

Prepare for {IELTS}

Video Lessons



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VOCABULARY FOR IELTS

AVOIDING ERRORS  
WITH EASILY  
CONFUSED WORDS  
PART 1

Prepare for {IELTS}

# WHAT YOU WILL LEARN?

- Why you should understand **EASILY CONFUSED WORDS**
- The most **EASILY CONFUSED VERBS** for **IELTS**
- The most **EASILY CONFUSED ADJECTIVES** for **IELTS**
- The most **EASILY CONFUSED NOUNS** for **IELTS**
- The most **EASILY CONFUSED ADVERBS AND OTHER WORDS**
- The most **EASILY CONFUSED WORDS CONNECTED WITH PEOPLE**
- Strategies to avoid confusion
- Practice

# WHY WORRY ABOUT EASILY CONFUSED WORDS?


- The **IELTS** examiner knows that many candidates confuse these words and will give you credit if you don't (**Vocabulary**)
- Accuracy is extremely important for **IELTS** writing. If you write the wrong word, it could seriously affect your grade (**Vocabulary**)
- If you make mistakes with **EASILY CONFUSED WORDS** you will confuse the **IELTS** examiner and she/ he won't understand your meaning. (**Task Achievement/Response**)

# IELTS TASK 2 WRITING BAND DESCRIPTORS

Band	Task Response	Coherence and Cohesion	Lexical Resource	Grammatical Range and Accuracy
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• fully addresses all parts of the task</li><li>• presents a fully developed position in answer to the question with relevant, fully extended and well supported ideas</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• uses cohesion in such a way that it attracts no attention</li><li>• skilfully manages paragraphing</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• uses a wide range of vocabulary with very natural and sophisticated control of lexical features; <b>rare minor errors occur only as 'slips'</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• uses a wide range of structures with full flexibility and accuracy; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips'</li></ul>
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• sufficiently addresses all parts of the task</li><li>• presents a well-developed response to the question with relevant, extended and supported ideas</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• sequences information and ideas logically</li><li>• manages all aspects of cohesion well</li><li>• uses paragraphing sufficiently and appropriately</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• uses a wide range of vocabulary fluently and flexibly to convey precise meanings</li><li>• <b>skilfully uses uncommon lexical items but there may be occasional inaccuracies in word choice and collocation</b></li><li>• produces rare errors in spelling and/ or word formation</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• uses a wide range of structures</li><li>• the majority of sentences are error-free</li><li>• makes only occasional errors or inappropriacies</li></ul>
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• addresses all parts of the task</li><li>• presents a clear position throughout the response</li><li>• presents, extends and supports main ideas, but there may be a tendency to over-generalise and/ or supporting ideas may lack focus</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• logically organises information and ideas; there is clear progression throughout</li><li>• uses a range of cohesive devices appropriately although there may be some under/ over-use</li><li>• presents a clear central topic within each paragraph</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• uses a sufficient range of vocabulary to allow some flexibility and precision</li><li>• uses less common lexical items with some awareness of style and collocation</li><li>• <b>may produce occasional errors in word choice, spelling and/ or word formation</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• uses a variety of complex structures</li><li>• produces frequent error-free sentences</li><li>• has good control of grammar and punctuation but may make a few errors</li></ul>

# IELTS TASK 2 WRITING BAND DESCRIPTORS

Band	Task Response	Coherence and Cohesion	Lexical Resource	Grammatical Range and Accuracy
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>addresses all parts of the task although some parts may be more fully covered than others</li><li>presents a relevant position although the conclusions may become unclear or repetitive</li><li>presents relevant main ideas but some may be inadequately developed/ unclear</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>arranges information and ideas coherently and there is a clear overall progression</li><li>uses cohesive devices effectively, but cohesion within and/ or between sentences may be faulty or mechanical</li><li>may not always use referencing clearly or appropriately</li><li>uses paragraphing but not always logically</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>uses an adequate range of vocabulary for the task</li><li>attempts to use less common vocabulary but with some inaccuracy</li><li><b>makes some errors in spelling and/ or word formation, but they do not impede communication</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>uses a mix of simple and complex sentence forms</li><li>makes some errors in grammar and punctuation but they rarely reduce communication</li></ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>addresses the task only partially; the format may be inappropriate in places</li><li>expresses a position but the development is not always clear and there may be no conclusions drawn</li><li>presents some main ideas but these are limited and not sufficiently developed; there may be irrelevant detail</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>presents information with some organisation but there may be a lack of overall progression</li><li>makes inadequate, inaccurate or over-use of cohesive devices</li><li>may be repetitive because of lack of referencing and substitution</li><li>may not write in paragraphs, or paragraphing may be inadequate</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>uses a limited range of vocabulary, but this is minimally adequate for the task</li><li><b>may make noticeable errors in spelling and/ or word formation that may cause some difficulty for the reader</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>uses only a limited range of structures</li><li>attempts complex sentences but these tend to be less accurate than simple sentences</li><li>may make frequent grammatical errors and punctuation may be faulty; errors can cause some difficulty for the reader</li></ul>



# AVOIDING ERRORS WITH EASILY CONFUSED WORDS TO IMPROVE YOUR IELTS GRADE

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# VERBS



# TO RISE/ TO RAISE

- Last year, prices **rose** by approximately twelve percent; this level of inflation is extremely worrying for the government and economists.
- Between 1999 and 2006 the number of households with more than one motor vehicle **rose** dramatically.
- The number of residents in the area experienced a rapid **rise** in the ten years leading up to the end of the last millennium.
- When governments **raise** taxes, it is generally extremely unpopular with the electorate.
- We need to **raise** awareness amongst children about the dangers connected with social media.

# TO INCREASE/ TO IMPROVE

- The number of home-owners has **increased** rapidly over the past few decades. Wealthier individuals have realised that investing in houses is a safe and potentially lucrative move.
- Over the past five years, there has been a noticeable **increase** in the number of new businesses. It seems that more and more people are keen on becoming entrepreneurs.
- The economic situation has **improved** markedly. There is now far more business confidence and consumers seem willing to spend their savings. This leads to increases in company profits and a keenness amongst employers to expand and take on more staff.
- There has been a sharp **improvement** in economic conditions since interest rates were cut.

# TO DEMONSTRATE/ TO SHOW/ TO DESCRIBE

- The tables given **demonstrate** the relationship between economic growth and inflation in three European countries over a ten-year period.
- The recent economic collapse, which started in The USA and spread around the globe, is a clear **demonstration** how inter-connected and inter-dependent we all are.
- The chart provided **shows** the number of domestic appliances bought during a twenty-year period starting in 1996.
- The flow-chart under discussion **describes** the process of publishing a book.
- Journalists often try to give their audience a clear **description** of what they have witnessed.

# TO ILLUSTRATE/ TO INDICATE

- The table provided **illustrates** the size of the problem of drug-taking in sport by showing how many top athletes have been found guilty of taking performance-enhancing steroids over a twenty-five year period.
- The fact that so many youngsters have been caught carrying knives and other weapons **illustrates** how widespread the problem is.
- The statistical table provided **indicates** that human activity is probably related to global warming.
- Rates of depression and mental illness amongst children are on the rise. This **indicates** that there are serious problems connected to the way in which children are raised.
- The fact that so many children are under-nourished is a clear **indication** that poverty is a major issue.

# TO COMPARE/ TO CONTRAST

- The pie chart **compares** the number of Olympic medals won by China and Russia since 2008.
- It is worth **comparing** living standards now with those at the start of the twenty-first century.
- Making **comparisons** between the lives of people living in urban areas and those whose homes are in the countryside makes little sense.
- The chart **contrasts** life expectancy in some of the world's most affluent nations with the figures for the poorest countries on the planet.
- It is worth **contrasting** the salaries paid to top sports-stars with those which dedicated health professionals such as nurses receive.
- There is a sharp **contrast** between average temperatures in Delhi and those in Helsinki.

# TO ASSESS/ TO ACCESS

- There are many ways in which schoolchildren can be **assessed**. It is not necessary to give them a formal, written exam at the end of the year. Presentations or short question-and-answer sessions can be used.
- Formal written **assessments** are a waste of time for younger children.
- Disabled people sometimes complain that they cannot **access** some government buildings and entertainment centres. This is particularly the case when older buildings cannot be renovated or updated to make them 'wheelchair-friendly'.
- Everybody needs **access** to good-quality education.

# TO LEARN/ TO TEACH

- Evidence indicates that anyone who has **learnt** a foreign language or a musical instrument is likely to have a wide range of improved cognitive skills. Such individuals will demonstrate improvements in reasoning skills, the use of logic and the ability to memorise information.
- It is obviously easier to **teach** willing and committed students than those who have no interest in the subject. Teachers with the ability to excite and stimulate uninterested learners are few and far between.

# TO LEARN/ TO STUDY

- **Learning** new skills can be immensely enjoyable.
- There is currently something of a debate about the role of technology in the classroom. Some argue that **learning** can be greatly enhanced by the use of specialist computer software, particularly for those who struggle with academic subjects.
- Most students dream of **studying** at one of the world's most prestigious universities, such as Harvard or Cambridge.
- It is important to have good **study** strategies if you want to pass your exams.



# TO WARN/ TO THREATEN/ TO ADVISE

- Scientists have been **warning** the general public and politicians for decades that unless steps are taken to tackle global carbon emissions, we face an extremely difficult future.
- Doctors regularly issue **warnings** that cigarette-smoking and drug-use can lead to premature death.
- A form of 'bird-flu' could actually **threaten** the survival of our species.
- Terrorist organisations have **threatened** to target ordinary members of the public as part of their campaign to force the government into a change of policy. This **threat** should be taken seriously.
- University students usually have the opportunity to book an appointment with a specialist in careers. This individual can **advise** students on possible career paths or options after graduation. Sadly, the **advice** given is not always taken.

# TO SAY/ TO TELL

- Experts in the field of animal care have **said** that keeping large carnivores like polar bears and lions in enclosed spaces is cruel.
- It is often **said** that older people are wiser than the young.
- The government has apparently been **told** by leading economists that it is necessary to reduce national debt within the next few years in order to avoid another crisis.
- Simply **telling** children to avoid communicating with strangers online is not enough; the dangers need to be fully demonstrated.

# TO AFFECT/ AN EFFECT

- Although younger viewers can be deeply **affected** by images showing violence, death and destruction shown during TV news bulletins, I feel that editors and producers are justified in broadcasting such footage which truthfully depicts some of the horrors of our modern world.
- Weather conditions can seriously **affect** food production.
- Many patients suffering from forms of depression and other mental and emotional illnesses take medication. However, the **effect** of this medicine varies considerably from one individual to the next. Worryingly, some drugs can have unpredictable and unforeseen side-effects.

# TO MEMORISE/ TO REMEMBER/ TO REMINISCE

- Some education systems appear to prize thinking skills over the simple recall of factual information. However, in other countries, students are merely expected to **memorise** and regurgitate facts and figures.
- It is important for all of us to **remember** the immense sacrifices which previous generations made for us. Our grandparents may have endured poverty and misery and it is only because of their strength and perseverance that we are here today.
- Allowing older people to **reminisce** about their past can have valuable psychological benefits.

# TO JOIN/ TO ATTEND

- At university, many undergraduates are encouraged to **join** clubs and societies. This enables them to develop talents, but also to forge friendships which may last a lifetime. Having a wider social circle at university is, in fact, a good predictor of academic success.
- University students sometimes decide not to **attend** lectures given by uninspiring tutors or teachers who struggle to explain their message in a clear and coherent way. Many academic institutions do not make attendance at lectures compulsory.

# TO ENSURE/ TO ASSURE

- It is essential that society **ensures** the safety and welfare of its children. Youngsters are vulnerable and their security me guaranteed.
- After disasters- natural or man-made- government officials are usually quick to **assure** the public that there is no further danger. However, the **assurances** given are not always particularly convincing.

# TO ADMIT/ TO ACKNOWLEDGE

- I believe that the advantages of educating boys and girls in the same classroom are huge. However, I have to **admit** that the academic performance of male and female students taught in single-sex classes tend to be quite impressive.
- We would all like to believe that we live in a fair world. However, it is necessary to **acknowledge** that society is rather sexist: women struggle to get the best jobs, to get equal pay and to be treated with the same respect and dignity as men.

# TO NOTICE/ TO REALISE

- Many people claim to have **noticed** that others are far ruder than they used to be. Particularly in large cities, people tend to push past each other without even bothering to apologise. This would have been extremely unusual in the past.
- It is essential to **realise** that the way we live is unsustainable. We will have to make drastic changes to our everyday lives if we want to look after the planet.



# TO CLAIM/ TO MAINTAIN

- Many supporters of free education for all **claim** that it leads to higher living standards and better quality of life for almost everyone in society.
- The **claim** that immigrants usually benefit an economy is not widely believed.
- Despite the fact that most in the scientific community now believe that rises in global temperatures are fundamentally linked to human activity, there are some who still **maintain** that climate change is an entirely natural phenomenon.

# TO STATE/ TO CONTEND

- Many experts in the field of economics have **stated** that the best way for a country to avoid recession and downturn is to invest in infrastructure and education.
- Some experts **contend** that governments with high levels of debt are no more likely to face recession than those with no debt whatsoever.
- The issue of abortion remains extremely **contentious**.

# TO REACT/ TO RESPOND

- People often **react** quite badly to being made redundant. Many become anxious, depressed or lethargic. It takes some individuals months or even years to recover.
- Many viewers have a negative **reaction** to scenes of violence and aggression on television.
- People **respond** to criticism in a number of ways. Some views it in a positive light and change their behaviour accordingly. Others ignore it.
- The **response** of some to television images of violence is to switch off.

# TO PRACTISE/ PRACTICE

- It has been estimated that anyone wishing to become a competent pianist will probably have to **practise** for a minimum of ten thousand hours. In reality, most would-be concert pianists are not willing or able to dedicate so much time to one activity.
- Mercifully, the **practice** of discriminating against members of ethnic minorities when they apply for jobs has been outlawed. However, it should be acknowledged that some employers still seem unwilling to appoint individuals from different backgrounds.
- It is sometimes said that **practice** makes perfect. Although this probably is only partially true, it is certainly the case that those who are dedicated usually improve faster than those who are not willing to take an activity seriously.

# TO ACCEPT/ EXCEPT

- Many employees have had to **accept** pay freezes or even pay cuts as a result of the poor economic conditions.
- Students should not have to **accept** poor-quality teaching at school. They have a right to expect motivated and hard-working teachers who inspire them.
- Every country which is a member of the United Nations- **except** The United States and Honduras- has signed the agreement.
- The table indicates that exam results improved in each subject last year, **except** Biology.
- With the **exception** of Denmark. Britain had the highest rates of teenage pregnancy in Europe.
- It has become **exceptionally** difficult to find a well-paid, full-time job.

# TO ADVISE/ ADVICE

- Although teachers often **advise** their students to apply for a place at university, in many cases it would make more sense for eighteen-year-olds to go into the world of work.
- Individuals are **advised** to wear seat-belts, even when travelling in the back of a car.
- Many choose to ignore the **advice** given by medical experts to take regular exercise and try to lose weight.
- Those in debt often require **advice** from financial experts.

# WHAT SHALL I DO NOW?

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- **Study the next part of this unit**
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PART 2

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# WHAT YOU WILL LEARN?

- Why you should understand **EASILY CONFUSED WORDS**
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# ADJECTIVES

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# TO BE INTERESTED/ TO BE INTERESTING

- Unfortunately, when youngsters are taken to a museum or art gallery, they are rarely **interested** in looking at the exhibits or works of art. Most museums need to radically re-think their approach. Otherwise, visitor numbers- especially amongst the young- will dwindle.
- It is **interesting** to note that although the amount of fatty food we eat has risen, there has been a corresponding increase in how much fruit people consume.
- **Worried-worrying; tired-tiring; fascinated-fascinating; bored-boring; concerned-concerning; surprised-surprising; infuriated-infuriating; annoyed-annoying; depressed-depressing; shocked-shocking; frightened-frightening; amused-amusing; amazed-amazing; terrified-terrifying**

# TO BE EVIDENT/ TO BE OBVIOUS

- It is **evident** that as living standards rise, the birth rate tends to fall. Figures from across the globe indicate that more affluent families choose to have fewer children.
- There is a great deal of **evidence** in support of the notion that children who are taught to read at an early age do well in formal education.
- It is **obvious** that every parent wants the best for their child. Mothers and fathers are willing to invest huge amounts of time and money to ensure that their children have the best opportunity to do well.

# TO BE SCEPTICAL/ TO BE CYNICAL

- I am, quite frankly, rather **sceptical** about the government's claims that unemployment is at an all-time low. I suspect that the figures have been manipulated and that the number of individuals out of work is actually higher than ever.
- Believing that we only donate to charity in order to feel good about ourselves is a rather **cynical** view; some individuals undoubtedly give money in order to make a genuine difference to the world.
- As something of a **cynic**, I tend to believe that individuals act in their own self-interest and only help others if, by doing this, they benefit themselves.

# TO BE SENSITIVE/ TO BE SENSIBLE

- When dealing with refugees and asylum-seekers it is essential to be extremely **sensitive**. Many of them have probably endured horrendous experiences and may be psychologically scarred.
- Undergraduates occasionally realise that they will not be able to complete and hand in a piece of assessed work on time. **Sensible** students approach their tutors as early as possible and attempt to negotiate an extension to the deadline.
- It is **sensible** to pack lots of warm clothing if you intend to visit Canada during the winter.



# TO BE MORAL/ MORALE

- We need to view this question from a **moral** perspective: it is completely unfair to treat people differently just because of their gender or ethnic background.
- Studies suggest that **morale** amongst public-sector workers is as low as it has ever been. Experts believe that a combination of low wages and the fact that those working in health and education are no longer as respected as they used to be are principle reasons for this.

# TO BE HUMAN/ TO BE HUMANE

- Unfortunately, selfishness and greed are basic **human** attributes. To some extent, we are all susceptible to these feelings.
- **Humans/Human beings** tend to be extremely poor at evaluating risk.
- We need, as a society, to have a far more **humane** attitude to asylum-seekers and refugees. We have to appreciate that many of them have had traumatic experiences and need support. Turning them back at the border is, quite frankly, **inhumane**.

# TO BE EVERYDAY/ EVERY DAY

- Public transport tends to be extremely unreliable. Unfortunately, a bus failing to turn up or arriving incredibly late is an **everyday** occurrence.
- **Every day**, the proportion of The Earth's surface subject to desertification grows a little. Experts are concerned that within decades the amount of productive farmland available to use will have diminished considerably.

# TO BE CAUSAL/ TO BE CASUAL

- Although there is certainly a correlation between a person's social class and the likelihood that they will die from a preventable disease, this might not be a **causal** relationship. It is quite feasible that underlying factors can explain this connection.
- Obesity clearly has a wide range of **causes**.
- These days, particularly in certain parts of the world, it has become incredibly common for young unmarried adults to have a large number of **casual** relationships. Some experts believe that this promiscuity is connected to the spread of sexually-transmitted diseases.

# TO BE ANCIENT/ TO BE ASIAN

- There is a great deal we can learn from **ancient** civilisations.
- Those living in the **ancient** past had a completely different relationship with nature to the one which modern societies have.
- Over the past few decades, **Asian** economies have developed strongly to become amongst the most powerful in the world.
- Many of the world's oldest civilisations are **Asian**.

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PART 3

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# NOUNS

# A QUANTITY/ A QUALITY

- The **quantity** of rubbish which we as a civilisation dump into the oceans is astronomical. Each year, frightening amounts of plastics, paper, glass and industrial materials find their way into the sea.
- It is difficult to **quantify** the importance to a child of having a good start in life.
- Studies have suggested that there is a correlation between the **quality** of a couple's accommodation and the **quality** of their relationship. It is speculated that those living in more comfortable surroundings experience less stress and are able to interact in more positive ways.

# THE AMOUNT/ THE NUMBER

- The **amount** of time spent doing housework has fallen significantly over recent years. This may be because we all lead busier lives or it might have something to do with the development of many labour-saving devices such as dishwashers and washing machines.
- A large **amount** of plastic waste is dumped into our oceans each year.
- The **number** of people who iron their clothes has fallen slightly since the turn of the millennium. A recent survey suggested that less than a quarter of adults iron towels.
- Although the **number** of rainy days has remained relatively constant over the past decade, the **amount** of rain which has fallen is significantly higher than it was.

# AN APPEARANCE/ AN OUTLOOK

- Users of social media often focus on their own physical **appearance**. In our image-conscious world, it is essential for them to look as perfect as possible.
- The **appearance** of the first cars towards the end of the nineteenth century changed our way of life forever.
- Studies have shown that having a positive **outlook** on life makes it more likely that you will be healthy and popular. Being an optimist seems to have a number of beneficial consequences such as the ability to recover more quickly from a major operation.

# AN INFLUENCE/ AN EFFECT

- Friends and classmates have a far greater **influence** on adolescents than their parents and families. So-called 'peer pressure' is probably at its height amongst young teenagers.
- The extent to which internet-users are **influenced** by social media has been seriously debated.
- There is no doubt that banning motor vehicles from entering city-centres can have a tremendously positive **effect** on the environment, making it calmer and cleaner.
- A student's academic performance can easily be **affected** by issues such as nutrition, a lack of sleep or not enough exercise.

# A LIBRARY/ A BOOKSHOP

- Even in our modern world dominated by technology and electronic reading devices, **libraries** have a fundamental role to play. Children and adults still need the opportunity to borrow an actual physical book.
- The number of **bookshops** on our streets has diminished considerably of late. Experts ascribe this change to the growth of e-commerce. Websites such as Amazon are able to sell books far more cheaply than physical **bookshops** as they have fewer costs and overheads. Those **bookshops** which remain have found themselves having to diversify into other areas.



# AN INJURY/ AN ILLNESS/ A DISEASE

- Sports-stars sometimes argue that the reason why they are entitled to earn such astronomical amounts of money is that they are very likely to suffer a career-ending **injury** whilst playing.
- It is quite disgraceful that although mental **illness** probably causes more suffering than physical illness, medical professionals around the world often ignore it.
- There are several tropical **diseases** which kill hundreds of thousands each year. Some of these are water-borne **diseases** whilst others are passed to humans via insects. If these **diseases** affected wealthier people living in the developed world, cures and effective treatments would have certainly been found by now.

# A CAREER/ A COURSE

- Anyone considering a **career** in journalism needs to take several facts into account: changes in technology and the development of social media mean that the role of the journalist has changed beyond all recognition and is likely to continue evolving over the coming years.
- These days, the majority of universities offer **courses** leading to a specific job rather than general **courses** which develop a range of skills. Subjects like Literature and History have become less popular, being replaced by Degrees which will lead directly to employment such as Forensic Psychology and Events Management.

# HABITS/ CUSTOMS

- Many drivers have got into the dangerous **habit** of using their mobile phone whilst driving. Studies suggest that this is extremely likely to lead to accidents, injuries and even fatalities.
- As our world becomes increasingly globalised, there is an enormous danger that we will lose some of the **customs** and traditions of individual cultures. Societies which become more 'westernised' may abandon their forms of art, music and celebration. This would be a terrible shame, making our civilisation far less diverse and far poorer culturally.

# A STORY/ HISTORY

- **Stories** are an invaluable tool for teaching children a number of essential skills. These include the ability to be creative, the ability to view the world from another's perspective and the ability to understand sequences and causal relationships.
- Those who have studied the **history** of the English language claim that its transformation from an insignificant dialect into a global super-language has had a number of causes including major historical events and good fortune.

# AN OPPORTUNITY/ A POSSIBILITY

- These days, thanks to technological developments, trainee doctors have the **opportunity** to practise the trickiest medical procedures in a simulator before attempting them in the real world.
- There is a distinct **possibility** that we will soon run out of antibiotics to treat some diseases. This would spell disaster for all of us.

# THE STANDARD OF LIVING/ THE QUALITY OF LIFE/ LIFE EXPECTANCY

- Over the past decade, there has been a noticeable rise in **the standard of living**: wages have risen in real terms and the purchasing power of the average consumer is higher than ever.
- It can be argued that those living in the countryside have a better **quality of life** than their counterparts living in urban areas. The pace of rural life is appreciably slower and those living in the countryside probably experience lower levels of stress and anxiety.
- The increase in **life expectancy** can probably be attributed to better diet and increased awareness of the importance of health. Improved medical techniques have also played a part in the fact that we are all living longer than we used to.

# A PRINCIPAL/ A PRINCIPLE

- School **principals** have to deal with a wide range of issues from balancing the budget to staff dissatisfaction and pupils behavior.
- The **principal** reason for vandalism is probably boredom. Youths with no job and nothing to do spray graffiti and break windows.
- I believe that dealing with the environmental crisis we currently face is **principally** the responsibility of governments and international organizations
- Fairness and equality are important **principles**. We should all aim to treat others as we would expect to be treated ourselves.
- We should stick to our **principles**: when offered a great deal of money to do something which we consider morally wrong, we should decline.
- **In principle** the policy of imprisoning everyone who commit a crime may make sense. However, in practice, this is an entirely unviable approach.

# THE PRESENCE/ THE PRESENT

- Teachers and parents alike have become increasingly worried by the **presence** of knives and even guns in some secondary schools.
- The **presence** of significant amounts of greenhouse gas in our atmosphere is a real cause for concern.
- At **present**, the number of individuals aged sixty or over is slightly higher than the proportion aged under sixteen.



# THE PAST/ PASSED

- In the **past**, the vast majority of adults worked in farming. The agriculture sector accounted for around four fifths of the economy. Nowadays, the situation is completely different with approximately three quarters of all employment being in service industries.
- Students who have not **passed** their driving test after three attempts should, as far as I am concerned, not be allowed to re-take the exam for at least six months.

# AN ISSUE/ A CONTROVERSY/ A DILEMMA

- The **issue** of whether students finishing school should go straight to university or should take a gap-year is an interesting one.
- There is a genuine **controversy** over the question of whether abortions should be legalised. Those on both sides of the debate have entrenched views and argument and debate is both heated and acrimonious.
- Parents of teenagers often face a tricky **dilemma**: they want to protect their offspring but, at the same time, to allow them the freedom they need to become independent.

# AN EXPERIMENT/ AN EXPERIENCE

- Researchers carried out an **experiment** to determine what would happen if astronauts were confined together in a small space for eighteen months. The purpose was to study how feasible it might be to send a manned mission to the planet Mars.
- Many school-leavers are tempted to travel around the world. They realise that they can have many wonderful **experiences** before returning home to find work.
- Anyone thinking about starting their own business should probably first work for a company which operates in the area they are interested in. This can give tremendously valuable **experience**.

# A CONSCIENCE/ TO BE CONSCIOUS

- It is very difficult to look at supermarket shelves stacked with nutritious and delicious food with a clear **conscience**, knowing that in other parts of the world people are desperately searching for something to eat.
- When they find themselves in social situations, most people are **conscious** that they need to behave in ways which others consider acceptable.
- Although most of us are **conscious** of the need to save money, in reality we find it quite difficult.
- The thought of being operated on while **conscious** is terrifying.

# AN ASSUMPTION/ AN ASSERTION

- It is wrong to make the **assumption** that older people have no value and can make no real contribution to society. Many have tremendous skills and could, if given the opportunity, make a huge difference.
- We should never **assume** that what we read online is the absolute truth.
- Politicians often make the **assertion** that economic prosperity should be government's main aim.
- Experts **assert** that prison tends not to be an effective deterrent.

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VOCABULARY FOR IELTS

AVOIDING ERRORS  
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# WHAT YOU WILL LEARN?

- Why you should understand **EASILY CONFUSED WORDS**
- The most **EASILY CONFUSED VERBS** for **IELTS**
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- Practice



# ADVERBS AND OTHER WORDS

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# A FEW / FEW

- There are **a few** sports and free-time activities- such as rock-climbing, caving and hang-gliding- which are so dangerous that, in my view, they should be outlawed. Those who take part in these pastimes are putting their lives at unnecessary risk.
- Most of us believe that activities such as painting, drawing and singing should form part of a child's upbringing. **Few** of us would want to stop youngsters from expressing themselves through these art forms.
- It would be amazing to meet one of the **few** individuals to have walked on the surface of the moon.

# A LITTLE / LITTLE

- Although there is still **a little** hope that we can save some of the species facing extinction, this hope is fading with every passing year.
- There is **little** evidence to suggest that motorists and consumers are ready to make the sacrifices necessary to cut carbon emissions and reduce the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. There is **little** doubt that unless radical changes occur, we face a bleak future.
- **Little** is really known about the ocean floor.

# TO/ TOO

- Many of us would like **to** move **to** a slightly more luxurious house in a better neighbourhood.
- Some graduates take well-paid jobs **to** earn more money rather than the fulfilling jobs which would give them genuine satisfaction.
- Although some schools have proposed starting classes before seven o'clock in the morning, this is **too** early for many students.
- One of the problems facing major cities is that **too** many migrants arrive each year.

# LASTLY/ AT LAST

- There are several reasons why teaching children about nutrition is hugely beneficial. Firstly, the children will begin to take notice of what they eat and hopefully start to become healthier. Furthermore, they are likely to pass on the message to their family members and encourage them to opt for better food choices. Lastly, we should consider the effect of such a change in diet on food manufacturers: seeing a rise in the demand for more nutritious foods, they are likely to switch production away from unhealthy alternatives and begin to market products which have a positive impact on our health.
- One atrocious miscarriage of justice occurred more than two decades ago when a man was convicted of a murder he did not commit. At last, after nearly twenty years of protests and judicial reviews, the individual concerned was released and pardoned a few months ago.

# EXCEPTIONALLY/ AN EXCEPTION

- Weather forecasters predict that, due to changes in our climate, weather patterns will become increasingly difficult to predict. Some regions can expect **exceptionally** warm weather whilst others may have to deal with **exceptionally** wet summers and cold winters.
- It has often been said that **exceptionally**-talented pupils, often referred to as gifted children, should be taught separately from everybody else.
- Secondary school students sometimes believe that science-based subjects have little relevance to the real world. One notable **exception** is Applied Mathematics, which seeks to use mathematical processes to solve practical, everyday problems.
- All adults **except** those in prison have the right to vote.



# EXCESSIVELY/ EXCEEDINGLY

- It is difficult to understand why so many people eat **excessively** large amounts of food. It could be a mixture of greed and the need to 'comfort eat'.
- An **excessive** amount of wine is produced each year. Some of it has to be thrown away as there simply is not enough demand for it.
- It is **exceedingly** difficult to learn a new skill after the age of eighty. Most octogenarians struggle to learn how to play a musical instrument or how to speak a foreign language.

# APPARENTLY/ PRESUMABLY

- **Apparently**, a large proportion of the workforce would like to join a trade union. However, researchers carrying out an investigation into why trade union membership remains so low found that many employees are worried or concerned that they might lose their job or face discrimination if they became a union member.
- Milk and cocoa are combined with other ingredients and the finished product is packed. Although the diagram does not show the next stage, the chocolate is **presumably** loaded onto lorries, driven to retail outlets and sold to the public.

# NOTABLY/ NOTICEABLY

- The number of individuals living in the city increased **notably** over the four years in question.
- There was a **notable** rise in computer sales during the 1990s.
- It has become **noticeably** harder to get a permanent and well-paid job than it used to be.
- There has been a **noticeable** change in the public's attitude towards capital punishment: many individuals now seem to be in favour of using it in some instances. This was not the case in the past.

# TO BE LIKELY/ LIKEWISE

- Unless urgent steps are taken to address the issue of global inequality, it is highly **likely** that the number of wars and armed conflicts, as well as the number of terrorist attacks, will continue to rise.
- It is quite **unlikely** that humans will return to the surface of the moon in the foreseeable future.
- Workers in agriculture are often paid exceedingly badly. **Likewise**, those in the service sector tend to be poorly remunerated by their employers.
- Allowing cars to drive in city-centres leads to unacceptably high levels of pollution for workers and shoppers **alike**.

# CURRENTLY/ ACTUALLY

- **Currently**, there is a somewhat heated debate about the rights and wrongs of keeping orca in aquatic parks. The controversy has sprung up because of the widely-publicised story of a killer whale called Tillicum.
- Some parents believe that administering physical punishment to their badly-behaved children will make them think carefully before doing something wrong. **Actually**, in most cases, this approach merely makes the situation worse.

# IN CONTRAST/ ON THE CONTRARY

- Most tourists visiting a well-known city spend quite a few days sight-seeing. **In contrast**, businesspeople coming to the same place tend to make their stay as short as possible and rarely if ever have time to see the famous buildings, monuments and other attractions or to soak up the atmosphere.
- It is believed by many that the death penalty is a far cheaper form of punishment than imprisonment. **On the contrary**, figures suggest that the lengthy legal process involved in putting a convicted criminal to death can actually make it costlier than jail.

# WHETHER/ WEATHER

- There has been a long-running debate about **whether** schoolchildren should be forced to wear uniforms. Supporters believe that uniforms give students a sense of belonging to their school whereas those opposed argue that making all learners wear the same thing can stifle individuality and creativity.
- The question of **whether** healthcare should be offered free of charge is an interesting one.
- Studies have suggested that **weather** significantly affects mood. On sunny days, we all tend to be more cheerful and optimistic and, conversely, when it is raining people have more negative thoughts.

# THROUGH/ THOROUGH

- **Through** reading good-quality children's literature, youngsters can develop a wide vocabulary as well as several important cognitive skills.
- These days, the majority of our communication is **through** smartphones and other electronic devices.
- **Throughout** the latter part of the twentieth century, there was a sustained effort to finally defeat malaria, which has been responsible for the deaths of millions.
- We need to develop a **thorough** understanding of the problem of truancy before we can expect to reduce it.
- I **thoroughly** approve of giving financial aid to impoverished countries.



# FORMALLY/ FORMERLY

- I do not believe it is necessary to assess primary-school children **formally**. Such examinations can only cause unnecessary stress and are unlikely to give a reasonable indication about the student's level.
- Although the two government have held **informal** talks, a **formal** agreement still has not been signed.
- Some countries which were **formerly** part of larger nations, such as The Soviet Union, can often struggle during the initial years of independence.
- **Former** government officials are often employed by major international companies as advisors.

# FARTHER/ FURTHER

- As a species, we never seem completely contented. We want to continue exploring, to go deeper and **farther** into the universe, to explore and understand more.
- Many families travel to Europe for their summer vacation. Some go **farther**, holidaying in more exotic locations such as Thailand and Mexico.
- Some would say that corporal punishment is a bad idea. I would go **further**: as far as I am concerned it is absolutely abhorrent.
- Allowing cars to drive in city-centres leads to unacceptably high levels of pollution for workers and shoppers alike. **Furthermore**, letting motor vehicles enter these areas has been shown to have a negative economic impact.

# NEARLY/ ROUGHLY

- The survey suggested that **nearly** eight out of every ten respondents believed that more should be done to help poorer families who were struggling to bring up their children
- Research indicates that **roughly** a quarter of all adults cannot name three South American countries.

# CONSEQUENTLY/ SUBSEQUENTLY

- Children are bombarded with advertising for toys. **Consequently**, many have come to associate having material possessions with being happy.
- House prices have risen sharply of late. There has been a **consequent** reduction in the number of individuals buying property.
- Milk is transported from the farm to the processing plant. **Subsequently**, it is treated and bottled before being sent to retailers.
- In 1988 oil prices fell slightly. There were three **subsequent** rises before the end of the millennium.

# WHAT SHALL I DO NOW?

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# WHAT YOU WILL LEARN?

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# WORDS CONNECTED WITH PEOPLE

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# A CITIZEN/ A CITY-DWELLER

- In many countries, there is a basic unwritten contract between **citizens** and their governments. Citizens agree to pay taxes and abide by the law whilst those in power promise to hold regular elections where they are accountable to voters.
- Life for **city-dwellers** can be incredibly stressful at times. However, there are undoubted benefits to living in a city. From both an economic and a social perspective, urban life has its perks.

# AN EMPLOYER/ AN EMPLOYEE

- **Employers** often believe that the only duty or responsibility they have is to pay their staff. In actual fact, the managing directors of companies have a legal obligation to protect their workers from danger and ensure that they are treated fairly.
- The number of **employees** who join a trade union has dropped markedly in recent years. This has led some to express concerns that workers' rights are likely to be eroded unless **employees** have some form of representation and the ability to negotiate and bargain with their employer.

# A COUNCILLOR/ A COUNSELLOR

- Local **councillors** are directly elected by members of the public, who expect them to make decisions in the best interests of the town or city.
- **Councils**- which are responsible for the day-to-day running of towns and cities- should adopt far more enlightened transport and environmental policies in order to improve the quality of air.
- **Counsellors** report having to deal with far more teenagers and young adults than in the past. It has been speculated the pressures of our modern lifestyle are seriously affecting the mental health of the young.
- I would **counsel** caution for anyone considering becoming a care-workers for the elderly: the job is stressful and, at times, depressing.

# A CHIEF/ A CHEF

- Obviously, anyone working as a **chief** of police or **chief** executive officer in a major company should receive a high salary to reflect the immense amount of responsibility related to the position.
- Being a **chef** is a far more complicated job than most of us realise. **Chefs** do not only need to be able to cook well. In addition, they need a detailed understanding of nutrition, hygiene and elements of chemistry. Furthermore, a Head **Chef** requires superb interpersonal skills and the ability to manage a hectic and chaotic working environment whilst under considerable time pressure.

# IMMIGRANTS/ MIGRANTS/ EMIGRANTS

- When a country decides to accept large numbers of **immigrants**, the situation has to be managed carefully. Elements of the so-called 'native' population can easily become scared, worried or even angry if they start to believe that 'foreigners are taking over'.
- Poverty, famine and warfare are amongst the reasons for the huge growth in the number of people **migrating** over recent years. Family groups and individuals are moving from one region to another in the hope of escaping intolerable deprivation or hardship. Although the vast majority are economic **migrants**, the number includes some who are literally fleeing for their lives.
- The number of Australians who **emigrate** has never been particularly high. With factors such as a relatively prosperous economy and an extremely good climate, there seems little incentive for them to go elsewhere. Some **emigrants** probably regret leaving.

# AN OFFICE-WORKER/ AN OFFICIAL/ AN OFFICER

- Life for many **office-workers** is monotonous and uninspiring. Most counteract this by either doing the bare minimum of work and putting the least possible amount of effort into their job, or by focussing on their free time, social life or family.
- Whenever a major city bids to host The Olympics, **officials** from The International Olympic Committee visit to check facilities in advance of a decision. It has been alleged that, in some cases, these **officials** have received bribes in exchange for a positive report.
- Military takeovers do not usually occur just because ordinary soldiers become dissatisfied with the regime. Governments are not usually displaced by the military until high-ranking **officers** lose confidence in politicians' ability to govern.



# AN ECONOMIST/ ECONOMICS/ THE ECONOMY/ TO ECONOMISE/ ECONOMIC

- **Economists** regularly make predictions about levels of **economic** growth, inflation and other indicators. However, the track-record of most of these so-called experts is mediocre at best. Their estimates are sometimes wildly inaccurate.
- Undergraduates studying **Economics** are sometimes frustrated that their tutors and lecturers regularly refer to old-fashioned and outdated theories and approaches which fail to provide an adequate explanation for the twenty-first century globalised **economy**.
- Those who retire often find themselves with a considerably lower income than previously. They may need to **economise** and to cut back on luxuries.
- The state of the **economy** is strongly linked to most people's sense of security and happiness. When **economic** conditions are good and there is little threat of unemployment or recession, individuals tend to feel more satisfied and content.

# A POLITICIAN/ POLITICS/ POLITICS/ A POLICY/ POLITICAL

- **Politicians** tend not to be trusted by the general public. They are seen as deceitful, manipulative and entirely untrustworthy by many.
- Undergraduates who choose to study **Politics** at university often mistakenly believe that getting a qualification in this subject will make it easier for them to enter the world of **politics** and perhaps become a Member of Parliament or even a minister.
- The government's zero-tolerance **policy** on immigration has been heavily criticised in the media. The authorities have decided to deport anyone they find who does not have the relevant documentation to be in the country. This approach has been denounced as cruel and inhumane.
- From an economic perspective, printing more money rarely makes sense. However, faced with an upcoming election and high levels of unemployment and social deprivation, such a **policy** might be justified for **political** reasons.



# STRATEGIES TO AVOID EASILY CONFUSED WORDS

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# STRATEGIES TO UNDERSTAND EASILY CONFUSED WORDS

- **Reading and Listening – Speaking and Writing**
- **Recording language...**
- Is it a **verb, noun, adverb or adjective**?
- Does it belong to a ‘**family**’ of words with related **verbs, nouns, adverbs or adjectives**? (to be easy: to be uneasy; easily/ uneasily; with ease; to ease; unease; uneasiness; to be easy-going)
- Can it be used with **prefixes or suffixes** (value: valuable; over-value; under-value; valueless; invaluable)
- Are there any **similar words** with **similar meanings**? (awareness: consciousness)
- Does it **collocate** with any other words? (poverty: to eradicate poverty; poverty-stricken)

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- Strategies to avoid confusion



# PRACTICE WITH EASILY CONFUSED WORDS

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# CHOOSE THE BETTER ALTERNATIVE

- Question 1
- There are several reasons why restricting the number of children a mother can have is wrong. Firstly, it is a violation of basic human rights. Secondly, mothers and families are intelligent enough to realise when they have enough children and do not need the state to intervene. **Lastly/ At last**, this policy is likely to lead to forced abortions and the unnecessary deaths of innocent women.
- There are several reasons why restricting the number of children a mother can have is wrong. Firstly, it is a violation of basic human rights. Secondly, mothers and families are intelligent enough to realise when they have enough children and do not need the state to intervene. **Lastly**, this policy is likely to lead to forced abortions and the unnecessary deaths of innocent women.

# CHOOSE THE BETTER ALTERNATIVE

- Question 2
- Celebrities nowadays seem to have a huge **effect/ influence** on the younger generation.
- Celebrities nowadays seem to have a huge **influence** on the younger generation.

# CHOOSE THE BETTER ALTERNATIVE

- Question 3
- Studies suggest that one of the major **effects/ influences** of becoming unemployed is on a person's self-esteem.
- Studies suggest that one of the major **effects** of becoming unemployed is on a person's self-esteem.

# CHOOSE THE BETTER ALTERNATIVE

- Question 4
- As a young child, I longed to be **learnt/ taught** the violin.
- As a young child, I longed to be **taught** the violin.

# CHOOSE THE BETTER ALTERNATIVE

- Question 5
- Being able to borrow books from a local **library/ bookshop** is a wonderful privilege. It is likely to lead to children with higher levels of literacy and a desire to read and learn new things.
- Being able to borrow books from a local **library** is a wonderful privilege. It is likely to lead to children with higher levels of literacy and a desire to read and learn new things.

# CHOOSE THE BETTER ALTERNATIVE

- **Question 6**
- **University students sometimes fail to ~~join/~~ attend lectures which start early because they have overslept.**
- **University students sometimes fail to attend lectures which start early because they have overslept.**



# CHOOSE THE BETTER ALTERNATIVE

- Question 7
- At university, I **joined/ attended** several sports clubs. This meant that I both improved my talent as a sailor, boxer and swimmer and developed a much wider social circle.
- At university, I **joined** several sports clubs. This meant that I both improved my talent as a sailor, boxer and swimmer and developed a much wider social circle.

# CHOOSE THE BETTER ALTERNATIVE

- Question 8
- It is **evident/ obvious** that children who are brought up by parents who treat them badly are less likely to become happy, well-adjusted adults. This is something which we all intuitively understand.
- It is **obvious** that children who are brought up by parents who treat them badly are less likely to become happy, well-adjusted adults. This is something which we all intuitively understand.

# CHOOSE THE BETTER ALTERNATIVE

- Question 9
- It is **evident/ obvious** that children of parents who drink alcohol are far more likely to become alcoholics themselves. Recent research has established a clear link.
- It is **evident** that children of parents who drink alcohol are far more likely to become alcoholics themselves. Recent research has established a clear link.

# CHOOSE THE BETTER ALTERNATIVE

- Question 10
- These days, a person's physical **appearance/ outlook** seems more important than ever. Young people in particular want to make sure that others consider them attractive.
- These days, a person's physical **appearance** seems more important than ever. Young people in particular want to make sure that others consider them attractive.

# CHOOSE THE BETTER ALTERNATIVE

- Question 11
- It has been proved that patients who have a more positive **appearance/ outlook** on life usually recover more successfully from major operations and invasive surgery.
- It has been proved that patients who have a more positive **outlook** on life usually recover more successfully from major operations and invasive surgery.

# CHOOSE THE BETTER ALTERNATIVE

- Question 12
- The statistical table provided **illustrates/ describes** how many top athletes have been found guilty of taking performance-enhancing drugs over a twenty-five year period.
- The statistical table provided **illustrates** how many top athletes have been found guilty of taking performance-enhancing drugs over a twenty-five year period.

# CHOOSE THE BETTER ALTERNATIVE

- Question 13
- Experts in the field of animal care have **said/ told** that keeping large carnivores like polar bears and lions in enclosed spaces is cruel.
- Experts in the field of animal care have **said** that keeping large carnivores like polar bears and lions in enclosed spaces is cruel.

# CHOOSE THE BETTER ALTERNATIVE

- Question 14
- The government has apparently been **said/ told** by leading economists that it is necessary to reduce national debt within the next few years in order to avoid another crisis.
- The government has apparently been **told** by leading economists that it is necessary to reduce national debt within the next few years in order to avoid another crisis.



# CHOOSE THE BETTER ALTERNATIVE

- Question 15
- The number of tenants who cannot afford to pay their rent to the landlord has **improved/ increased** steadily over the past few months.
- The number of tenants who cannot afford to pay their rent to the landlord has **increased** steadily over the past few months.

# CHOOSE THE BETTER ALTERNATIVE

- Question 16
- The economy has certainly **improved/ increased** since last September; inflation is down, unemployment figures show a significant fall and economic growth has started.
- The economy has certainly **improved** since last September; inflation is down, unemployment figures show a significant fall and economic growth has started.

# CHOOSE THE BETTER ALTERNATIVE

- **Question 17**
- **Many individuals have the rather annoying *habit/ custom* of dropping litter on the street.**
- **Many individuals have the rather annoying *habit* of dropping litter on the street.**

# CHOOSE THE BETTER ALTERNATIVE

- Question 18
- The **habit/ custom** of lighting a candle to mark the anniversary of the death of a loved-one goes back generations in our country.
- The **custom** of lighting a candle to mark the anniversary of the death of a loved-one goes back generations in our country.

# CHOOSE THE BETTER ALTERNATIVE

- Question 19
- Taking part in extreme sports like parachuting and hang-gliding can lead to serious **illness/ injury**.
- Taking part in extreme sports like parachuting and hang-gliding can lead to serious **injury**.

# CHOOSE THE BETTER ALTERNATIVE

- Question 20
- Leading a sedentary life-style can often lead to a serious **illness/**  
**injury** such as heart disease or diabetes.
- Leading a sedentary life-style can often lead to a serious **illness** such as heart disease or diabetes.

# CHOOSE THE BETTER ALTERNATIVE

- Question 21
- **Sensitive/ Sensible** tourists usually prepare well before visiting far-away destinations. They often take out insurance, seek medical advice, buy appropriate clothing and do research to make sure they will be safe.
- **Sensible** tourists usually prepare well before visiting far-away destinations. They often take out insurance, seek medical advice, buy appropriate clothing and do research to make sure they will be safe.

# CHOOSE THE BETTER ALTERNATIVE

- Question 22
- When dealing with vulnerable young adults, we need to take a **Sensitive/ Sensible** approach. They may have had terribly damaging experiences and need a great deal of support, understanding and compassion.
- When dealing with vulnerable young adults, we need to take a **sensitive** approach. They may have had terribly damaging experiences and need a great deal of support, understanding and compassion.



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