



lingoda

# Ellipsis

GRAMMAR

LEVEL  
Advanced

NUMBER  
C1\_1061G\_EN

LANGUAGE  
English



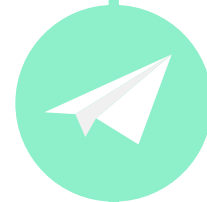


## Goals

- Can recognise and explain the purpose of ellipsis and substitution.
- Can accurately use ellipsis and substitution effectively in writing and everyday speech.



Doing anything tonight?  
Not a lot. You?  
Seeing my friends. Want to come?  
Too tired. Thanks, though.





## Ellipsis and substitution

- **Ellipsis** and **substitution** are used in English when we **leave out** or **replace** certain words in order to avoid repetition.
- Learning how to use these techniques lends **cohesion** to speech or writing.



We woke up and then [we] **had** breakfast.



## Textual ellipsis

- Textual ellipsis occurs in writing and speaking.
- We leave out words when we can understand everything in a sentence because of the surrounding text (from context).
- Textual ellipsis often occurs after **and**, **but** and **or**. We omit a repeated subject.
- If the auxiliary verb is repeated, we can also omit that. Note the omissions in brackets [...].

- **She** likes chocolate **but** [she] doesn't like cookies.
- **We** go to the cinema **or** [we] watch TV.
- **He needs to** wash his face **and** [he needs to] comb his hair.



## Textual ellipsis

Here are some more examples.

### Textual Ellipsis

**He** loves dogs **but** [he] hates cats.

**She should** wake up **and** [she should] get out of bed.

**I would like to** see him **or** [I would like to] speak to him.

**We** went to a café **and** [we] met Jean.





## Textual ellipsis

- We can also **omit** repeated **verb phrases** or the **complement** of the verb when it is obvious what they are.
- We can **omit** the **verb** in the **second clause** when we **negate** the **verb** (meaning when we use **not**).

- James believes he is **right** but he isn't [**right**].
- I haven't **been to Thailand** but my sister has [**been to Thailand**].
- I would like to **have another coffee** but I shouldn't [**have another coffee**].
- He needs to **move house** but he doesn't want to [**move house**].
- My teacher said I have to **go** but I can't [**go**].



## Textual ellipsis

**Can you use ellipsis to make these sentences sound more cohesive and natural?**

1. I went to the bar and I bought a beer.
2. They met Janice in the town and they talked to her for a while.
3. I thought I could come tonight but I can't come tonight.
4. He couldn't eat and he couldn't sleep.
5. We can't fix your computer today but we can fix it tomorrow.







## Read through the dialogue. Does it sound natural to you?



Hi Jane! What have you been doing?

Did you buy beef or did you buy chicken at the butchers?

Yes, I would like to go for a coffee but I can't go for a coffee.  
I'm late for a meeting.

Hi Marie. I've been to the butchers and I've been to the bakers.

I bought beef. Would you like to go for a coffee?

Oh, it's ok. I have to go to the dentist and I have to pick up my daughter from school.



## Using ellipsis

**Read the  
dialogue on the  
previous page  
with your teacher  
again but this  
time use ellipsis  
to make it sound  
more natural.**



Marie



Jane



## Situational ellipsis

- Situational ellipsis is normally used in speech.
- It is when we omit something because it is obvious from the context what is missing.
- We often leave out the **first person subject pronoun I** or the **third person subject pronoun he, she** or **it** when it is obvious who is being talked about. This is quite informal.

I hope you enjoy your meal.	Hope you enjoy your meal.
I went to the car wash today.	Went to the car wash today.
I saw Dave today. <b>He</b> seems well.	Saw Dave today. Seems well.
I can't find my phone.	Can't find my phone.
Alice started her new job today. <b>She</b> loves it.	Alice started her new job today. Loves it.



## Situational ellipsis

- In informal conversation we can omit the **subject pronoun** *I* or *you* and the **auxiliary verb**.
- This is most common in questions.

[**Have you**] Finished your dinner?

[**I've**] Lost my phone again.

[**Would you**] Mind coming with me?

[**Do you**] Want a cup of coffee?

[**Have you**] Got any change?





## Situational ellipsis

- Situational ellipsis often occurs in answers to questions when a word or a few words can stand in for an entire phrase.
- We know from the context what is missing.

When is she coming back?	[She's coming back] <b>Tomorrow</b> .
What time is it?	[I] <b>Don't know</b> [what time it is].
Where's Sue?	[Sue is] <b>At John's</b> .
Did you take the rubbish out?	<b>No, I didn't</b> [take the rubbish out].



## Situational ellipsis



- Sometimes we can omit almost all of a phrase. Imagine we are in the kitchen with our friend and we are waving a mug at them.
- We don't need to say: ***Do you want a cup of coffee?***



Coffee?



## Use substitutional ellipsis to transform the sentences

1. Have you done your homework?

→ Done your homework?

2. Are you going out tonight?

→ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you want a drink?

→ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Would you mind carrying this?

→ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Did you have a good journey?

→ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



**Read through the dialogue and identify where ellipsis has been used.**



Know when Tom will be back?

Seen Dave at all this week?

Yes, saw him yesterday actually.

About 8. Haven't seen him today though.

No. Seeing him tomorrow. You?





## Talk to your teacher

Have a conversation with your teacher using ellipsis. Use the prompts below to help you start.

“

Doing anything tonight?

”

“

Had dinner yet?

”



## Substitution

- We use substitution when we **replace** a word or phrase with another word.
- We do this to avoid repetition and to make our speech or writing cohesive.
- To replace a **countable noun**, we often use **one** (or **ones** if it is plural).
- This can often be seen in questions and answers.

Have you got a jacket?	No, I haven't got <b>one</b> .
What kind of cake do you want?	A chocolate <b>one</b> , please.
Do you want a glass of wine?	Yes, a big <b>one</b> please!
What colour trousers did you buy?	Black <b>ones</b> .



## Substitution



- We do **not** use **one** with **uncountable** nouns.
- We might use ellipsis instead.



I'll have **white wine** and my friend will have **red**.



## Substitution with *do* and *did*

- We can use **do** or **did** to substitute the verb and its complement.
- This is often seen in responses to statements.

We love going to Crete.	We <b>do</b> too.
We visited Gibraltar when we were in Spain.	We <b>didn't</b> but our son <b>did</b> .
They hated the food in New Zealand.	They <b>didn't</b> , <b>did</b> they? We loved it.
Make sure you post that letter.	I will <b>do</b> .



## Substitution with so

- We can use **so** to replace entire phrases.
- It is only used after certain verbs.

Is she coming today?	I <b>assume</b> so.
Do they like fish?	I don't <b>think</b> so.
Will it be hot in Canada?	They <b>believe</b> so.
Will it be difficult to learn Japanese?	I <b>imagine</b> so.
Is she coming with her boyfriend?	She didn't <b>say</b> so.
Are they in a relationship?	It <b>seems</b> so, though they haven't said anything.
Can you help me with this?	Hmm, I <b>suppose</b> so.



## Substitution with *not*

- We can use **not** to replace entire phrases.
- It is only used after certain verbs. These are the same verbs that can be used with **so**.

Is there a test tomorrow?	I <b>hope</b> not.
Have you finished that report?	I'm <b>afraid</b> not.
Are there any chocolates left?	I <b>imagine</b> not.
Are they arriving before lunch?	They <b>said</b> not.



## Answer these questions using *one* or *ones*

1. Have you got a key?



Yes, I've got one.

2. Want a cup of tea?



---

---

3. What colour trousers did you buy?



---

---

4. Does Jim want a glass?



---

---

5. Have you got a jumper?



---

---



**Read through the dialogue and identify words and phrases which could be replaced by *do*, *did* or *so***



Helena and Chris really love that restaurant for dinner.

I believe that they are, but they didn't reply to my invitation.

Yes, I suppose they might be busy. They usually are.

We love that restaurant for dinner too! Are they coming on Friday night?

They didn't reply to your invitation?! That's a little rude, but they might be busy.





## Answer the questions

**Answer these questions using *so* or *not* along with an appropriate verb. Add more details to your answer if possible.**

1. Is Britain leaving the EU?
2. Are you going out tonight?
3. Is it easy to learn a new language?
4. Can I come over for dinner next weekend?
5. Is the USA a good place to go on holiday?



## Reflect on the lesson

Take a moment to review any new **vocabulary, phrases, language structures** or **grammar points** you have come across for the first time in this lesson.

Review them with your teacher one more time to make sure you don't forget!





## Answer key

### Exercise p. 8

1. and bought, 2. and talked, 3. can't, 4. and/or sleep, 5. can tomorrow

### Exercise p. 10

Accept any appropriate answers

### Exercise p. 15

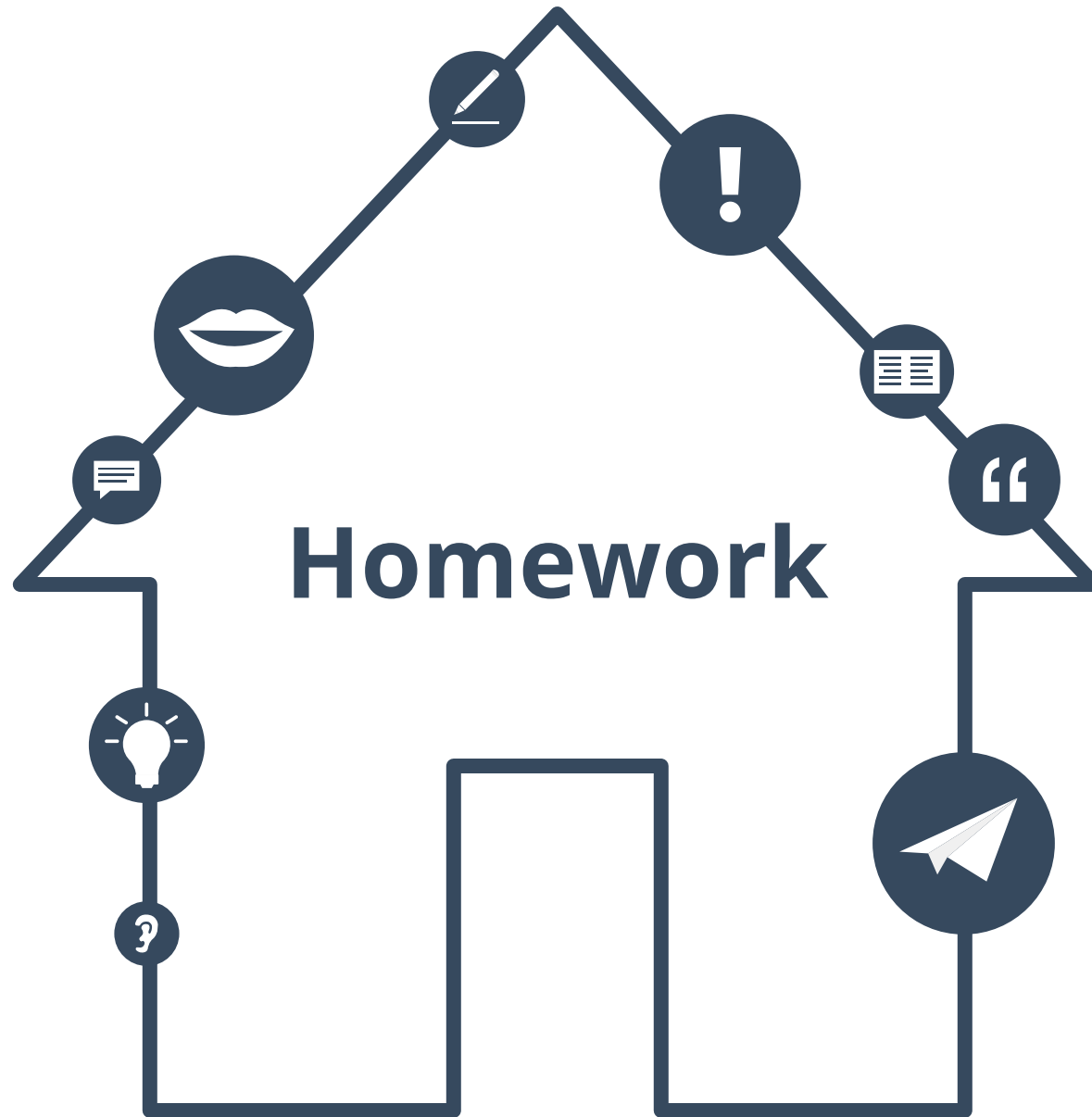
2. Going out tonight?, 3. Want a drink?, 4. Mind carrying this?, 5. Have a good journey?

### Exercise p. 23

Accept any appropriate answers

### Exercise p. 24

Accept any appropriate answers





## Use ellipsis or substitution in these sentences

1. I went to the car and I cleaned it.

→ I went to the car and cleaned it.

2. She bought a coat and she bought a cardigan.

→ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. We can eat chicken or we can eat beef tonight.

→ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Have you eaten your vegetables?

→ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Are you looking for this?

→ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. I hope you have a good journey.

→ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. I love it! I love it, too.

→ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Is he coming? I'm afraid he is coming.

→ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



## Homework answer key

### Exercise p. 29

2. And a cardigan, 3. or beef, 4. Eaten your..?, 5. Looking for..?, 6. Hope you have..., 7. I do too, 8. I'm afraid so.



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