

SENTENCE TRANSFORMATIONS

In this type of exam task you need to rewrite sentences keeping the meaning the same as in the original sentences. There are two types of this exam task: in type 1 you are given the beginning and the ending of the new sentence, whereas in type 2 you are also given a word or an expression that you have to use in your sentence. You are not allowed to change this word in any way.

(1) Nothing matters to me except your health and happiness.
The only thing that matters to me, your health and happiness.

(2) My mother was too worried to concentrate on the movie. (THAT)
My mother was so worried that she could not concentrate on the movie.

Below, you will find examples of the structures which are most commonly tested in this type of exam task.

REPORTED SPEECH

'Why did you leave your previous job?' asked the interviewer.
The interviewer asked me why I had left my previous job.

THE PASSIVE AND HAVE/GET SOMETHING DONE

The police are interrogating one suspect in connection with the crime.
One suspect is being interrogated in connection with the crime.

Your hair needs cutting.
You ought to have your hair cut.

CONDITIONALS

You didn't succeed because you didn't do your best.
You would have succeeded if you had done your best.

GRAMMATICAL TENSES

My parents' twentieth wedding anniversary is in March next year. (FOR)
By March next year my parents will have been married for twenty years.

INVERSION

We had only just taken our seats when they started showing trailers. (WHEN)
Hardly had we taken our seats when they started showing trailers.

STRUCTURES I WISH AND IF ONLY, WISHES, ADVICE AND SUGGESTIONS

It's a pity she didn't make any effort to justify her decision. (WISH)
I wish she had made some effort to justify her decision.
Please don't use my laptop without my permission. (RATHER)
I don't want you to use my laptop without my permission.

LINKING WORDS

I enjoyed our trip although I felt a bit under the weather.
Despite feeling a bit under the weather, the fact that I felt a bit under the weather, I enjoyed our trip.

MODAL VERBS (REFERRING TO THE PAST)

It's possible that she didn't receive our wedding invitation. (NOT)
She might / may not have received our wedding invitation.

VERB PATTERNS

I'd rather stay at home than go to the pub with them.
I prefer staying at home to going to the pub with them.

PARASAL VERBS

The board meeting has been postponed until next Thursday. (PUT)
The board meeting has been put off until / till next Thursday.

TEST YOURSELF

1 Rewrite the sentences so that the meaning is the same as in the original sentences. Decide which structures are being tested in each of them.

- I'm sure that tall man was following us all the way home. (BEEN)
That tall man must have been following us all the way home.
- modal verb referring to the past
- John isn't similar to his father. (AFTER)
John isn't as similar to his father as his father.
- I'm sorry I lost your favourite pen. (APOLOGISE)
I do apologise for losing your favourite pen.
- You'd better find a way to solve this problem quickly. (YOU)
If I could, a way to solve this problem quickly.
- I shouldn't have told her the truth. (ONLY)
If I hadn't told her the truth, her the truth.
- I will never lend him any money again. (CIRCUMSTANCES)
Under no circumstances will I lend him money again.

REPORTED SPEECH

2 Complete the sentences so that the meaning is the same as in the original sentences.

- 'How much did you spend on your child's first birthday party?' she asked us.
She asked us how much we had spent on our child's first birthday party.
- 'You've broken my favourite vase!' shouted Kate.
Kate accused me of breaking her favourite vase.
- 'Don't leave the classroom without permission!' said the teacher to the class.
The teacher told them not to leave the classroom without permission.
- 'I'm so sorry I've stained your new blouse,' said Olivia.
Olivia apologised for staining my new blouse.

THE PASSIVE AND HAVE/GET SOMETHING DONE

3 Complete the sentences with the correct forms of the verbs in brackets.

- People who live below the threshold of absolute poverty must be helped (not forget).
- Coral reefs are disappearing (wipe out) by the end of the century.
- So far no cases of swine flu have been reported (report) in this country.
- I hate being (tell) what to do by my older siblings.
- I failed the test because I wasn't prepared (teach) how to handle the stress of test taking.

4 Complete the sentences so that the meaning is the same as in the original sentences.

- No one gave us sufficient information about the meeting point.
We weren't given about the meeting point.
- Many people believe that Hitler committed suicide in April 1945.
Hitler is believed to have committed suicide in April 1945.
- Two painters are painting our house tomorrow.
We are being painted tomorrow.
- The dentist will probably take out Mark's tooth.
Mark will have his tooth taken out.

CONDITIONALS

5 Make conditional sentences using the situations below.

- Tom hasn't got any money, so he can't give you a loan.
If Tom had some money, he could give you a loan.
- My girlfriend is absent-minded. That's why she forgot about our date yesterday.
If she weren't absent-minded, she wouldn't forget about our date.
- I was late for work because I missed the bus.
If I hadn't missed the bus, I wouldn't have been late for work.
- It might rain heavily tomorrow. If so, we probably won't go for a walk.
If it rains heavily tomorrow, we probably won't go for a walk.
- Fiona doesn't have a well-paid job now because she dropped out of studies.
If she hadn't dropped out of studies, she would have a well-paid job now.

6 Complete the sentences using the words given so that the meaning is the same as in the original sentences. Do not change the words given in any way.

- The customer wanted to complain about the faulty product but he didn't know who to turn to. (WOULD)
If the customer had known who to turn to, he would have complained.
- You won't know how it works if you don't read the manual carefully. (UNLESS)
You won't understand how it works unless you read the manual carefully.
- Matthew wants to go on a package tour to Spain but he hasn't got enough money. (WOULD)
If Matthew had enough money, he would go on a package tour to Spain.
- I think the teacher won't let me off this time because I have already missed many classes. (HADN'T)
If I hadn't missed many classes, the teacher would let me off this time.
- You will get a high mark for your essay unless you make spelling mistakes. (LONG)
You will get a high mark unless you make spelling mistakes.

GRAMMATICAL TENSES

7 Complete the sentences with the correct forms of the verbs in brackets.

- I'm absolutely exhausted because I have been running (paint) my room all day.
- By the time we get home, the children will be going (go) to bed.
- Mobile phones are becoming (become) cheaper and cheaper.
- I was shopping (do) shopping yesterday, when I bumped into an old friend of mine.
- I'm sure she'll call us as soon as the ship reaches (reach) its destination.

8 Complete the sentences so that the meaning is the same as in the original sentences.

- I haven't driven on the left side of the road for ages.
It's ages since I last drove on the left side of the road.
- Several thousand tourists visit the Natural History Museum in our city every month.
By the end of the month several thousand tourists will have visited the Natural History Museum in our city.
- When did you start learning Chinese?
How long have you been learning Chinese?
- We ate all the food before other guests arrived.
By the time the other guests arrived, all the food was gone.
- The last time this nation overthrew the government was about fifty years ago.
This nation last overthrew the government about fifty years ago.
- Having introduced my girlfriend to my parents, I started talking about our engagement plans.
After I had introduced my girlfriend to my parents, I started talking about our engagement plans.