation is enclosed in inverted commas, and because the quotation is broken off in the middle of a sentence, only a comma is used to mark the pause. The explanatory portion is followed by another pause, indicated by another comma, before the quotation is continued and concluded. The remaining words of the quotation are again enclosed in inverted commas, but the first word, "that", does not have a capital T, because the words are merely continuing a sentence which has been interrupted.

The fourth example shows two quotations. The first one is spoken by one person and the second one is the reply. Both quotations are complete sentences, so they both begin with

capital letters and end with full-stops.

In the fifth example the quotation does not indicate what was said, but what was written. The first few words in the example explain and introduce the quotation.

### SELF-HELP EXERCISE 3

1. The following sentences contain abbreviated words which have been wrongly punctuated. Rewrite the sentences correcting all the errors you can find.
  - a. Your not to stay out late tonight.
  - b. We dont dislike the rainy season.
  - c. It doesnt matter if were not in time for supper.
  - d. You mustnt waste the electricity by leaving the lights burning when they are not needed.
  - e. Youll be sorry -that you didnt spend more time in study.
  - f. I shant tell my father you interfered with his car.
  - g. It wasnt truthful to pretend you were ill when you werent.
  - h. Its a long time to wait before the train leaves.
  
2. Put in the correct punctuation marks in the following sentences commas, full-stops, Inverted commas and apostrophes.
  - a. Well be sorry I said to him when we find the bus has left now I shant he replied Im never sorry about anything.
  - b. I want to catch the train for Claremont said the lady where do I find it go along to platform 3 answered the inspector it is waiting there now
  - c. I can never find a thing I require grumbled the man nothing is ever in its right place the trouble is retorted his wife you take things away and never put them back
  - d. Do you think the weather will remain fine I asked my companion as we set out on

our long journey. It looks promising my companion replied but in these mountains great changes in the weather occur with little or no warning.

**NOTE:** *In examinations you will find it useful to begin each new quotation on a new line when a conversation is being written down. It will also help you to remember to open and close the quotations with inverted commas.*

Here is an example of how to set about it. This piece of conversation between two people, has been taken from the book, "The Master of Ballatrae", by Robert Louis Stevenson.

"I shall require your hand upon it", says he.

"You have the right to make conditions", I replied, and we shook hands.

### **The comma**

The comma ( , ) is used to show the reader where a pause must be made to understand passage correctly. We have already seen how the comma *is* used in conjunction with inverted commas, and now we will learn some of its other uses.

- i. It is used to separate items in a list. In this case, the comma *is* not put after the second last item in the list, because here we put the word "and".

*Example:* The woman went into the shop where she purchased tea, coffee, sugar, pepper and salt.

An exception to this rule may be made when we wish to give equal emphasis to all the items in the list. For example: Prizes are awarded in this race only to competitors who take the first, second and third places.

- ii. Commas are used to enclose words which could be left out of a sentence without altering its meaning.

*Example:* On Sunday, my mother's birthday, we all went for a picnic in the country.

The words "my mother's birthday", can be omitted without altering the main sense of the sentence.

- iii. Commas are used to indicate the pauses which are essential to the correct reading of a passage. Compare the completely different meanings of the following sentences when the positions of the commas are changed.

We, too, often think of you.

We, too often, think of you.

The first sentence means that the thoughts of the speaker often turn to the listener; the second sentence means that the speaker thinks of the listener more than he wants to do!

### **The colon**

The punctuation mark is used much less now than it used to be. Years ago it was customary to write in very long sentences and the colon was used to give the sentences balance. However, the colon still has its uses.

Earlier in this lesson, we saw how a colon is used at the beginning of a long quotation, such as the one taken from a written story. Other ways in which it can be used are shown in the following examples:

Road safety would be greatly increased if all drivers would remember to give attention to these important points: ensure that your brakes are in good working order; do not drive at speed close behind another vehicle; etc.

*In the examination, students will be tested on the following sections of the syllabus: dictation and spelling, letter-writing, comprehension, paraphrasing, etc.*

### **The semi-colon**

The semi-colon (;), like the comma, tells the reader that a pause is intended, but the semi-colon indicates a longer and more needed pause than the comma. It generally separates a sentence into parts or more shorter but related sentences. Look back over this lesson, and see where it has been used.

Here is another example:

At no time had it been proposed that Jameson should ride into the Transvaal before the Johannesburg revolt started; yet that is what he did, thinking that his action would force the Uitlanders to rise.

The words before the semi-colon form a complete sentence and the words that follow also form a complete sentence. But the two sentences relate to the same subject and the second merely enlarges on the first. They are therefore only separated by the semi-colon.

The second sentence, although in itself a complete sentence, does NOT begin with a capital letter.

### **The question mark**

This is sometimes called "the mark of interrogation". It is used in writing direct speech, that is, when the actual words of a speaker are quoted and enclosed in inverted commas.

*Example:* "Where are you going?"

As you can see, the question mark is placed inside the inverted commas.

You will also find the question mark used in an examination paper, for example: What is the square root of 121? If the question mark was omitted you would still know that the sentence "What *is* the square root of 121" is a question, but the question mark is put at the end to give it added emphasis.

### **The exclamation mark**

In speaking, people often use words which have no real meaning but merely tell us what the speaker is feeling. We use the exclamation mark to emphasise these exclamations of surprise, anger, delight or pity.

"Oh dear! I am sorry to hear such bad news." "Hurrah! I am delighted with your success."

The exclamation mark is also used to show that words were spoken abruptly and with emphasis as in giving a command.

*Example:* "You will stay here. Do not attempt to go away!"

### **The dash**

The dash ( - ) shows an abrupt and unexpected pause which indicates that the thought is interrupted.

#### *Examples:*

Unless your work improves - perhaps you are unable to improve it -you will be discharged.

If the roads in your country are good - in some countries there are no good roads - you will find travelling by car is very popular.

### **Brackets**

Brackets are sometimes used instead of the dash. They are also useful to remind the reader of some fact that the sentence itself does not mention.

#### *Example:*

The second wife of King Henry VIII {Anne Boleyn} was executed.

One of the first English newspapers was the Morning Post (1772).

In the first example, the name, Anne Boleyn, is put into brackets to remind the reader of her name. Similarly, the date 1772, placed in brackets to tell the reader, in case he has forgotten, when one of the first newspapers was started. The writer was chiefly concerned to say which of the English newspapers was one of the oldest and not when it was started.

## **SELF-HELP EXERCISE 4**

Punctuate the following passage:

Such things as air sunshine and water and the other free gifts of nature which are unlimited in quantity are not to be regarded as economic wealth because they are **TO** be had for nothing and no exertion is required to obtain them they have no value in exchange that is

nobody will give anything for them



## ANSWERS TO SELF-HELP EXERCISES

### Exercise 1

You were asked to give The meaning of the following words: (Have you checked with your dictionary?)

1. *COMPILE*: to compose or amass.
2. *QUOTATION*: something that is repeated from a passage in a book or from words that were actually spoken.
3. *MEMORISE*: to learn by heart.
4. *VARIETY*: the state or quality of having many different kinds; the absence of sameness.
5. *INTELLIGIBLE*: easily understood.
6. *SPICE*: a vegetable product used for making food more Tasty. In the core Text "Variety is the spice of life" it means that variety makes life more enjoyable and exciting.
7. *ESSENTIAL*: necessary
8. *CONTEXT*: the statement or matter which is referred to.

### Exercise 2

1.
  - a. The horse's hoof.
  - b. The soldier's uniform.
  - c. The child's laugh.
  - d. The girls' dresses.

- e. The boys' playground.
2.
    - a. The children's work was carefully done.
    - b. The birds' feathers were coated with oil.
    - c. The explorers' sufferings were very great.
  3. The company's premises were situated at the upper end of Orange Street. At the other end of the street, there were residential properties whose owners were mostly employed in the town's commercial life. The premises of the company were modern. The Manager's office was situated near the main entrance while the upper floors of the building were devoted to the clerks and accounts. The directors of the company meet regularly once a week in the Board Room. Dr. the days of their visits, the members of the Board of Directors paused to admire the well-kept lawns and gardens in front of -he building. They were the Chairman's special pride and joy.

### **Exercise 3**

1.
  - a. You're not to stay out late tonight.
  - b. We don't dislike the rainy season.
  - c. It doesn't matter if we're not in time for supper.
  - d. You mustn't waste the electricity by leaving the lights burning when they are not needed.
  - e. You'll be sorry that you didn't spend more time in study,
  - f. I shan't tell my father you interfered with his car.
  - g. It wasn't truthful to pretend you were ill when you weren't,
  - h. It's a long time to wait before the train leaves.
2.
  - a. "We'll be sorry," I said to him, "when we find the bus has left". "No, I shan't," he replied, "I'm never sorry about anything".
  - b. "I want to catch the train for Claremont," said the lady "Where do I find it?"  
"Go along to platform 3," answered the inspector. "It is waiting there now."
  - c. "I can never find a thing I require," grumbled the man. "Nothing is ever in its right place."  
"The trouble is," retorted his wife, "you take things away and never put them back."
  - d. "Do you think the weather will remain fine?" I asked my companion, as we set out on our long

journey.

- e. "It looks promising at the present," my companion replied, "but in these mountains, great changes in the weather occur with little or no warning."

#### **Exercise 4**

Such things as air, sunshine and water and the other free gifts of Nature, which are unlimited in quantity, are not to be regarded as economic wealth. Because they are TO be had for nothing and no exertion is required to obtain them, they have no value in exchange. That is, nobody will give anything for them.