



General Upper Intermediate

Unit 9: Oh those days!

Objectives

- Language focus: Expressing habit
- Vocabulary: Homonyms and homophones
- Everyday English: Moans and groans
- Reading: Living in the past
- Listening: A teacher to remember
- Writing: Writing for talking





1. When were phones designed like this? What method did people use to dial a number? In what ways is that different from how we make phone calls now?

2. Take a look at the quote. Can you explain the humor in it? Do you think nostalgia is positive or negative? What kinds of things make you feel nostalgic?

**‘Nostalgia isn’t what it
used to be.’**

Peter De Vries

Test your grammar!

1. Match a line in **A** to a pertinent line in **B**.

A	B
1. A good friend	a. is always talking about himself.
2. Bill is so self-centred, he	b. can't get used to working night shifts.
3. I love my job, but I	c. will never let you down.
4. In Victorian times, men	d. used to wear top hats.
5. My sister's in love – she	e. used to be best friends.
6. When we were little we	f. spends hours gazing at Ron's photo.

Underline the words that express habit. Which are past and which present?

2. Choose the correct ending for these sentences.

- He used to work hard
 - He's used to working
- because he's a builder.

but now he's retired.

- 1. What do you do to stay in contact with your friends? How can you reconnect after losing contact? Have you ever reconnected with an old friend?
- 2. Read quickly through **Nicky's** email. Who is it to? Why is she writing?
- 3. Complete the email with phrases a-l.

A	B
a. painted	g. loved
b. used to sit	h. would never wear
c. would go	i. 'd argue
d. were always giggling	j. 'll always arrive
e. 'd go cycling	k. used to listen
f. meet up	l. get used to calling

Listen and check.
Who are the four friends? What do you learn about their lives now?



- 4. Match lines in **A** and **B**. Practice saying them. Pay attention to contracted forms and weak forms.

A	B
1. We used to sit	to your house.
2. We were always giggling	and whispering.
3. We'd go back	round town.
4. We'd go cycling	next to each other.
5. I can't get used to calling	late.
6. She'll always arrive	you Anastasia.

Listen and check.



To: anastasia.peabody@smalltalk.co.uk
Subject: Memories of Ash House School

Hi Tazy! (Anastasia!)

It's great to be in touch again. The wonder of social media – sometimes! How could anybody forget a name like yours? Crazy Tazy Jones! And now you're a 'Peabody'!

You and I were friends from the start. We 1. _____ next to each other in class, but then the teachers made us sit apart, because we 2. _____ and whispering. Do you remember how we 3. _____ back to your house after school and listen to music for hours on end? CDs in those days! We both 4. _____ Oasis, but we 5. _____ endlessly about who was better – Liam or Noel. Oh, and we also 6. _____ to the Spice Girls – but 'in secret', because they were so 'uncool'. Then there was that time we 7. _____ your bike bright pink. Then we 8. _____ round town on it, and we 9. _____ our helmets. Your dad was furious – but we didn't care! I 10. _____ with Polly and Tina from time to time. They're both married with kids, and, like us, balancing work and home life. Polly's the same as ever, a rotten timekeeper – she 11. _____ late and rush in, full of apologies.

It'd be so great if you could join us – in the meantime keep on keeping in touch! It's great to catch up.

Love,
Nicky

PS I can't 12. _____ you Anastasia Peabody! To me, you'll always be Crazy Tazy Jones.



LANGUAGE FOCUS

1. Look at the sentences that express present habit.

- a. My grandpa **loves** running.
- b. He's **always trying** to get me to help and I don't want to.
- c. He'll **go out** into the road early in the morning and **won't come in** until dusk.

Which sentence expresses ... ?

1. my attitude to this habit of his (I find it annoying.)
2. a simple fact about him
3. characteristic behaviour (This is typical of him.)

2. Put sentences **a–c** into the past. Express sentence **a** in two ways.

3. Look at the sentences.

- a. I **used to live** in Berlin, but now I live in Madrid.
- b. I **didn't use to** like Dutch cheese, but now I love it.
- c. I've lived near the city center for years, so I'm **used to** the noise.
- d. I'm **getting used to** travelling on the Metro.

Which sentence(s) express ... ?

- a past state/habit now finished
- a situation which is familiar, and no longer strange
- a situation which is still strange, but becoming easier

Go to pages 19-20 for grammar reference.

1. What adjective describes someone like this? Choose from the box.

- sensible
argumentative
clumsy
- mean
easy-going
absent-minded
- sensitive
stubborn

1. She’s ruled by her head, not her heart. She’ll always think carefully before she acts.
2. Nothing ever upsets her or annoys her, or worries her.
3. He’s always losing things or forgetting where he’s put things.
4. And he’d pick a fight with anyone about anything.
5. I’m always dropping things or bumping into things.
6. She’ll always cry at the end of a sad film.
7. I remember that bloke Dave. He’d never buy you a drink.
8. He just won’t listen to anyone else’s suggestions.

2. Add similar sentences to support these statements.

1. My wife is the untidiest person in the entire world.
She's always leaving her things around the house ...
2. Nothing ever upsets her or annoys her, or worries her.
3. He’s always losing things or forgetting where he’s put things.
4. And he’d pick a fight with anyone about anything.
5. I’m always dropping things or bumping into things.
6. She’ll always cry at the end of a sad film.
7. I remember that bloke Dave. He’d never buy you a drink.
8. He just won’t listen to anyone else’s suggestions.

3. Decide which sentence in B (a-j) best continues the sentence in A (1-10).

A	B
1. My friend Tom buys and sells cars.	• He’s a real techno-geek. • Don’t you think that’s wasteful of him? • He earns loads of money.
2. He’s always buying new things for himself – the latest iPhone or smartwatch.	
3. He’ll buy an expensive shirt and only wear it once.	
4. Tim usually does the cooking	• because he’s been doing it for years. • but he isn’t tonight. I am. • but then he stopped. • but he still burns things sometimes.
5. He’s used to doing the cooking	
6. David used to do the cooking	
7. Joe’s getting used to doing the cooking	• What an adventure that was! • We’d go to the same place year after year. • I remember those day with such fondness!
8. When I was a child , we used to have holidays by the seaside.	
9. My father and I would go rock climbing and I’d go swimming with my mum.	
10. One year we went to America.	

used to and would

4. Read *When I was a boy*, and note the verbs *in italics*. They are all in the **Past Simple**. Which are **state** verbs? Which are **action** verbs?

When I was a boy...

When I was a boy, we *lived* in a village, in the heart of the countryside and I *liked* going for long walks, especially on summer mornings. I *got up* early in the morning without waking my parents. We *had* a dog called Bob and he and I *crept* out of the house and down the lane. Bob and I *climbed* the hills together while the rest of the world was sleeping. Once I *walked* for nearly twenty miles and my parents *got* very worried. I *loved* those days, so innocent, so carefree. I *went* back there last year – but it wasn't the same.



5. Decide which verbs ... ?

1. Can take would or used to.
2. Can take only used to not would.
3. Must stay in the Past Simple.

Discuss how to rewrite the text to make it sound more nostalgic, then listen and compare.



Audio 9.4

used to do/used to doing

6. Answer the questions with a form of used to *do / be / get used to doing / sb / sth*.

1. A. You don't like your new teacher, do you?
B. Not a lot, but we're getting used to her.
2. A. How can you get up at five o'clock every morning?
B. No problem. I _____ it now.
3. A. How come you know New York so well?
B. I _____ live there.
4. A. How are you finding your new job?
B. Difficult, but I _____ it bit by bit.
5. A. Do you still have any CDs?
B. No, I _____ have loads, but not anymore.
6. A. Do you get on well with your sister?
B. Well, we _____, but now we're really close.
7. A. You two argue so much. How can you live together?
B. After 20 years we _____ each other.

Listening I Me and my parents

7. Have a look at the photos of the families.

- Which decade do you think each is?
- How old are these children now?
- What do you think the relationships between the children and parents were like?

8. Listen to four people discuss their relationships with their parents. Who had a strong connection? Who didn't? Why?



9. These lines are close to what the people said. Which ones can be rephrased? Which ones can't? Listen again. What are people's actual words?

1

Kathryn

- We did a lot together as a family.
- We used to go on walks, and have picnics.
- Once he bought me a necklace with a heart ... just cheap, but I loved it.
- My mother said he was spoiling us.

2

Michael

- My dad drove me mad.
- He kept telling me to get my hair cut.
- She used to get angry when I picked at food.
- When I was 16, I suddenly shot up. I'm 6ft 5" now.

3

Jonny

- My mum always nagged me. She used to tell me to get off my computer.
- She was all put out when I used to shut myself away in my room.
- We didn't use to talk much in our family.
- My wife always asks me about my childhood.

4

Gillian

- I told her everything, well, nearly everything.
- She talked to me very openly.
- My dad left when I was three.
- We used to go out shopping.



10. Optional. Talk about your parents and your family life, past and present.

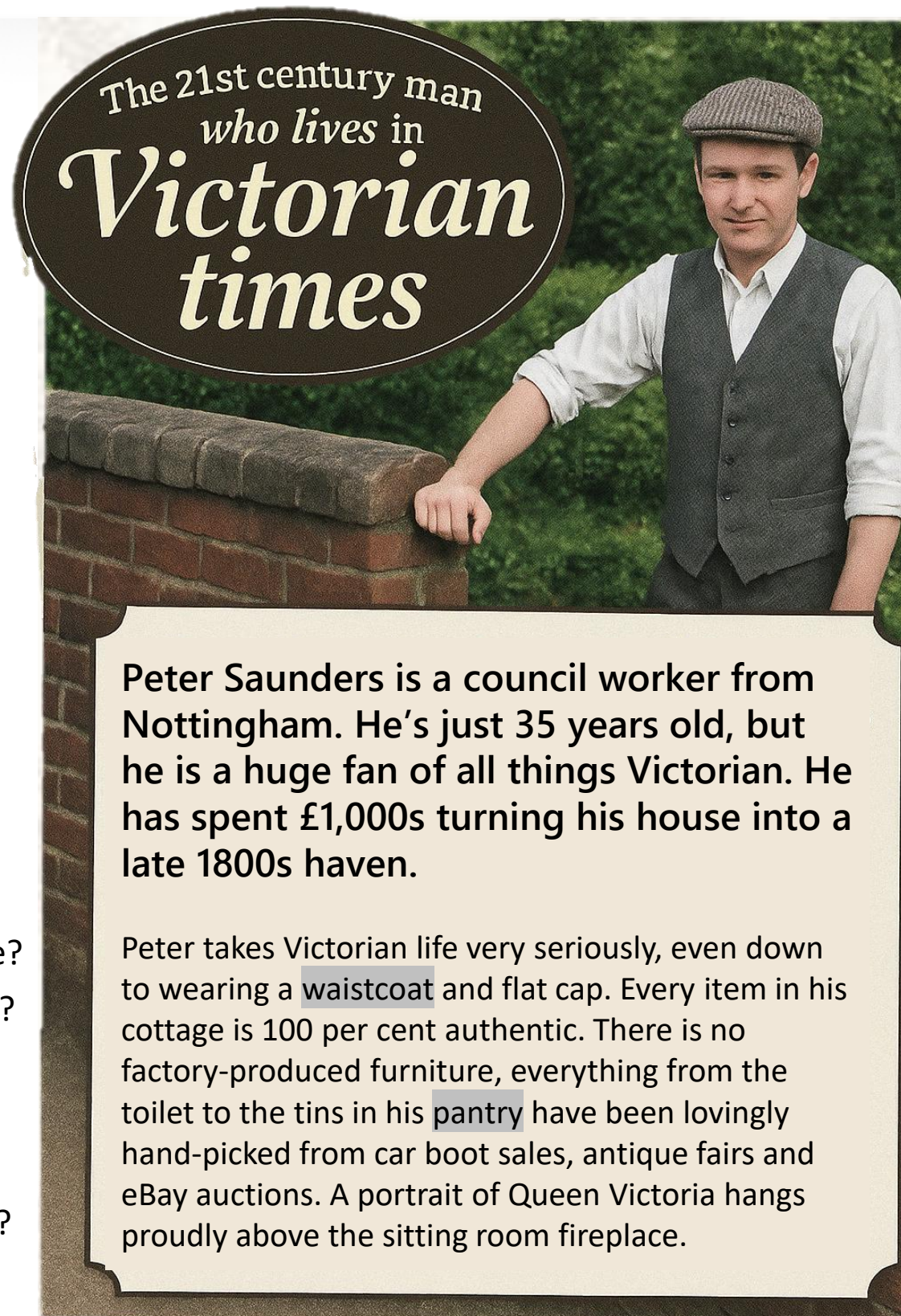
1. What do you know about when your grandparents and great-grandparents were young? When was it? What were their homes like? How did they have fun?

2. Look at the photos. What things can you find that are typical of the 19th century and the 1950s?

3. Answer the questions.

1. Which era is he/she obsessed by? What started the obsession?
2. What does she/he wear?
3. How does he/she source the things for the house?
4. What does she/he not like about modern life?
5. What does he/she like about the bygone era?
6. Which 'mod cons' do they have in their houses? Where do they keep them?
7. How do they entertain friends?
8. What do other people think of their lifestyle?
9. What do you learn about other members of the family?

4. Try to guess the meaning of the highlighted words in the text.



Peter's four-bedroom house now looks much like it used to look when a real-life Victorian family lived there and Peter is considering opening its doors to the public.

He says: 'I've gone to a lot of trouble and I would like to share it with people who will appreciate it. The Victorian period was a fascinating time. Both my mum and my sister are interested in it, too, so I guess my passion for it started from them. My mum is always picking things up for me from car boot sales. I like the idea of the lifestyle that the Victorians had. They would entertain themselves. They used to love a sing-song round the piano. And they were less wasteful than we are today. Things were built to last. I can't stand all that modern stuff made of plastic that all looks the same. Most of my friends are very supportive and they love coming round for dinner parties when all the old glasses and cutlery comes out.'

Peter uses all the original cooking features in his kitchen, but admits to having a microwave oven. He also has a television, central heating and a fridge freezer, but he says: 'All my mod cons are cleverly hidden around the house in cupboards or behind curtains. And I have running water, as most Victorians had, but they didn't have hot water like I do.'

The house has an outside loo, which Peter is restoring. 'But I also have a Victorian-style indoor bathroom with antique fittings, so I suppose I have the best of both worlds – all the modern conveniences but with the romantic and quaint feel of the Victorian period, and it's very cosy – the Victorians were all about comfort.'

Experts agree with Peter that the house genuinely reflects Victorian times. Hilary Silvester, chairman of Nottingham Civic Society, said: 'Peter's done it extremely well. It's not twee in any way and has been restored in such a genuine fashion.'



5. Look at the photos. What things can you find that are typical of the 19th century and the 1950s?

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The 21st century woman who lives in **1950s**

Joanne Massey, 40, lives in a re-creation of a 1950s home in Stafford with her husband Kevin, 47, who is a graphic designer.



found someone with the same passion. Some women I meet ask me if I feel patronized by spending all my time caring for Kevin, but I never would.'

At work, Kevin gets teased because he's the only one with home-made cakes and even home-made jam in his sandwiches. Joanne thinks his colleagues are jealous that he has a wife who devotes herself solely to his happiness. How many men these days can really say that?

Joanne is a housewife. She says:

'I love nothing better than fastening my pinny round my waist and baking a cake for Kevin in my 1950s kitchen. I put on some lovely Frank Sinatra music and am completely lost in my own little fantasy world. In our marriage, I am very much a lady and Kevin is the breadwinner. We've been married for 13 years and we're extremely happy because we both know our roles. I make sure our home is immaculate, there is dinner on the table, and I look pretty to welcome my husband home.'

Joanne doesn't even put petrol in their Ford Anglia car, which is 43 years old, because she thinks that is unladylike. She asks Kevin to do it. She only ever wears 1950s clothing, such as tight pencil skirts, a white blouse and a wide belt. Her furniture is all from the 50s. The kitchen is an original 'English Rose' design, which used to be very much the 'in thing'. They advertised for it in an antiques magazine and bought it from a family in Scotland who had it in their garage to keep tools in.

Joanne thinks modern life is too hectic. Shopping in supermarkets is an ordeal, and she doesn't read newspapers — they are just too distressing. She says: 'We do have a television set, but we hide it in a retro cabinet. Neither of us drinks and our social life revolves around visiting like-minded friends for tea and cakes.'

Her obsession began as a teenager. She loved old movies because they seemed to represent a halcyon time, when women were more feminine and men more protective. She could have gone to university, but chose to work in a bank.

She says: 'I was marking time until I met the right man. Kevin and I met at a Fifties Convention, and we had an old-fashioned courtship before he proposed. I was ecstatic, because I had



What do you think?

- Why do some people like the idea of past times so much?
- Which past era would you like to live in, or do you prefer life today?
- Which 'mod cons' would you miss?
- What is your opinion of Peter's and Joanne's lifestyles?
- Which do you prefer? What do you like/not like about them?

1. Look at the photos. What are modern classroom like? What were classrooms like years ago? How have teaching styles changed?



2. Listen to four people, **Sean, Samantha, Rupert** and **Charlotte**, talking about a teacher they remember well.
Answer the following questions after each one.



Audio 9.8

1. What was the teacher's subject?
2. What did she/he look like?
3. What is said about the age of the teacher?
4. Why is she/he so memorable? Is it for positive or negative reasons?
5. Did he/she influence the speaker in any way? If so, how?

3. Listen again. Which teacher ...

- Poked students? With what? Why?
- Taught 'dry' subjects? What were they?
- Had to 'crouch'? Where? Why?
- Had a 'mission in life'? What was this?
- Slammed something down on the desk? What? Why?
- Had a 'razor-sharp wit'? What was hidden in his words?
- Glowed with gratitude? Why?
- Gave crystal clear explanations? About what?

SPOKEN ENGLISH - Adjective intensifiers

1. Look at these lines from what the people said. Which words intensify the adjective?

'He used to make these dead languages seem dead easy.'
'He had a razor-sharp wit.'

2. Complete the sentences with a word from the box.

brand	stiff	freezing	tiny
wide	great	boiling	fast

1. They live in this ____ big house in the centre of London.
2. I made one ____ little mistake in my driving test, but I still failed.
3. Careful with the soup - it's ____ hot. Don't scald yourself.
4. It's ____ cold in here. Can't we put on the heating?
5. Do you like my car? It's ____ new.
6. Don't worry. You won't wake the children. They're ____ asleep.
7. I have a cold shower every morning, then I feel ____ awake.
8. 'I'm fed up with this lesson.' 'Me, too. I'm bored ____.

What do you think?

- What makes a teacher memorable? Think of positive, negative and funny reasons.
- Who is a teacher you'll never forget? Why? What was/is she/he like?

1. What do these words mean?

right fine
fan mean
glasses park

2. Listen and write down the words you hear.



Audio 9.9

Homonyms

3. Homonyms are words with the same spelling and more than one meaning.

- A **bank** in the High Street.
- The **bank** of a river.
- Don't **bank** on my support forever.

Complete the pairs of sentences with the same word used twice. Then, listen and check.



Audio 9.10

1. Grandma's leaving now. Come and _____ goodbye!
He was swept out to sea by a freak _____, but he survived.
2. Oh dear! We have a _____ tyre and no spare wheel.
I'm renting a _____ near where I work.
3. 'What's today's _____?' 'The third.'
I've got a _____ tonight. I'm going out with Carl.
4. He goes to the gym every day. He's very _____
The trousers are too small. They don't _____ you at all.
5. It's not _____. Everyone else is allowed to stay out till midnight.
She has beautiful _____ hair and blue eyes.

4. Think of two meanings for these words. Make sentences using them.

suit miss type
point train cool

Homophones

5. Homophones are words with the same pronunciation, but different spellings and different meanings.

/rəʊd/ It's the road to Oxford. I rowed across the river

Write the word in phonetics in the correct spelling.

1. /həʊl/ - the _____ world / a _____ in the ground
2. /pi:s/ - a _____ of cake / war and _____
3. /'flaʊə(r)/ - a rose is a _____ / _____ to make bread
4. /seɪlz/ - a yacht has _____ / buy clothes in the _____
5. /sel/ - shops _____ things / a prisoner lives in a _____

6. Think of a word with the same pronunciation but a different spelling for these words.

bored caught hire
plain waist aloud
write seas maid

7. A lot of children's jokes are made with **homonyms** and **homophones**. Read and listen to some. Which words are funny?



Audio 9.11

1. **Why will you never starve in the desert?**

... Because of the sand which is there.

2. **Why is Sunday the strongest day?**

... Because the others are weak days.

3. **A:** Your battery's flat. That's why your car won't start.

B: Oh dear! What shape should it be?

4. **A:** Waiter! What's wrong with this egg?

B: Don't ask me, sir. I only laid the table.

5. **A:** What do you get when 5,000 strawberries try to go through a door at the same time?

B: I don't know. What do you get?

A: Strawberry jam!

6. **A:** Waiter, this food tastes funny?

B: So, why aren't you laughing?

7. **What do you give to a sick lemon?**

... Lemon aid!

8. **What did one toilet say to the other?**

... You look a bit flushed.

9. **Why can't Cinderella play soccer?**

... Because she's always running away from the ball.



1. Read the complaints in A. Match them to a response in B. Which of the items in the box do they refer to?

- a leather jacket
- texting
- boots
- ordering by phone
- a bookcase
- an exam
- a TV series
- a dishwasher

A	B
1. It's not fair. I'd been looking forward to curling up with a box set and then my phone goes and rings!	a. I'm awfully sorry, sir. I'm afraid there's nothing I can do about it. It's out of my hands.
2. I don't believe it! All I get is 'Message failed to send. Try again'. So, I try again and guess what?	b. That's always so annoying! But do you think you've still passed?
3. What a waste of time! Ten minutes listening to ghastly music, punctuated by 'All our lines are busy. Thank you for waiting'.	c. No joy! What a pain! Why don't you try phoning them instead?
4. This is beyond a joke. You promised you'd deliver it Tuesday at the latest. Now you're saying next month!	d. Well, don't ask me! This flatpack stuff is a nightmare! I had the same trouble with a coffee table.
5. I went away to think about it, and when I went back it'd been sold. I'm gutted! I should have bought it there and then.	e. I know, it drives me mad – but worse is when they say, 'This call is important to us,' when it obviously isn't.
6. How many times do I have to tell you? Take them off before you come into the house!	f. That's a shame. Didn't you ask if they had another one in stock?
7. I could kick myself. As soon as I'd handed it in, I remembered what the answer was.	g. You didn't have to answer it. Who was it? Anyone interesting?
8. These instructions don't make any sense to me at all. If you can follow them, you're a genius.	h. Give me a break. I was in a hurry. Anyway, they're only a bit muddy.



2. Listen and check your answers. Read them aloud.



3. Role Play. Read this conversation with your teacher/ partner. Then choose two more conversations from 1 and continue them.

A: I could kick myself. As soon as I'd handed it in, I remembered what the answer was.

B: That's always so annoying! But do you think you've still passed?

A: Who knows? I always get so nervous taking exams.

B: I'm the same. I never do myself justice.

4. What are some of the events in a typical day in your life? For each event think of something to moan about.

I don't believe it! I forgot to set my alarm again, so I overslept and I was late for work.

What a pain!

5. Do you have any moans and groans about anything that is happening at the moment in your country or in the world? Discuss as a class.

Present Simple

1. Adverbs of frequency come before the main verb, but after the verb to be.

We **hardly** ever go dancing.

He **frequently** forgets what he says.

We don't **usually** eat meat.

We are **seldom** at home in the morning.

Is he **normally** so good-tempered?

2. *Sometimes, usually, normally, and occasionally* can come at the beginning or the end of a sentence.

Sometimes we play darts.

We go to the movies **occasionally**.

The other adverbs of frequency don't usually move in this way.

~~Always I have in the morning.~~

Present Simple

1. Adverbs of frequency come before the main verb, but after the verb to be.

I like Mark. He's **always** smiling.

She's **always** giving people gifts.

2. *There is often an element of criticism with this structure. Compare these sentences said by a teacher.*

Peter **always asks** questions in class. (This is a fact.)

Peter **is always asking** questions in class. (This annoys the teacher.)

3. *There is usually an adverb of frequency with this use.*

I'm **always losing** my papers.

She's **forever leaving** the bath taps running.

will and would

1. *Will and would* express typical behaviour. They describe both pleasant and unpleasant habits.

He'll sit at his iPad for hours on end.

She'd spend all day long gossiping with her colleagues.

We **would** say ... / don't think you'll pass the test.

~~He'd live in a large apartment.~~

2. *Will and would, when deconstructed and stressed*, express an annoying habit or action.

He **will** come into the house with his muddy shoes on.

She **would** keep criticizing my art.

used to + infinitive

1. This structure expresses a past action and/or a state. It has no present equivalent.

When I was young, we **used to** go on holiday to the seaside. (action)

He **used to** live in a large apartment. (state)

2. Notice the negative and the question.

Where did you **use to** go?

We didn't **use to** do anything valuable.

3. We cannot use *used to* with a time reference+ a number.

~~We used to have holidays there for 10 years/three times.~~

But:

We **used to** go there every year.

In a narrative expressing a series of past actions, it is common to begin with *used to*, then continue with *would*.

When I was young, we **used to** go on holiday to the seaside. We'd play on the beach, then we'd eat at a small restaurant at lunchtime.

be/get used to+ noun + -ing form

1. This is completely different from *used to + infinitive*. Here, *used* is an adjective meaning familiar with, and it describes something that was once difficult or unusual but isn't anymore.

Travelling around NY by Metro weird at first, but I'm **used to** it now.
After a year, I'm **used to** driving on the left in the UK.

2. Notice the use of *get to* express the process of adapting.

I'm **getting used to** the weather.

Don't worry. You'll **get used to** eating with chopsticks.