

PREPOSITIONS THROUGH PRACTICE

DR. K. MUTHURAMAN



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- Use 1: Later in time; immediately following
- Use 2: Chasing
- Use 3: Trying to get
- Use 4: Beyond
- Use 5: Following/going behind
- Use 6: Next to in order of importance
- Use 7: Following and in spite of
- Use 8: Look after: Attend to; take care of
- Use 9: After all: In spite of everything; nevertheless
- Use 10: See after: Attend to
- Use 11: Take after: Resemble
- Practice 4
 - Against
 - Use 1: In hostility or active opposition to
 - Use 2: In Competition with
 - Use 3: Towards, so as to touch or in such a way as to be resisted
 - Use 4: In such a way as to be supported/resisted something physical
 - Use 5: In front of (a background) or contrasted with (what is behind)
 - Use 6: Opposite
 - Use 7: In Comparison with
 - Race against: Try to finish work within the limited time available
 - Borrow (money) against something: Borrow

(money) with something as security
 - Hope against hope: Continue to hope, even though the situation appears hopeless
- Practice 5
 - AHEAD
 - Use 1: In a position to the front of or in the direct line of one's movement
 - Use 2: Indicating motion/direction, and meaning forward, downward
 - Use 3: In the lead
 - Use 4: Earlier, before
 - Look/think ahead: Think of the future
 - Go/get ahead: Make progress

- Lie/stretch ahead: Be in the/somebody's future
- Ahead of time: Earlier than scheduled
- Practice 6
 - ALONG
 - Use 1: Following the line of
 - Use 2: Parallel to
 - Use 3: Onwards in the direction of motion
 - Come/get along: Make progress
 - Along with: Together with, in company with
 - All along: During the whole time
 - Get along: Have friendly relations
 - Get along with you: Stop behaving like that
 - Will be along: Will arrive
- Practice 7
 - AMONG
 - Use 1: Surrounded by
 - Use 2: Introducing the various sharers in a
distribution
 - Use 3: Indicating action towards each other by the members of a
group
 - Use 4: In the number/class of
 - Use 5: By the combined action of
 - Use 6: Out of the number of
 - Among others: Including or among them
- Practice 8
 - AT
 - Use 1: Can be used instead of beside, by, close to, in, near, on, and
under
 - Use 2: Used with proper names of villages and towns
 - Use 3: Used with points of time
 - Use 4: Engaged in, busy over
 - Use 5: During the course of
 - Use 6: Subject to
 - Use 7: Introduces an address
 - Use 8: Indicates motion towards
 - Use 9: Introduces a phrase showing the speed at which something

is done

- Use 10: Introduces distances/heights/depths
- Use 11: Introduces phases of age
- At night: During the night
- At home: At the speaker's house or at the house of the person about whom one is speaking
- At present or at the moment: As things are now or for the time being
- At the back of: The secret cause of
- At once: Immediately

- Practice 9

- AWAY
- Use 1: From a place to a distance
- Use 2: Indicates position, not motion and meaning "distant (from)"
- Use 3: Absent or not here/there
- Use 4: Remove from being part of or from being in contact with something
- Use 5: Part with or lose something
- Use 6: Move from one direction to another
- Right/straight away: Immediately
- Get away with: Succeed in escaping consequences of something or successfully steal

- Practice 10

- BACK
- Use 1: In the opposite direction, so as to return to the place from which (it)started
- Use 2: In a state of being prevented/impeded from moving forward or making progress
- Use 3: In return/repayment for something received
- Use 4: Into time past
- Use 5: To a later time
- Use 6: Away from the present position, or the ordinary position
- Use 7: In the past
- Go back on(a promise): Break (a promise)

- Practice 11

- BEFORE
- Use 1: Earlier in time or previously
- Use 2: Introduces a place to mean before (one)
reaches the place
- Use 3: In front of someone or something who/which is superior or has authority
- Use 4: Indicates physical position and means “in front of”
- Use 5: In preference to
- Before tax: Before the deduction of tax
- Practice 12
 - BEHIND
 - Use 1: In the rear of something moving or standing still
 - Use 2: In a place which has been left by others
 - Use 3: Backwards or towards the rear
 - Use 4: Less advanced than somebody
 - Use 5: Supporting or helping
 - Behind the times: Old fashioned or not so advanced as the average
 - Behind the time: Late
 - Behind the scenes: Hidden or out of sight
- Practice 13
 - BELOW
 - Use 1: Directly down
 - Use 2: In a lower position, without meaning that this position is directly beneath
 - Use 3: Deeper than the surface of
 - Use 4: Lower than in age/ amount/ weight/ value/ price
 - Use 5: Lower in rank or social position
 - Use 6: Lower on a page or later in a book
 - Use 7: At a lower level
 - From below: From under something or upwards
- Practice 14
 - BENEATH
 - Use 1: Directly under or directly down from
 - Use 2: In a lower position, without being directly under or at the foot of
 - Use 3: Covered or hidden by

- Use 4: Lower than the surface of
- Use 5: Unworthy of or not dignified enough for
- Beneath the same roof: in the same house
- Practice 15
 - BESIDE
 - Use 1: At the side of, close to, near, and by
 - Use 2: Compared with
 - Beside oneself: Frantic
 - Beside the point or question: Irrelevant
- Practice 16
 - BESIDES
 - Use 1: In addition to
 - Use 2: Moreover, further
- Practice 17
 - BETWEEN
 - Use 1: Denotes a position or motion in space, and introduces two points or areas which are on the opposite or surrounding sides of the thing which is in the position referred to
 - Use 2: Intermediate to two limits
 - Use 3: Indicates time, meaning at sometime during the interval following one point of time and preceding another
 - Use 4: Introduces alternatives that have to be selected from
 - Use 5: Indicates division and distribution to two or more people or groups
 - Use 6: Refers to reciprocal action or relation between two or more persons
 - Read between the lines: Understand the hidden meaning of something
- Practice 18
 - BEYOND
 - Use 1: Farther away than, past, or so as to leave behind
 - Use 2: Outside the sphere/limit of or out of the grasp or reach of
- Practice 19

- BUT
- Use 1: Except
- But for someone or something: If somebody or something had not done something
- Practice 20
 - BY
 - Use 1: Near
 - Use 2: By means of
 - Use 3: Introduces the difference resulting from comparing things
 - Use 4: Introduces phrases of time showing when the time allowed or needed for an action end
 - Use 5: Indicates motion past a point
 - Use 6: Introduces the part of a whole at which the action of the verb is applied to the whole
 - Use 7: Introduces the doer of an action or creator of something
 - Use 8: Because of
 - Use 9: Alone
 - Use 10: By oneself: Without anyone's help
 - Use 11: Learn by heart: Commit something to memory
 - Use 12: By your leave: With your permission
 - Use 13: By all means: Certainly
 - Use 14: By no means: Definitely not
 - Use 15: Call/drop/stop by: Visit someone informally on one's way to another place
 - Use 16: Get or acquire
- Practice 21
 - DOWN
 - Use 1: In a descending direction
 - Use 2: To a position resulting from having fallen/ bent/sat/etc. down
 - Use 3: In a low, lower, or lowest position
 - Use 4: On a paper or a list
 - Use 5: At or to a lower rate or price
 - Use 6: Indicates motion or position, but without any meaning of descending or of lower position
 - Use 7: From a state of violence or excitement to one of calm
 - Use 8: To a smaller quantity or size

- Use 9: Below the usual or natural level
- Break down: Cease to function (Properly)
- Let someone or something down: Be unfaithful to someone or something
- Put something down to someone's account: Enter something on someone's account
- Rundown: Be tired and rather ill
- Look down on someone or something: Despise someone or something
- Practice 22
 - DURING
 - Use 1: Throughout the duration of
 - Use 2: At some point in the duration of
- Practice 23
 - Except/excepting or except for
 - Use 1: With the exception of
- Practice 24
 - FOR
 - Use 1: It indicates the distance
 - Use 2: It indicates the length of time
 - Use 3: To find/get/have
 - Use 4: Because of
 - Use 5: Suitable or in connection with
 - Use 6: Introduces the place which one is trying to get to
- Practice 25
 - FROM
 - Use 1: Indicating motion and introducing the starting-point of an action
 - Use 2: Introducing the first of two limits
 - Use 3: Introducing the source, does or the place of origin
 - Use 4: Indicating position, not motion, and introducing the thing from which something hangs or projects
 - Use 5: Introducing a starting point in time
 - Use 6: Introducing the substance out of which

something is made

- Practice 26
 - IN
 - Use 1: Indicating place or position and meaning “within the limits”
 - Use 2: Introducing phrases of motion/direction, meaning “towards the inside of”
 - Use 3: Used before the proper names of continents, seas, oceans regions, provinces, and other regions of countries
 - Use 4: Used before a countable noun without an article, showing the position in space, but stressing the activity connected with the noun
 - Use 5: Used before phrases answering the question, In what sort of situation /manner/state?
 - Use 6: Used before a period of time, meaning “within/at the end of/ after” a certain period of time
- Practice 27
 - INSIDE
 - Use 1: Used to denote “within the space concerned”
- Practice 28
 - INTO
 - Use 1: Indicating motion/direction from outside a physical space to inside it
 - Use 2: Introducing the substance/form into which something grows, changes, or is made
 - Use 3: Introducing a state or condition into which something enters
 - Use 4 : Introducing what someone begins wearing
 - Use 5: Introducing the parts into which something is divided
 - Use 6: Expressing direction, without actual motion
- Practice 29
 - NEAR
 - Use 1: Indicating a closer position
 - Use 2: “Near” followed by time and meaning close to
 - Use 3: “Near” meaning “Close to” (without any sense of motion or physical position)
- Practice 30
 - OF
 - Use 1: To indicate quantity

- Use 2: Preceded by an expression of number, quantity, indicating part of a whole
- Use3: Meaning “Connected with a relative/ friend/ enemy/ acquaintance/ Collaborator”
- Use 4: Preceding a possessive pronoun
- Use 5: It means “about”
- Use 6: Joining work and its author.
- Use 7: Introducing an origin/source
- Use 8: Introducing the person/thing from whom/ which something is (yet to be) obtained
- Use 9: Meaning “to get”
- Use 10: Meaning “in the shape/form of”
- Practice 31
 - OFF
 - Use 1: Indicating separation from being attached, in contact and part of
 - Use 2: Referring to motion/direction from a place to a distance away
 - Use 3: Denoting a position in space and meaning “in a state of not being on”
 - Use 4: Meaning “so as to stop something”
 - Use 5: Meaning “Stopped”
 - Use 6: Meaning “at a distance” or “away from” in space or time
 - Use 7: Indicating “becoming less or poorer in quality”
- Practice 32
 - ON/UPON
 - Use 1: Meaning “above and in contact with”
 - Use 2: Indicating contact with a surface that is not horizontal
 - Use 3: Indicating position with reference to a place or thing
 - Use 4: Indicating that something covers or clothes somebody or something
 - Meaning 5: Introducing phrases of time (days,or the phrase on (Monday) morning/ afternoon/ evening/ night)

- Use 6: Indicating position/motion and introducing a means of transport (Except means of closed transport).For train/bus/ship, we canuse both on and in
- Use 7: Meaning “forward/onwards”
- Use 8: Introducing the object of expenditure
- Use 9: Introducing the things, which one eats, or which provide one with a living
- Use 10: Meaning “fastened by a chain or anything else”
- Use 11: Meaning “a member of”
- Use 12: Indicating direction, Meaning “towards” and “at”
- Practice 33
 - OUT
 - Use 1: Indicating motion/direction from within a space
 - Use 2: Meaning “not in the house”
 - Use 3: Meaning fully, properly, or completely as necessary
 - Use 4: Meaning issued or published
- Practice 34
 - OUTSIDE
 - Use 1: Beyond the limits of an enclosed area
 - Use 2: Introducing a time, meaning “not in”
 - Use 3: Indicating “distant from”
- Practice 35
 - OVER
 - Use 1: Indicating “above/on and to the other side”
 - Use 2: Indicating “so as to pass above and beyond,” instead of “reading and hitting”
 - Use 3: Meaning “on, and overlapping on both sides”
 - Use 4: Indicating “more than”
 - Use 5: Indicating “on all parts of the surface of” or “from place to place on the surface”
 - Use 6: Indicating “on the other side of”
 - Use 7: Introducing a period of time, meaning “from beginning to end of”
 - Use 8: Indicating “upon, as an influence”
- Practice 36
 - PAST
 - Use 1: Denoting “later than” or “after”

- Use 2: Denoting “further than (in position)” or “after passing”
- Practice 37
 - PER
 - Use 1: Used after words of number/quantity, meaning “for/in each/every”
 - Use 2: Meaning “by means of”
- Practice 38
 - ROUND/AROUND
 - Use 1: Indicating circular motion
 - Use 2: Meaning in various/all directions. Or here and there
 - Use 3: Meaning “to various people”
 - Use 4: Meaning “in the neighbourhood of” or “near”
- Practice 39
 - SINCE
 - Use 1: Denoting “continuously from a certain time to the time referred to”
- Practice 40
 - THROUGH
 - Use 1: Indicating “from one side/end to the other”
 - Use 2: Indicating “across,” meaning that the movement begins beyond the limits of the thing concerned
 - Use 3: Indicating “by means of”
 - Use 4: Meaning “because of”
 - Use 5: Meaning “everywhere in” or “all over”
- Practice 41
 - THROUGHOUT
 - Use 1: Meaning “during the whole of”
- Practice 42
 - TILL/UNTIL
 - Use 1: Meaning “upon the time of”
- Practice 43
 - TO
 - Use 1: Indicating movement in the direction of and actually reaching something
 - Use 2: Introducing the person/thing addressed.
 - Use 3: Meaning “before”

- Use 4: Meaning “motion and purpose,” followed by a noun without an article
- Use 5: Introducing something against which some- thing is compared
- Use 6: Meaning “in honour of,” as an expression of good wishes
- Use 7: Meaning “in respect of”
- Use 8: Meaning “in contact with”
- Use 9: Meaning “agreement/suitability” in accord- ance with
- Use 10: Meaning “to the accompaniment of”
- Practice 44
 - TOWARDS
 - Use 1: Indicating movement in the direction of and so as to approach
 - Use 2: Indicating direction without motion
 - Use 3: Introducing the object of behaviour/feeling
- Practice 45
 - UNDER
 - Use1: Meaning “a position physically beneath/ below something”
 - Use 2: Meaning “a position beneath the surface of the ground/water”
 - Use 3: Meaning “at the foot of”
 - Use 4: Meaning “affected by something” and subject to something
 - Use 5: Indicating protection, care, or kindly interest
- Practice 46
 - UNDERNEATH
 - USE 1: Meaning vertically down, beneath or below in physical position
 - Meaning 2: Meaning below/beneath
(clothing/ covering)
- Practice 47
 - UP
 - Use 1: Indicating motion/direction, meaning from a lower position to a higher position
 - Use 2: Meaning “so as to remove from the
horizontal”
 - Use 3: Meaning so as to abandon something

- Use 4: Meaning “above the usual/natural level”
- Use5: Meaning “to the notice” or “for the attention of someone”
- Practice 48
 - UPTO
 - Use 1: Meaning “as for/high as”
 - Use 2: Meaning “until a time” or “until the time of”
 - Use 3: Meaning “towards” or “in the direction of”
 - Use 4: Meaning “capable of”
- Practice 49
 - WITH
 - Use 1: With is followed by what is used or supplied to do
 - Use 2: Meaning “in the company of”
 - Use 3: With is followed by a noun, meaning manner or under what circumstances.
 - Use 4: Meaning “accompanied by” or “and”
 - Use 5: Meaning “including”
 - Use 6: Meaning “in the hands of”
 - Use 7: Introducing phrases of purpose
- Practice 50
 - WITHIN
 - Use 1: Meaning “not more than” (a certain distance)
 - Use 2: Meaning “before the end of”
 - Use 3: Meaning “inside”
- Practice 51
 - WITHOUT
 - Use 1: Meaning “with absence/ lack of something”
 - Use 2: Meaning “with no help/support from”
 - Use 3: Meaning “If there is not”

Preface

A preposition is a word or group of words used before a noun or pronoun or a noun phrase to refer to direction, time, place, location, spatial relationship, or to introduce an object. Some examples of prepositions are “on,” “of,” “off,” “with,” “in,” “into,” “since,” “about,” and “from.”

Prepositions are deceptively simple to master. As far as I know, prepositions are the most difficult among the eight parts of speech for those who learn English as a foreign or second language, and native speakers as well. Even learned native scholars seem to have been confused regarding the choice as well as the use of certain prepositions. But as users of the English language, we must take utmost care to make ourselves familiar with the meanings and uses of all the prepositions to use them without errors.

The meanings and uses of prepositions cannot be mastered overnight, because they require consistent practice using them in our own sentences. Though grammar books tell us the uses of prepositions and provide illustrations, majority of the learners are not at ease in the use of prepositions.

We have not so far identified the best ways to master prepositions and their uses. But a better and more efficient way to master them is to learn them through conversations in an appropriate context. One of the most popular, convincing, and effective approaches to learning the English language is Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). It emphasizes interaction, dialogue, or conversation as both the means and the ultimate goal of learning a language. Prepositions introduced through a conversation will enable the learners to better comprehend, retain and use in their communication. With this aim, I have chosen the prepositions that are the most important and oft-used in everyday communication, and introduced them through conversations in this book.

Prepositions Through Conversation is a practice book intended to help the learners of English for oral practice inside or outside the classroom, at home, or wherever they could comfortably train themselves in conversation practice. The conversations in the book are down to earth, based on common, everyday situations, with an aim to make conversations natural.

Since the conversation practices themselves are exercises meant for repeated practice and strengthening the correct use of prepositions in their spoken and written communication, this book does not tax the learners by focusing on additional exercises besides the conversation practices through the book. Hence, I appeal to the learners to repeatedly practice the conversations until they become confident and comfortable using the prepositions dealt with in this book.

I hope you will find the book exceedingly helpful, enjoy the conversations, master the uses of prepositions, and also recommend the book to all your friends.

My best wishes!

K. Muthuraman

Preposition: An Introduction

Preposition is one of the eight parts of speech used to link nouns, pronouns, gerunds, or phrases to other words in a sentence. Their function is to connect people, objects, time, and location within the sentence. A preposition is a short word, normally placed before nouns. Any word or phrase a preposition introduces is called the object of preposition. A simple idea one has to bear in mind is that a preposition is always followed by a noun, not a verb. If you want the preposition to be followed by a verb, it should be in its gerund form (walk+ing = walking).

Read the sentences below:

1. Rita is looking **for** the register.
2. John lives **in** India.
3. Keep the books **on** the shelf.
4. I will be there **after** breakfast.
5. Look **at** the stars glittering like gold ornaments.

In all the sentences above, the prepositions in boldface are followed by nouns used as objects.

6. Lissy is afraid **of** walking in the dark.
7. John is good **at** working in the paddy field.

8. The little girl is crazy **about** playing cricket.

9. Shylaja is fond **of** singing western songs.

10. Prakash is glad **about** walking in the rain.

In the sentences above, the prepositions are followed by the gerund form of the verb (cook +ing = cooking).

Kinds of Preposition

Simple Preposition: At, in, of, with, to, out, by, down, off, etc. are simple prepositions:

1. The old man sits **on** the chair.

2. The milk you need is **in** the refrigerator.

3. The baby is sitting **under** the table.

4. She lost her bag **at** the beach.

5. Hari drove **to** the city.

Double Preposition: Into, onto, within, without, among, toward, behind, etc., are double prepositions.

1. Christopher jumped **into** the deep river.

2. Ramya sprang **onto** the horse easily.

3. They moved **toward** the auditorium.

4. Find out the person hidden **behind** the wall.

5. There was a quarrel **among** the students.

Compound Preposition: Double prepositions and compound prepositions are similar. The double preposition is formed through the conjunction of two

simple prepositions. In contrast compound prepositions are formed through conjunction of a non-prepositional word and a simple preposition. According to, ahead of, apart from, with a view to, with regard to, in favour of, in front of, by virtue of, due to, etc.

1. **According to** you, Jack is intelligent.
2. Could you see the big rock **in front of** me?
3. I am here **because of** your moral support.
4. Who'll go to Chicago **instead of** Prem?
5. I can't do anything **in favour of** your son.

Participle Preposition: Participle prepositions are verbs ending with “-ing,” “-en,” or “-ed”:

1. All the students were in the auditorium, **including** their teacher.
2. You will be successful **provided** you are sincere.
3. **Concerning** the cause of fire, nobody knows anything.
4. **Respecting** the programmes you organize, I don't have any knowledge.
5. **Barring** the lost minute problems, we could complete the work in time.

Phrasal Preposition: A phrasal preposition is a group of words that does not contain a verb or subject. Typically a prepositional phrase has either a simple preposition and a noun, or a simple preposition and a pronoun:

1. **In spite of** his hard work, he could not the first rank in the examinations.
2. I attend this meeting **on behalf of** the Principal of my colleges.
3. The train arrived late by one hour **because of** heavy rain.

4. Thoughts are transmitted to the audience **by means of** words.

5. I would like to have apple juice **instead of** green tea.

A brief introduction to preposition and its types will undoubtedly enable you to learn what prepositions are and how to use them in your communication. But this alone will not ensure that you will be able to use prepositions comfortably in your spoken and written communication.

As prepositions express rich and subtle meanings, the users of the English language require a lot of regular practice over a period of time in order to make them handy in all your communication situations, both inside and outside the classrooms. With this objective, I have selected the prepositions that are frequently and very often used in spoken as well as written communication, and introduced them through conversations. A studious and repeated practice of the conversation in the book will undoubtedly enable you to use them confidently and appreciably.

Practice 1

About

Use 1: Approximately; more or less. The preposition is followed by an expression of time or quantity

John : Hello, how are you?

Smith : Pretty well, thanks. And you?

John : I'm fine, thanks.

Smith : What do you usually do in the evening?

John : I go to the library.

Smith : How long is it from your house?

John : It's **about** two kilometres

Smith : When do you return home?

John : I usually return home at **about** 8 O'clock.

Use 2: Here and there; to and fro; on any side of

Cynthia : Helen, why do you look worried?

Helen : I'm after my daughter.

Cynthia : Don't worry. She is standing **about** at the street corner.

Helen : Thank you very much.

Use 3: Concerning; with regard to; in connection with

Alice : What is the book **about**?

Mary : It's **about** prepositions.

Alice : What is the best thing about the book?

Mary : It contains very many practices.

Use 4: Just going. Just can modify about

Tom : Please give me a cup of coffee.

Sylvia : Just a minute, please. I'm **about** to make it.

Tom : I want a strong coffee without sugar.

Sylvia : I know you take only sugar-free coffee.

Use 5: In a number of places

Fiske : Why was she admitted to the hospital?

Martin : Her husband got drunk and cut her **about** badly with a knife.

Fiske : How is her health now?

Martin : Luckily, she has come out of the danger zone.

Use 6: Round

Jennifer : The lady beside you is wealthy.

Bill : How do you know?

Jennifer : She wears a diamond necklace **about** her neck.

Bill : How do you know it is made of diamond?

Jennifer : My father is a diamond merchant. I have learnt to differentiate between diamond and imitation.

Use 7: See about something: Take necessary action concerning something

Cashier : May I help you?

Borrower : Yes. Is my loan ready?

Cashier : When did you apply for it?

Borrower : Last week.

Cashier : I will see **about** it. Wait for another week.

Borrower : Thank you.

Use 8: Set about (doing) something; start doing or dealing with something

Mother : Have you read the Chemistry lessons?

Daughter : Yes, mummy. But I have to complete the homework.

Mother : When will you set **about** it?

Daughter : After super, mummy.

Mother : But you should go to bed immediately after you have completed it.

Daughter : OK, mummy.

Use 9: Stand/sit about: Stand/sit idly

Teacher : When do you have the test?

Student : Next week, master.

Teacher : Have you read all the lessons?

Student : I have to read the last lesson.

Teacher : Then, why do you stand **about** at the gate?

Use 10: Come about: Happen

John : You look tired. Are you sick?

Smith : I think I've got a cold.

John : How has it come **about**?

Smith : It's probably due to this terrible weather.

Use 11: Bring about: Cause something

Kerry : Whom do you admire?

Michael : Adam Smith, the new Manager.

Kerry : What has made you admire him?

Michael : He has brought **about** many reforms and boosted the profit of the company.

Use 12: Beat about: Be evasive

Ram : Could you lend me 1000?

Ravi : Yesterday, I had 2000, but Dinesh borrowed it. So I don't have money with me now.

Ram : Please don't beat **about** the bush. Just tell me if you could lend me?

Ravi : I'm sorry, I don't have money.

Use 13: Turn about: Turn so as to face in the opposite direction

Sheela : Have you seen the calculator I left here?

Mother : I haven't. Ask your brother.

Ganesh : Sheela, just **turn about**, and you will find it under the chair.

Sheela : Thank you.

Practice 2

Above

Use 1: Directly over or upstairs

Customer : Do you sell readymade garments?

Shopkeeper : Yes. We sell for children as well as adults.

Customer : Can you tell me where the section is?

Shopkeeper : It's **above** you.

Use 2: Higher than the line or upper surface (of)

Guna : Is this the big rock you have often spoken about?

Ramesh : Exactly. It's one of the biggest in Asia.

Guna : But it doesn't seem to be very big.

Ramesh : It's because half of the rock is underwater, and only half is **above**.

Use 3: More than in quantity/amount/number/price

Son : Would you please give me a big bag?

Mother : How many apples are you going to buy?

Son : I want to buy twenty-five apples.

Mother : Don't worry. The bag I have given you can hold **above** fifty.

Use 4: At a level higher than

John : Why do you stay in a lodge?

Richard : The heavy rain has flooded my street.

John : Has your house also been flooded?

Richard : Yes. When I vacated the house, the water was **above** my knees and rising.

Use 5: Higher than in grade, rank, importance

Ram : Is Kannan your colleague?

Suresh : Yes, he is.

Ram : Is he junior to you?

Suresh : No. He isn't. He is **above** me.

Use 6: From above: From a higher position

Prakash : Why do you want to resign from your job?

Ravi : Let's go to the canteen. I'll tell you the reason there.

Prakash : Is anybody watching us here?

Ravi : Yes. The Manager is watching us **from above** the second floor.

Prakash : He knows about your resignation.

Ravi : I have already told him. But I don't want to discuss the reasons in his presence.

Use 7: Above all: Particularly; especially; more important than anything else

Ralph : I have packed all the books.

Joseph : Thank you. When will you come to the railway station?

Ralph : I'll be there at 5 p.m.

Joseph : Don't be late, and **above all** don't forget to bring the books.

Use 8: Over and above: Besides something

Rani : How much sugar do you have?

Meera : I have bought fifty kilos.

Rani : Is it enough for the function?

Meera : Don't worry. I have ten kilos **over and above** what we actually need.

Use 9: Above board: Honest; without trickery

James : Why do you look worried?

Stephen : It's all about the interview I attended yesterday.

James : You don't have to worry, because selection will be based on merit.

Stephen : I'm afraid because one of the interviewers is the son of an influential person.

James : The committee is quite **above board**; so don't be anxious.

Use10: Above the law: Too important to have to obey the law

Reporter : Why have you arrested the Railway Minister?

Police Officer : He got a bribe for signing a Government contract.

And we have evidence for it.

Reporter : Then, why should he protest against his arrest?

Police Officer : He thinks that he is **above the law**.

Practice 3

After

Use 1: Later in time; immediately following

Lakshmi : When are you meeting your friends?

Latha : I'm meeting them **after** a week.

Lakshmi : How are they getting here?

Latha : They're coming by air.

Use 2: Chasing

Wife : Have you seen our dog?

Husband : It's in the street, running **after** a cat.

Wife : But where's Ram?

Husband : He's probably running **after** the dog.

Use 3: Trying to get

Ganesh : I don't think Ram will stick to this job for long.

Senthil : How do you say that?

Ganesh : He has sent applications to several companies.

Senthil : You mean to say that he is **after** a better job.

Use 4: Beyond

Brown : Where are you staying?

Smith : I'm staying at the Lakeview Hotel.

Brown : Where's it?

Smith : It's on Main Street, the second building **after** the Church.

Brown : Is the hotel near the railway station?

Smith : You can reach the hotel in just five minutes from the station.

Use 5: Following/going behind

Xavier : Excuse me. I'm lost.

Fielding : Where do you stay?

Xavier : I stay at the Royal Hotel

Fielding : This flower girl goes there. You just walk **after** her, and she will show you the hotel.

Use 6: Next to in order of importance

Henry : Whose novels do you like very much?

Jones : I admire Hardy's.

Henry : Don't you admire the novels of Dickens?

Jones : **After** Hardy, Dickens is my favourite author.

Use 7: Following and in spite of

Jennifer : Have you invited Mr Joseph?

Agatha : No. I haven't.

Jennifer : But don't forget that he's your Manager.

Agatha : Do you want me to invite him **after** what he has spoken of my family.

Jennifer : What will you say when the other employees of the company ask you about him?

Agatha : I'm not afraid. I will tell you all that I have not invited him.

Use 8: Look after: Attend to; take care of

Stella : Could you please help me?

Nancy : What can I do for you?

Stella : Could you **look after** my baby for an hour? I have some work in the post office.

Nancy : Just a moment, please, while I drink coffee.

Use 9: After all: In spite of everything; nevertheless

James : Where do you buy grocery every month?

Lawrence : I buy at Nicholas Chain store.

James : It's hard to get fast service in this store.

Lawrence : But it's the only store that sells quality grocery **after** all.

Use 10: See after: Attend to

Raja : When did you go to bed yesterday?

Ramesh : I went to bed at 10 p.m.

Raja : Did you **see after** the horse before you went to bed?

Ramesh : Yes. I **saw after** all his needs even before I had my dinner.

Use 11: Take after: Resemble

Stephen : Do you recognize him?

John : I think he's Smith's son.

Stephen : How do you know that?

John : It's easy. He exactly **takes after** his father.

Practice 4

Against

Use 1: In hostility or active opposition to

Jack : Has the Government decided to close the company?

Oliver : Yes. We're worried about it.

Jack : What are you going to do then?

Oliver : We'll rise **against** the Government.

Jack : Do you think that the government will go back on its decision to close?

Oliver : We will not rest till we make the government yield to our demands.

Use 2: In Competition with

Prem : Did India win the match yesterday?

Shyam : Yes. The Indian team had a glorious victory.

Prem : Does India have any match tomorrow?

Shyam : Yes. Tomorrow India plays **against** South Africa.

Use 3: Towards, so as to touch or in such a way as to be resisted

Percy : How did it come about that you got an injury on your head?

Sandy : I hit my head **against** a wall.

Percy : Where did this happen?

Sandy : It happened in the crowded movie house yesterday.

Use 4: In such a way as to be supported/resisted something physical

Jim : Please, don't lean **against** the iron gate.

Smith : Why? Is it damaged?

Jim : No, I have painted it just now. And the paint will stick to your dress.

Smith : Thank you. I bought this shirt only yesterday.

Use 5: In front of (a background) or contrasted with (what is behind)

Clive : Why do you want all of us to run away immediately?

Jim : Because I've seen a ferocious lion.

Clive : Where have you seen it?

Jim : I've seen it **against** the dark hole of that cave.

Use 6: Opposite

Donald : Do you have the name register with you?

Dick : Yes. But how can I know the students who have opted for French?

Donald : It's effortless. I've put star marks **against** their names.

Dick : Thank you. Do you want a separate name list now?

Donald : Yes, please.

Use 7: In Comparison with

Raymond : I have some sugar, but I don't know if it weighs two kilos.

Tony : Do you have anything that weighs two kilos?

Raymond : Yes. I've two kilos of oranges.

Tony : Good. If you just weigh the sugar **against** the oranges, you'll know whether you have less or more than two kilos of sugar.

Race against: Try to finish work within the limited time available

Manager : Has the accountant prepared all the reports?

Supervisor : No, he hasn't. But he **races *against*** time to finish the work before evening.

Manager : Don't forget that the reports should be submitted to the Chairman tomorrow.

Supervisor : I'm sure he'll have them ready this evening.

Borrow (money) against something: Borrow (money) with something as security

Moneylender : What's the matter?

Roy : I'd like to borrow money ***against*** this gold chain.

Moneylender : Whose chain is it?

Roy : It is my wife's.

Moneylender : How much do you need?

Roy : I want 10,000.

Moneylender : When will you get your chain back?

Roy : In three months.

Moneylender : Otherwise, your chain will be auctioned.

Roy : Trust me. I will get my chain back in less than three months.

Hope against hope: Continue to hope, even though the situation appears hopeless

Carl : Did your father travel on the plane that crashed yesterday?

Henry : Yes. Not only my father, but also my nephew.

Carl : Do you know about the survivors?

Henry : I don't know. But I **hope against hope** that my father and nephew have survived.

Practice 5

AHEAD

Use 1: In a position to the front of or in the direct line of one's movement

John : Please drive slowly.

James : But we've to reach the city in an hour.

John : I tell you this because there are puddles ***ahead***.

James : Thank you. I'm new to this road.

Use 2: Indicating motion/direction, and meaning forward, downward

Robin : Where're the students?

Walter : I've sent them ***ahead*** because they must be at the airport early in the morning.

Robin : When did they start their journey?

Walter : Just half an hour ago.

Use 3: In the lead

Sandy : Who'll win the football match?

Peter : Certainly. Indians.

Sandy : How can you say?

Peter : Indians are seven goals ***ahead*** of South Africans.

Use 4: Earlier, before

Rex : What can I bring you?

Emily : I want two pizzas immediately.

Rex : If you want pizzas, you must order them 15 minutes ***ahead***.

Emily : I'm sorry. I can't wait.

Rex : If you have any work in the bazaar, then finish it and come back after 15 minutes. We'll have your pizza ready.

Emily : This is a brilliant idea. I will be back after 15 minutes.

Look/think ahead: Think of the future

Simon : I've got an appointment with two companies.

William : Which company are you going to join?

Simon : I haven't decided yet. I just ***think ahead*** and want to know where these companies will get me.

William : It's always good to think several times before taking a decision.

Go/get ahead: Make progress

Tony : Well! How was your trip?

Flora : It was very smooth and comfortable.

Tony : How is your export business?

Flora : It's **going ahead** well.

Lie/stretch ahead: Be in the/somebody's future

Noel : Why do you look worried?

Patrick : I'm afraid that a financial crisis **lies ahead**.

Noel : What could be the cause of it?

Patrick : It's all due to our credit sales.

Noel : How much money do you need to tide over the crisis?

Patrick : I need \$ 50,000 for three months.

Noel : No problem. I will give you the money you need tomorrow. Be careful hereafter.

Patrick : Thank you very much.

Ahead of time: Earlier than scheduled

Angela : How long does it take to reach the railway station by car?

Taxi driver : It takes about 30 minutes. When do you have the train?

Angela : I've it at 7 p.m.

Taxi driver : Get into the car, and I'll get you there 15 minutes **ahead**.

Practice 6

ALONG

Use 1: Following the line of

Eva : Can you give me some information?

Tony : Yes. May I help you?

Eva : I want to go to Gloria Hotel.

Tony : Walk **along** this street till you reach the post office. And the hotel is next to the post office.

Use 2: Parallel to

Sandy : How long do we have to walk?

Victor : Just two kilometres.

Sandy : It's the hot sun I'm afraid of.

Victor : Don't be afraid. **Along** the side of the road, there runs a line of trees for several kilometres.

Sandy : Really?

Victor : Yes, all of them were planted by my family twenty years ago.

Use 3: Onwards in the direction of motion

Miles : Come **along**. We haven't got much time.

Flora : Please wait. The two young men are yet to come.

Miles : Why do they walk very slowly?

Flora : They're pulling a heavy bag **along**.

Come/get along: Make progress

Ted : Hello. How are you?

Ned : Pretty well, thanks. And you?

Ted : I'm fine, thanks. How's your new business **getting along**?

Ned : It's **coming along** very well.

Along with: Together with, in company with

Oliver : Did you meet John recently?

Wayne : Yes. I met him last week, and he went to China two days ago.

Oliver : Did he go alone?

Wayne : No. He went **along with** his parents.

All along: During the whole time

Thomas : Have you passed the examination?

William : No. I've failed in two subjects.

Thomas : I told you **all along**, not to idle away your time. But you didn't listen to me.

William : I regret it now.

Get along: Have friendly relations

Eliza : I'm glad to have met you.

Daisy : Thank you. We meet after ten years.

Eliza : How do you get **along** with your mother-in-law?

Daisy : Oh, we **get along** with her quite well.

Get along with you: Stop behaving like that

Father : Where have you kept my spectacles?

Son : I haven't seen them, dad.

Father : **Get along with you**, you naughty boy. I saw you take them away stealthily.

Son : I've kept them in the shelf.

Will be along: Will arrive

Victor : For whom are you waiting for?

Philip : I'm awaiting John.

Victor : When'll he come?

Philip : He **will be along** in a few minutes.

Practice 7

AMONG

Use 1: Surrounded by

Celia :I think the chief guest hasn't arrived yet.

Daisy : He has already come.

Celia : Where's he now?

Daisy : He's **among** children in the auditorium.

Use 2: Introducing the various sharers in a distribution

Oliver : Why does Richard quarrel with his father?

Thomas : He urges that he should be given more property than his sisters.

Oliver : What do the sisters say?

Thomas : They want the property to be divided equally **among** his two daughters and a son.

Use 3: Indicating action towards each other by the members of a group

Wilfred : Who'll lead the jubilee rally tomorrow?

Victor : Mr. Ted has agreed to lead it.

Wilfred : Have you chosen him?

Victor : I haven't. The volunteers decided **among** themselves.

Use 4: In the number/class of

Emily : Do you know Stephen?

Grace : I've known him for several years. He's very sincere.

Emily :**Among** his many good qualities, I appreciate his honesty.

Grace : It's very rare to find a person like him these days.

Use 5: By the combined action of

Smith : John, will you please lift this stone?

John : I can't lift this huge stone alone.

Smith : Who's going to lift it?

John : None of the students can lift the stone alone but can certainly lift it **among** us.

Use 6: Out of the number of

Dora : Do you sell emergency lamps?

Shopkeeper : Which brand do you want?

Dora : I want Philips.

Shopkeeper : Please go upstairs. There're many, and you can choose **among** them.

Among others: Including or among them

Eva : Where do you buy vegetables?

Amy : I buy them at the Central Market.

Eva : Do you find a lot of vegetables there?

Amy : Yes. I find lots and lots of vegetables—**among** others, cabbages,

potatoes, and beans.

Practice 8

AT

Use 1: Can be used instead of beside, by, close to, in, near, on, and under

Ralph : Whom do you want to meet?

Vincent : I'd like to meet John.

Ralph : He's **at** the old tree by the river.

Vincent : Thank you.

Use 2: Used with proper names of villages and towns

Tony : Where did you meet Simon?

Agatha : I met him **at** Bristol.

Tony : How long will he be there?

Agatha : For six months.

Use 3: Used with points of time

Dorothy : Can I meet you early in the morning?

Usha : Will you please tell me the time?

Dorothy : **At** 6 O'clock. Will you be awake?

Usha : No problem. Usually I get up **at** 5 O'clock.

Use 4: Engaged in, busy over

Noel : Can I meet your sister now?

Flora : You can't, because she's **at** her prayers.

Noel : Shall I come after half an hour?

Flora : After prayers, she'll be **at** breakfast. Please come after an hour.

Noel : Can I meet her tomorrow?

Flora : Oh yes. At what time you'll be here?

Noel : At 11 a.m.

Flora : She will be free.

Use 5: During the course of

Lara : You seem to be very happy today?

Helen : I met my boyfriend after a long time.

Lara : Where did you meet him?

Helen : I met him **at** dinner last night.

Use 6: Subject to

Sidney : What's the fate of the minister taken captive by the militants?

William : He's **at** their mercy.

Sidney : Will they release him?

William : They demand one million dollars for his release.

Use 7: Introduces an address

Brian : Where do you live now?

Dick : I live **at** No. 10 Harding Street.

Brian : Is your house huge?

Dick : Yes. We've enough room for guests now.

Use 8: Indicates motion towards

Lewis : Why did you run **at** the bus stand yesterday?

Edward : I forgot my briefcase when I got down the bus.

Lewis : Did you catch the bus?

Edward : I caught the bus, but not my briefcase.

Use 9: Introduces a phrase showing the speed at which something is done

Richard : How did it come about that you met with an accident?

Neville : The reckless driver drove the car **at** the speed of 150 miles per hour?

Richard : Is that car yours?

Neville : No. I hired it **at** a rate of \$10 an hour.

Use 10: Introduces distances/heights/depths

Gloria : Did you see the explosion?

Harriet : Yes. I did.

Gloria : Where were you actually then?

Harriet : I was near a bank, **at** a distance of half a mile from the spot.

Use 11: Introduces phases of age

Gloria : **At** what age, do children start school in your country?

Ram : They start **at** the age of three.

John : Were you sent to school **at** this age?

Ram : No. I was sent to school **at** the age of five.

At night: During the night

Father : Have you forgotten the test you have to write the next week?

Son : I haven't forgotten it, dad.

Father : Then, why do you sleep during the day?

Son : Don't worry, dad. I'll read the lessons **at night**.

At home: At the speaker's house or at the house of the person about whom one is speaking

Bill : Did you meet Peter yesterday?

Gary : I went to see him, but he was not **at home**.

Bill : Was he out of station?

Gary : His wife told me he had gone to Bangalore.

Bill : When will he return to his hometown?

Gary : She told me that he would be back only next week.

Bill : OK. Meet him next week and ask for guidelines.

At present or at the moment: As things are now or for the time being

Robert : Can I meet the Manager now?

Stephen : I'm sorry; he's busy **at the moment**.

Robert : When can I meet him then?

Stephen : You can meet him in the afternoon.

At the back of: The secret cause of

Betty : Why are the students on strike?

Grace : They protest against the recent tuition-fee hike.

Betty : Who's **at the back** of their strike?

Grace : Some politicians are **at the back of** it.

At once: Immediately

David : I'm going to the University Press.

Smith : Will you meet Mr. Stephen there?

David : Yes. What can I do for you, please?

Smith : Please ask him to meet the Director **at** once.

Practice 9

AWAY

Use 1: From a place to a distance

Jack : Did you catch the thief?

Clive : No. I ran after him, but he got **away** in the dark.

Jack : Did he steal anything from your house?

Clive : No. Fortunately, I woke up when he was about to open the bureau.

Use 2: Indicates position, not motion and meaning “distant (from)”

Celia : How can I get to the railway station?

Thomas : Take any bus at the next corner.

Celia : How far is the station from here?

Thomas : It's just five kilometres **away** from here.

Use 3: Absent or not here/there

Noel : Were you at home when the thief broke into your house?

Walter : I was **away** on a visit to my sister in Mumbai.

Noel : Then how did you know about the theft?

Walter : One of my neighbours rang me up at once.

Use 4: Remove from being part of or from being in contact with something

Dolly : Have you cut **away** the rotten part of the fruit?

Gloria : Yes, I have. Also, I have Kept the fruit on the table.

Dolly : Thank you. Don't forget to sweep **away** the rotten part before you go.

Gloria : I'll do it and then leave.

Use 5: Part with or lose something

Ellen : John is a famous Professor of English.

Agatha : You know him only as a Professor of English

Ellen : What else do you know about him?

Agatha : He's a great philanthropist too. Recently he has given \$10,000 **away** to an orphanage.

Ellen : Is he an alumnus of our university?

Agatha : Yes. He was my classmate in 1987.

Ellen : A wonderful philanthropist was your classmate.

Use 6: Move from one direction to another

Linda : Have you greeted Julie?

May : Yes, I have, but she has turned **away** and begun talking to someone else.

Linda: Isn't she a bosom friend of yours? Why is she avoiding you?

May : Because I forgot to invite her to my wedding.

Right/straight away: Immediately

William : Could you help me, please?

Sandy : What can I do for you?

William : Will you please go to the airport **straight away** to receive the chief guest.

Sandy : Just a moment, while I get the car key, please.

Get away with: Succeed in escaping consequences of something or successfully steal

Robert : When did the thief break into your house?

Miles : It happened last week.

Robert : Did the police catch the thief?

Miles : No. He **got away with** \$2000.

Practice 10

BACK

Use 1: In the opposite direction, so as to return to the place from which (it)started

Oliver : Why do you go to Bangalore?

William: I have an interview at Simson Software Company

Oliver : When'll you come **back**?

William: I'll be **back** home tomorrow.

Use 2: In a state of being prevented/impeded from moving forward or making progress

Sudha : Why didn't you come to the park yesterday?

Ravi : I'm sorry. I was held **back** by my father.

Sudha: Why did he do so?

Ravi : Because he wanted me to accompany him to Church.

Use 3: In return/repayment for something received

Harriet : Why is John weeping?

Juli : Smith kicked him.

Harriet : Why did he kick John?

Juli : John kicked him first, and Smith just gave him one **back**.

Use 4: Into time past

Jane : Have you read the novel?

Susan : Yes, I have.

Jane : Is it autobiographical?

Susan : Yes. The author looks **back** on his childhood with mixed feelings.

Use 5: To a later time

Smith : Will Mathew join duty in May?

Richard : No. His leave has been put **back** a month. He'll join only in June.

Smith : Why has he gone on extended leave?

Richard : He's told me that his mother is seriously ill.

Smith : Is Mathew her only son?

Richard : She has a daughter who lives in Russia.

Smith : So, Mathew must be with his mother when she is seriously sick.

Use 6: Away from the present position, or the ordinary position

Ganapathy: Where's the attendant?

Ram : He's taken a file to the Manager's room.

Ganapathy : When he returns, ask him to pull **back** the curtains so that we can get some sunlight in the room.

Ram : We need not wait till he arrives; I will pull **back** the curtains.

Use 7: In the past

David : Grandpa, did you travel by train when you were a child?

Johnson : Yes, but very rarely I did.

David : My teacher told me that there were no trains in the past.

Johnson : Yes. But it was only **back** in the seventeenth century.

Go back on(a promise): Break (a promise)

Mason: Would you like to accompany us to New York tomorrow?

Ruby : Yes, I haven't seen New York so far.

Mason: Shall I book a ticket for you?

Rubi : Oh, sure. I will not **go back** on my promise.

Practice 11

BEFORE

Use 1: Earlier in time or previously

Rajesh : Why have you all gathered here?

Teachers : We're here to receive the Director of School Education.

Rajesh : Have you ever met him **before**?

Teachers : No, we haven't.

Use 2: Introduces a place to mean before (one) reaches the place

Diana : Where shall we meet tomorrow?

Joseph : We'll meet at Smith's house.

Diana : Where does he live?

Joseph : If you walk down this street, you'll come to a red building ***before*** the station.

Diana : That's where he lives.

Use 3: In front of someone or something who/which is superior or has authority

Robert: Why was he brought ***before*** the Principal?

Kate : He was intolerably mischievous in my class.

Robert: What did the Principal do?

Kate : He warned him severely and then pardoned him.

Use 4: Indicates physical position and means “in front of”

Prakash: Who has taken away my book?

Kamala : James, your friend.

Prakash: Are you sure?

Kamala : I'm sure about it. It happened ***before*** my eyes.

Prakash: He should have informed me.

Kamala: I asked him about it, but he just smiled and took the book away.

Use 5: In preference to

Manager: You should make an apology for the delay in the dispatch of the

parcel.

Eswari: I won't, because I was not responsible for the delay.

Manager: If you don't, you will be dismissed.

Eswari: I would resign **before** apologizing.

Before tax: Before the deduction of tax

Raphael: What's John's annual income?

Jane : He has an annual income of \$25,000.

Raphael: Have you excluded tax from his income?

Jane : No, this is his income **before** tax.

Practice 12

BEHIND

Use 1: In the rear of something moving or standing still

Revathi : Where's the attendant?

Mani : He's standing **behind** the door.

Revathi : Ask him to take the file and walk **behind** me to the conference hall.

Mani : Yes, I will.

Use 2: In a place which has been left by others

Master: Why are you alone in class? Where are your friends?

Grayson: They've gone to the book exhibition.

Master : Why haven't you accompanied them?

Grayson : As I'm tired, I've stayed ***behind***.

Use 3: Backwards or towards the rear

Weston: Shall we walk fast?

Churchill: We don't have to. The drama starts at 7 p.m. only.

Weston: But look ***behind***. Someone is following us.

Churchill: Don't be afraid, be bold. This is my town.

Weston: OK. Thank you very much.

Use 4: Less advanced than somebody

Blake: Have the matches between India and Australia been over?

Oscar: No, the last match will be played tomorrow.

Blake: Can India win the series?

Oscar: We can't be sure because Australians are just 25 runs ***behind***.

Use 5: Supporting or helping

Walker: How many days do you need to complete the work?

Alexis: I need just ten days.

Walker: Can you complete the work within this short period?

Alexis: Yes. It's possible because 25 dedicated workmen are ***behind*** me.

Behind the times: Old fashioned or not so advanced as the average

Clayton: Do you like our villagers?

Tanner: Yes, they're really wonderful. But they're fifty years ***behind the times***.

Clayton: Why do you think so?

Tanner: Because they're thinking as our grandfathers used to do.

Behind the time: Late

Edwin: Did you get to the station on time?

Clark: No, we're half an hour ***behind*** the time.

Edwin: So, you missed the train.

Clark: No. Fortunately, the train arrived an hour ***behind the time***.

Behind the scenes: Hidden or out of sight

Warren: Is your company a big one?

Edgar: Yes, there are about 2000 men employed in our company.

Warren: Yesterday, when I came to your office, I saw about a few hundred employees only.

Edgar: But a large number of men are working ***behind the scenes***.

Practice 13

BELOW

Use 1: Directly down

Hattie: Have you seen the children?

Jenna: Yes, I've. They're in the field.

Hattie: How have they got into the field?

Jenna: They've just **crept** *below* the wire and got into the field.

Use 2: In a lower position, without meaning that this position is directly beneath

Bruce: Where does the saint live?

Carter: He lives in a hut *below* the top of the mountain.

Bruce: How long has he been here?

Carter: For the past twenty-five years.

Use 3: Deeper than the surface of

Dorothy: Were you able to catch the thief?

Fletcher: Yes, I caught him in his village.

Dorothy: Did you recover the stolen jewels from him?

Fletcher: Yes, all the jewels, which he kept *below* the ground beside his house.

Use 4: Lower than in age/ amount/ weight/ value/ price

Nelson: Why is this shop crowded?

Wilson: Here, you can buy things **below** the price you have to pay elsewhere.

Nelson: Do they sell things of good quality.

Wilson: I'm sure all the things they sell are of the best quality.

Use 5: Lower in rank or social position

Booker: Whom do you teach?

Shaw: I teach undergraduate students.

Booker: Why don't you teach postgraduate students?

Shaw: Because teachers **below** the rank of Professor are not allowed.

Use 6: Lower on a page or later in a book

Jack: Can you give me an example for dissemination from the book?

Harper: You can find one on page 27.

Jack: Thank you. Can you show me a few examples more?

Harper: For other examples, see pages 47 and 72 **below**.

Use 7: At a lower level

Madeline: How did you go across the bridgeless river?

Piper: We just waded through the water.

Madeline: Wasn't the river deep?

Piper: No, the water was just ***below*** our waist.

From below: From under something or upwards

Parker: Why didn't you come down when I called you out from the ground floor yesterday?

Josie: At what time did you call me out?

Parker: At about 9 p.m.

Josie: I'm sorry. I didn't hear from you, because I went to bed early at about 8 p.m.

Practice 14

BENEATH

Use 1: Directly under or directly down from

Rose: How did you go to John's house?

Parker: I just walked ***beneath*** the bright stars.

Rose: When did you reach his house?

Parker: At about 11: 00 p.m.

Use 2: In a lower position, without being directly under or at the foot of

Nancy: Where're the girls?

Jane: They're ***beneath*** the neem tree.

Nancy: What are they doing there?

Jane: They're having their lunch.

Nancy: Are they not allowed to dine in their classrooms?

Jane: Yes, but they enjoy eating under the tree.

Use 3: Covered or hidden by

Weston: What are the walls of the house made of?

Brooks: They're made of bricks.

Weston: Are you sure?

Brooks: Yes, they're ***beneath*** the muddy surface of the walls.

Use 4: Lower than the surface of

Edward: Where do earthworms live?

Karter: They live ***beneath*** the ground.

Edward: How do they help farmers?

Karter: They attack the soil and make it fertile also.

Use 5: Unworthy of or not dignified enough for

Kingston: Have you listened to John's speech at the conference?

Cole: Yes, I have.

Kingston: Do his complaints perturb you?

Cole: No. His childish remarks are *beneath* notice.

Beneath the same roof: in the same house

Blake: Do both of you live *beneath* the same roof?

Preston: Yes, for the past five years.

Blake: How long have you been living in the same house.

Preston: For the past two years.

Practice 15

BESIDE

Use 1: At the side of, close to, near, and by

John : What are you searching for?

Smith : My spectacles. Have you seen them?

John : Yes, they are *beside* the table.

Smith : Thank you very much.

Use 2: Compared with

Taylor : I have enrolled for Latin. Which language do you learn?

Hill : I learn French.

Taylor : Isn't French difficult to learn?

Hill : *Beside* Latin, it is easy to learn.

Beside oneself: Frantic

Rupert : Why are you beside yourself with joy?

Alice : I've got through the Civil Service Examination.

Rupert : Congratulations!

Alice : Thank you.

Beside the point or question: Irrelevant

Oliver : I'd like to settle in Delhi. How much does a plot cost here?

Hariet : Why don't you settle in Mumbai?

Oliver : It's *beside the point*.

Hariet :Ok, then. Here, a plot costs about fifty crore rupees in the prime locality.

Oliver : Thank you.

Practice 16

BESIDES

Use 1: In addition to

Kevin : Did you go to work today?

Jack : Yes, I did.

Kevin : How many others did work with you?

Jack : **Besides** me, two men and four women worked.

Use 2: Moreover, further

Clive : Why didn't you come to college at 9 O'clock? I was here at 8:30 am and waiting for you.

James : I never said I'd come as early as 9 O'clock. **Besides**, the conference was scheduled to begin only at 11 O'clock.

Clive : When did you come then?

James : I was there exactly at 11 O'clock.

Practice 17

BETWEEN

Use 1: Denotes a position or motion in space, and introduces two points or areas which are on the opposite or surrounding sides of the thing which is in the position referred to

Lewis : Where's John's house?

Jack : Do you see that school and that factory?

Lewis : Yes, I do.

Jack : His house lies **between** the two.

Use 2: Intermediate to two limits

Philip : Let me go now, and we'll meet tomorrow.

Celia : You can't go now, because it's raining.

Philip : It's not raining. It's something **between** rain and snow.

Celia : You won't listen to me. So you may go.

Use 3: Indicates time, meaning at sometime during the interval following one point of time and preceding another

Erica : Will you be at home tomorrow?

Henry : Yes, I'll. You are welcome to my house.

Erica : When can I meet you?

Henry : Come **between** 5:00 and 5:30 in the evening.

Use 4: Introduces alternatives that have to be selected from

Daniel : You have to choose **between** green and yellow. Which of these pictures do you choose for the first prize?

Martin : It's tough, because both of them are exceedingly wonderful.

Daniel : What're you going to do then?

Martin : I choose both for the first prize.

Use 5: Indicates division and distribution to two or more people or groups

Wife : I have to go for shopping.

Husband : What are you going to buy?

Wife : I want to buy cakes for our children.

Husband : Good. But be careful to divide the cakes equally **between** them. Otherwise, they'll quarrel with you.

Use 6: Refers to reciprocal action or relation between two or more persons

John : Why do you go to New York tomorrow?

James : I'd like to attend the party Mr Smith hosts.

John : What's the party for?

James : It's to celebrate the marriage arranged **between** Mr. Smith and Ms. Jones.

Read between the lines: Understand the hidden meaning of something

Noel : Is Joseph happy at the hostel?

Tony : He says he is. But if you **read between the lines**, you'll see that he's not happy.

Noel : Then, why does he continue to stay?

Tony : His parents force him to be at the hostel.

Practice 18

BEYOND

Use 1: Farther away than, past, or so as to leave behind

Edmund : Where's your house?

Mark : My house is **beyond** that river.

Edmund : Where's John's house?

Mark : It's beyond the Church.

Edmund : How often do you meet?

Mark : In the evening, every day.

Edmund : Both of you are lucky to be nearer to each other.

Use 2: Outside the sphere/limit of or out of the grasp or reach of

Frank : John is selling his furniture.

Dick: Why does he sell his furniture?

Frank: He would like to sell his house.

Dick : Would you like to buy it?

Frank: No. I don't want to because he is asking for a price far **beyond** its value.

Dick: True. But they are made of superior quality wood.

Practice 19

BUT

Use 1: Except

Ganesh : Did all the students attend the interview?

Ram : All **but** Prathap attended the interview.

Ganesh : Did they ask difficult questions?

Ram : I don't think so, because they are all happy.

Ganesh : Did they answer all your questions?

Ram : All of them **but** Mohan.

But for someone or something: If somebody or something had not done something

Simon : Roger is immensely thankful to Peter.

Lucy : There must be a reason. What has he done to him?

Simon : **But for his encouragement**, Roger would not have started his profitable business.

Lucy : Are they friends?

Simon : Yes, they have been intimate friends for more than a decade.

Lucy : Do they live in the same town?

Simon : Yes. Also, they studied in the same school together.

Practice 20

BY

Use 1: Near

Linda : Do you go to the bazaar?

Rita : Yes, I do.

Linda : Do you take Julie with you?

Rita : I don't want to, but he is adamant.

Linda : If you take her, keep close **by** her so that she will not run away.

Use 2: By means of

Jim : At what time does the train leave?

Kevin : I don't know.

Jim : How can I know it?

Kevin : Don't worry. I'll find out **by** calling up the station master.

Use 3: Introduces the difference resulting from comparing things

Bruce : Did you see the recent match between India and Sri Lanka?

David : Yes, I did. It was an excellent match.

Bruce : How many runs did India score?

David : I have forgotten their score, but I know that they won Sri Lanka **by** 295 runs.

Use 4: Introduces phrases of time showing when the time allowed or needed for an action end

Edmund : I'll meet you at the railway station.

Michael : You should be at the station **by** 10 O'clock, or we shall miss the train.

Edmund : If we catch that train, can we be in London in the evening?

Michael : **By** the time we get to London, it will be dark.

Use 5: Indicates motion past a point

Linda : Do you know this girl, Grace?

Dora : Yes, I see her very often.

Linda : She is very sincere in her studies.

Dora : Yes, I know. Whenever I pass **by** her house, I watch her read books.

Use 6: Introduces the part of a whole at which the action of the verb is applied to the whole

Flora : Why does the boy weep?

Ann : His sister has beaten him.

Flora : Why has she beaten him?

Ann : He pulled her **by** the hair.

Use 7: Introduces the doer of an action or creator of something

Vincent : Why is Tony so gloomy?

Ted : His house has been destroyed **by** fire.

Vincent : How did this come about?

Ted : I think some miscreants set the house on fire.

Use 8: Because of

Father : Have you seen tigers in the zoo?

Son : Yes. I've seen many. Are they cruel **by** nature?

Father : Yes. They are.

Son : I'll not go to the zoo.

Use 9: Alone

Alice : Were you at home yesterday?

Flora : Yes. I spent the whole of the day **by** myself.

Alice : Why didn't you ring me up then?

Flora : I thought you hadn't returned from New York.

Use 10: By oneself: Without anyone's help

Frank : Why do you feel exhausted?

Jim : I've done a lot of work **by myself**.

Frank : Why haven't you sought the help of your brothers?

Jim : I haven't because they have to prepare for their examination.

Use 11: Learn by heart: Commit something to memory

Edgar : Diana is precocious. She has learnt 250 English poems **by heart**.

Maggie : What is her age now?

Edgar : She's just five.

Maggie : She will be famous in some field.

Use 12: By your leave: With your permission

Robert : Can I stay here for a night?

Miles : Yes, but only **by the manager's leave**.

Robert : When'll he come?

Miles : He'll be here in about half an hour.

Use 13: By all means: Certainly

Emma : Will you go to New York tomorrow?

Fanny : Yes, **by all means**.

Emma : How long will you be there?

Fanny : I'll be there for a week.

Use 14: By no means: Definitely not

Elizabeth : Are you ready for the journey?

Kitty : Yes, I am.

Elizabeth : Is Linda also ready?

Kitty : No. She's **by no means** ready. She hasn't had bath yet.

Use 15: Call/drop/stop by: Visit someone informally on one's way to another place

Grace : Will you be at home today?

Lisa : Then I'll **call by** and see you on my way to market.

Grace : Will you please tell me the time of your visit?

Lisa : I'll drop by 6 O'clock in the evening.

Use 16: Get or acquire

Anne : You look lovely in the new coat.

John : Thank you very much.

Anne : How did you come **by** this beautiful coat?

John : It's my birthday gift from my sister in London.

Practice 21

DOWN

Use 1: In a descending direction

Emily : Why is the boy crying?

Jane : He fell **down** the stairs and hurt himself.

Emily : When did this happen?

Jane : Just half an hour ago.

Use 2: To a position resulting from having fallen/ bent/sat/etc. down

Simon : Will you please sit **down** and have a cup of coffee?

Ned : That sounds good.

Simon : I always enjoy coffee at work.

Ned : I like it best in the morning.

Use 3: In a low, lower, or lowest position

Rupert : Keep the curtain **down**.

Grace : If I keep it **down**, the sunlight will enter the room.

Rupert : If you don't keep it **down**, people will peep through the hole on the windowpane.

Grace : OK, I'll keep it **down**.

Use 4: On a paper or a list

Ramesh : Copy this letter **down** and then go home.

Sita : When'll I meet you again?

Ramesh : Write **down** your phone number and give it to me. I'll ring you up

and tell you the date.

Sita : Thank you very much.

Use 5: At or to a lower rate or price

Flora : Why have you bought two kilos of carrots?

Ralph : Because carrots are **down** to five pence a pound now.

Flora : What was the price yesterday?

Ralph : Seven pence yesterday.

Use 6: Indicates motion or position, but without any meaning of descending or of lower position

Kay : Have you seen John anywhere here?

Sidney : Yes. He has just walked **down** this road with his wife.

Kay : Has he gone home?

Sidney : Probably. Because his house is farther **down** this road.

Use 7: From a state of violence or excitement to one of calm

Sean : Where were you during the thunderstorm?

Ada : I was at the railway station.

Sean : When did you return home then?

Ada : At about 10 p.m., when the storm died **down**.

Use 8: To a smaller quantity or size

Eve : What's your problem?

Celia : The cook doesn't fit the hole.

Eve : Cut it **down** until it fits the hole.

Celia : I'll try.

Use 9: Below the usual or natural level

Philip : Is the lake full?

Miles : The level of the lake is **down** several feet.

Philip : Is the water sufficient for cultivation?

Miles : No. Unless we get some rain soon, we will be without water.

Break down: Cease to function (Properly)

William : The engine of my **bike has broken down**, and I don't know how to repair it.

Ralph : Ring your mechanic up. He'll come and take it to the workshop.

William : It's of no avail because he has closed his workshop.

Ralph : Has he taken to any other profession?

William : No. He can't take to any profession because his health **has broken down completely**.

Let someone or something down: Be unfaithful to someone or something

Alan : Why are you anxious?

Giles : It's 10 O'clock, but Kevin hasn't come yet.

Alan : Why do you wait for him?

Giles :He has promised to lend me 10,000 today.

Alan : You can put your trust in him. He won't **let you down**.

Put something down to someone's account: Enter something on someone's account

Andrew : How much does the hat cost?

Justin : Just two \$2.

Andrew : But I haven't brought money with me.

Justin : Don't you have \$2?

Andrew : I haven't really brought money. I have forgotten to bring the Purse.

Justin : No problem. You may pay for it later.

Andrew : Thank you. But don't forget to **put it to my account**.

Rundown: Be tired and rather ill

Joseph : Why is John on leave today?

Mark : He is **run down**.

Joseph : Will he come to the office tomorrow?

Mark : Yes, he will.

Look down on someone or something: Despise someone or something

Donald : Why does Clive **look down upon** Dick?

Leo : Because Dick happens to be poorer than him.

Donald : Would you like to make friends with such a fellow?

Leo : No. I won't because he is a snob.

Practice 22

DURING

Use 1: Throughout the duration of

Oliver : How many hours did you travel by train?

Alice : Five hours.

Oliver : Won't the journey be tedious?

Alice : I love travelling by train.

Oliver : What did you do **during** the journey?

Alice : I read a novel.

Use 2: At some point in the duration of

Jack : When did you meet John?

Smith : I met him **during** my tour of America.

Jack : What's he doing there?

Smith : He's now a very popular software engineer.

Jack : When'll he come to London?

Smith : He intends to visit London **during** the Christmas holidays.

Practice 23

Except/excepting or except for

Use 1: With the exception of

Adam : How many students took up the test?

John : All **except** Anne.

Adam : Why was she absent?

John : She was seriously ill.

Rita : Are you all ready to go now?

Atool : **Except for** my mother, we are all ready.

Rita : What's she doing?

Atool : She's packing food for us.

Practice 24

FOR

Use 1: It indicates the distance

Raymond : Why do you return home very late?

Rex : Because I walked *for* miles in the woods.

Raymond : Why did you walk in the woods?

Rex : I did it just as an exercise.

Use 2:It indicates the length of time

Dorothy : Where did you go last week?

Emily : I went to my grandma's house in Salem.

Dorothy : How long were you there?

Emily : I stayed there *for* three days.

Use 3: To find/get/have

Ted : Do you want to go *for* a walk?

David : No. I feel exhausted.

Ted : Shall I send someone **or** tea?

David : Yes, please.

Use 4: Because of

Daniel : Dorothy shouted *for* joy when he heard the news.

Max : What was the news?

Daniel : England won the match.

Max : How did you know it?

Daniel : Jim sent the message just now.

Use 5: Suitable or in connection with

John : It is a good novel *for* boys. Where have you bought it?

Smith : I haven't. My sister presented it to my son *for* Christmas.

John : Has he read it?

Smith : He hasn't because he is preparing *for* the school examination.

Use 6: Introduces the place which one is trying to get to

Carl : Do you have any work now?

Mark : Yes. I have to despatch a few letters.

Carl : When shall we leave *for* home then?

Mark : At 6 p.m.

Practice 25

FROM

Use 1: Indicating motion and introducing the starting-point of an action

Sathish : I came here **from** France yesterday.

Ram : How long have you been there?

Sathish : I was there for five years.

Ram : When will you go back?

Sathish : Since my contract period is over, I won't go to France again.

Use 2: Introducing the first of two limits

Rajani : Could you please help me?

Ram : What can I do for you?

Ranjani : Get me a photocopy of this book **from** page 7 to 12.

Ram : I will handover the copy in ten minutes.

Use 3: Introducing the source, does or the place of origin

Charles : **From** where do these oranges come?

John : They are **from** Spain.

Charles : Do you import them only **from** Spain?

John : No. we also import them **from** India.

Use 4: Indicating position, not motion, and introducing the thing from which something hangs or projects

Radha : See the big rings hanging **from** her ears.

Kavitha : What is special about them?

Radha : They are made of diamonds.

Kavitha : She must be rich.

Radha : Yes. Her father is an industrialist.

Use 5: Introducing a starting point in time

Ganesh : You constructed the building in a short span of time.

Prem : My team worked **from** morning to night for three months.

Ganesh : Your manager told me about it.

Prem : He was also on the site day and night.

Use 6: Introducing the substance out of which something is made

Smith : This jam is tasty. What are the ingredients?

James : It is made **from** oranges, apples, and honey.

Smith : Is it imported?

James : No. It is made in our country.

Practice 26

IN

Use 1: Indicating place or position and meaning

“within the limits”

Mary : I have been waiting for you. Where are you?

Jennifer : I am at the entrance of your street. I could not enter because several cars are standing **in** your street.

Mary :Sorry. I forgot to tell you. A minister has been invited to inaugurate the Community Hall in our street.

Use 2: Introducing phrases of motion/direction, meaning “towards the inside of”

Robert : Get **in** the car, and we’ll go.

Thomas : Are we going to the seashore now?

Robert : I am hungry. Let’s go to the hotel first.

Thomas : I too would like to have something before we go to the seashore.

Use 3: Used before the proper names of continents, seas, oceans regions, provinces, and other regions of countries

Daniel : I work **in** New Mexico, but my family is **in** New York.

Robert : I work **in** Washington, DC, but my family is **in** Kentucky.

Daniel : My wife is employed **in** New York.

Robert : My wife is a homemaker, but my children are at school **in** Kentucky.

Use 4: Used before a countable noun without an

article, showing the position in space, but stressing the activity connected with the noun

Linda : Where is your little son, John?

Nancy : He is in the room, playing with his friends.

Linda : Where is your elder son Kevin?

Nancy : He is **in** school. He will return home in the evening.

Use 5: Used before phrases answering the question, In what sort of situation /manner/state?

Daniel : Why do you sit in the dark?

Mark : I like sitting **in** the dark and listening to music.

Daniel : I love walking **in** deep snow.

Mark : I can't because I will catch a cold.

Use 6: Used before a period of time, meaning “within/at the end of/ after” a certain period of time

Steven : Come again in a day or two.

Andrew : As I have some official work, I will meet you in ten days.

Steven : Shall we go to a coffee shop now?

Andrew : I will be ready **in** five minutes.

Practice 27

INSIDE

Use 1: Used to denote “within the space concerned”

John : Where are the boys? It’s raining heavily.

Diana : They are safe *inside* the shed.

John : Are you with them?

Diana : Yes. They are chatting with me.

John : Really? Do you spend your time with them?

Diana : Yes. Why do you ask me this silly question?

John : I asked you because you told me that you had some important work.

Diana : True. But children wanted me to be with them.

John : Fantastic. Great. Be *inside* the shed till I arrive. I’ll join you.

Practice 28

INTO

Use 1: Indicating motion/direction from outside a physical space to inside it

Raji : Could you please come *into* the house?

Sudha : Thank you. Where is your little son?

Raji : He stealthily ran *into* the kitchen. I do not know what he is doing there.

Sudha : Shall I bring him back here?

Raji : Yes, please. I would like to see him.

Use 2: Introducing the substance/form into which something grows, changes, or is made

Smith : What is produced in this factory?

Wilson : This factory makes water *into* ice.

Smith : Is your brother a translator for the government?

Wilson : Yes. His job is to translate English *into* Tamil.

Smith : Where's he now?

Wilson : He's in Kentucky now.

Use 3: Introducing a state or condition into which something enters

Harry : He is always getting into trouble.

Mary : Why?

Harry : He is insincere and does not work hard.

Marry : What harm has he done to the company?

Harry : Due to his carelessness, petrol in the godown burst *into* flames.

Marry : Oh, my God!

Use 4 : Introducing what someone begins wearing

Latha : Please wait. I will change **into** the new dress in a few minutes.

Sudha : If you take much time, we will miss the bus.

Latha : Extremely sorry for the delay.

Sudha : Get **into** the auto, please.

Use 5: Introducing the parts into which something is divided

Harper : How much money has been credited **into** my account as dividend?

Mason : \$7000 .

Harper : Divide the money **into** seven parts.

Mason : To whom shall I give it?

Harper : To all the seven partners of our company.

Use 6: Expressing direction, without actual motion

Daisy : Fantastic! Your dining room opens **into** the garden.

Lucy : I could see the beauty of the garden as I eat.

Daisy : You are highly imaginative.

Lucy : Thank you very much.

Practice 29

NEAR

Use 1: Indicating a closer position

Angela : Where is your house?

Mila : It's quite **near** the forest.

Angela : How far is it away from the town?

Mila : The town is quite **near** the forest.

Use 2: “Near” followed by time and meaning close to

Miranda : Have you forgotten that your examination is drawing **near**?

Rose : No, mom. I was preparing during the night.

Miranda : Is it?

Rose : Yesterday it was **near** midnight when I went to bed.

Use 3: “Near” meaning “Close to” (without any sense of motion or physical position)

Smith : By the time the thief entered my house at night, I was **near** shivering in fear.

Barbara : What happened then?

Smith : Luckily, when he drew **near** me with a knife, he fainted.

Barbara : Surprising. Why?

Smith : He was heavily drunk.

Practice 30

OF

Use 1: To indicate quantity

Nicholas: I reached home before it started raining. Only a few drops *of* rain fell on my head.

Sarah :When did you start for home?

Nicholas :An hour ago

Sarah :Relax. First, have a cup *of* coffee.

Use 2: Preceded by an expression of number, quantity, indicating part of a whole

Charles : Have all of the participants reached the hall in time?

Blair : No. Eight *of* them were late.

Charles : How many *of* them were in the hall till the meeting was over?

Blair : All *of* them were there.

Use3: Meaning “Connected with a relative/ friend/ enemy/ acquaintance/ Collaborator”

Alexis : Are you the grandson *of* Dr. James?

Tom : Yes sir.

Alexis : Your grandfather is one ***of*** my great teachers at college.

Tom : Exceedingly happy to hear this from you.

Use 4: Preceding a possessive pronoun

Smith : Why do you allow him to be in the hall?

John : He is a friend ***of*** mine.

Smith : I thought he is a friend ***of*** Tom's sister.

John : No. Her friend is Charles.

Use 5: It means “about”

Suresh : Could you please inform Kumar ***of*** our dinner party this evening.

Sathish : I have already informed him. But I don't think he will attend the party.

Suresh : Why?

Sathish : He has been warned ***of*** social distancing due to corona.

Use 6: Joining work and its author.

Mary : Have you read the poems ***of*** Shakespeare?

Rita : No. I have read some ***of*** his plays.

Mary : Could you understand his English.

Rita : I can't. I have read the summary ***of*** the plays.

Use 7: Introducing an origin/source

Shelley : We must provide a scholarship to Ms Darcy?

Crane : Why?

Shelley : She comes **of** quite a poor background.

Crane : Are we going to help Sam?

Shelley : No. He is born **of** a rich father.

Use 8: Introducing the person/thing from whom/ which something is (yet to be) obtained

Shylock : Why are they angry with their boss?

John : Because the boss demands too much **of** his staff.

Shylock : He should have listened to the grievance of the employees.

John : They all begged **of** him to listen to them, but he was adamant.

Shylock : He's my intimate friend. If you permit, I'll talk to him.

John : Yes, please. We'll be thankful to you.

Use 9: Meaning “to get”

Raman : Your daughter Manshiha has been industrious.

Santhi : Yes. She is unimaginably ambitious. She is ambitious **of** becoming a professor at a university.

Raman : She will definitely become a professor. What's your son's ambition?

Santhi : My son Jai would like to become a District Collector.

Raman : Great. You are lucky.

Use 10: Meaning “in the shape/form of”

Betty : You are lucky to have got Miranda as your daughter.

Nancy : I do have the same feeling.

Betty : She is indeed an angel *of* a girl.

Nancy : Very few of us are blessed with a daughter like yours.

Practice 31

OFF

Use 1: Indicating separation from being attached, in contact and part of

Jack : What caused the accident?

Jane : My car hit a truck and ran *off* the road.

Jack : What happened to you?

Jane : As the door came *off* the car, we rolled down into the field.

Jack : Did you suffer any injury?

Jane : No. It was a narrow escape.

Use 2: Referring to motion/direction from a place to a distance away

Diana : When do you send your children *off* to school?

Susmitha : Usually at 8:30 a.m.

Diana : When do they return home.

Susmitha : At about 4:00 p.m.

Use 3: Denoting a position in space and meaning “in a state of not being on”

Philip : Leave your car *off* the road.

Dinesh : Just for five minutes.

Philip : It is a national highway well known for frequent accidents.

Dinesh : Thank you. I will.

Use 4: Meaning “so as to stop something”

Ganesh : Why do they sing a song now?

Deepak : They end the party with a song.

Ganesh : Why do they turn the lights *off*?

Deepak : This is also what they do when the party ends.

Use 5: Meaning “Stopped”

Juliet : The movie we saw yesterday was terrific.

Lily : You are right. I would like to see the movie again.

Juliet : You can't, because it is *off* now.

Lily : Tell me if it is shown in some other town.

Use 6: Meaning “at a distance” or “away from” in space or time

Mason : Keep yourself *off* these dogs. They are dangerous.

James : Then, why do you keep them at home?

Mason : Because of thieves, as my home is away from the town.

James : Is your house far *off* from the town?

Mason : My house is just three miles *off* the heart of the town.

Use 7: Indicating “becoming less or poorer in quality”

Ella : I have seen that attendance is falling *off* for five students.

Jackson : What can be done now?

Ella : Could you please inform their parents?

Jackson : Yes, I will.

Practice 32

ON/UPON

Use 1: Meaning “above and in contact with”

Lucy : Have you seen my phone?

Tom : It is **on** the bed.

Lucy : I kept it **on** the table.

Tom : When I cleaned the table, I put it **on** your bed.

Use 2: Indicating contact with a surface that is not horizontal

Evelyn : How much time do you need to fix the handle **on** the door?

Fletcher : I will fix it in half an hour.

Evelyn : Don't forget to hang the picture **on** the wall.

Fletcher : Yes, Madam.

Use 3: Indicating position with reference to a place or thing

Kinsley : Have you seen the cows?

Victoria : Yes. I have seen them **on** all sides.

Kinsley : Did you see cows **on** the other side of the road?

Victoria : Yes, they are bigger. I am afraid of them.

Kinsley : Don't be afraid. They are harmless.

Victoria : The size of the animal makes me afraid.

Use 4: Indicating that something covers or clothes somebody or something

Dane : You have forgotten to put **on** your coat.

Hudson : Oh sorry. Thank you.

Dane : Did you try the coat **on** you to see if it fits you.

Hudson : Tomorrow I will when I go for a function.

Meaning 5: Introducing phrases of time (days,or the phrase on (Monday) morning/ afternoon/ evening/ night)

Parker : Are you free **on** Wednesday evening?

Charlie : I have some other work. I am free **on** Saturdays.

Parker : OK. We shall meet next Saturday. I think the day falls **on** the 15th of June.

Charlie : I will be at your home at 5 O'clock in the evening.

Use 6: Indicating position/motion and introducing a means of transport (Except means of closed transport).For train/bus/ship, we canuse both on and in

Harry : Have you come here **on** foot?

George : No. I was tired. So, I travelled in a taxi.

Harry : How do you go to the office?

George : By bus.

Use 7: Meaning “forward/onwards”

Leo : Ask the students to move **on**. Otherwise, we will not be able to meet the Secretary.

Oscar : I asked them to go **on** and not to stop anywhere till they reach the station.

Leo : Jane is approaching us, but walking like a snail.

Oscar : Jane, come **on**! You are walking too slowly.

Use 8: Introducing the object of expenditure

Amelia : Don't waste your time **on** trivial discussions?

Lema : No, our discussion is related to the debate we organize in our department.

Amelia : How many of you participate in the debate?

Lema : Just five.

Use 9: Introducing the things, which one eats, or which provide one with a living

William : What do silkworms feed **on**?

Jack : They feed **on** Mulberry leaves.

William : Do humans eat them?

Jack : Yes. In Asian countries, they are prepared into tea and drunk.

Use 10: Meaning “fastened by a chain or anything else”

Edward : Why do you stand at the gate? Come in.

Sam : All because of the dog you have at the entrance.

Edward : Don't be afraid. I have kept the dog **on** the chain.

Sam : Thank you.

Use 11: Meaning “a member of”

Jack : Happy to know that you are **on** the executive committee.

Eric : Thank you very much.

Jack : I am **on** the board of management.

Eric : We will meet frequently.

Use 12: Indicating direction, Meaning “towards” and “at”

Broker : I fixed my eyes **on** the feet of Jesus in the Church.

Winston : The priest smiled **on** me and blessed me.

Broker : Does your house look out **on** the river?

Winston : Yes. Also, my house is near the Church.

Practice 33

OUT

Use 1: Indicating motion/direction from within a space

Thomas : I knocked at the door continuously.

James : Did he open the door?

Thomas : Yes. After ten minutes, he opened the door and came **out**.

James : Did he listen to your apology?

Thomas : No. He asked me to get **out** of the house.

Use 2: Meaning “not in the house”

Poppy : Is Dr. Emily at home?

Oscar : No, she is **out**.

Poppy : When will she return?

Oscar : I am not sure.

Use 3: Meaning fully, properly, or completely as necessary

Harry : As the programme is presided over by the Home Minister, we must plan **out** everything carefully.

Elizabeth : Sure. We have already started our arrangement.

Harry : Good. I will visit the hall in the evening.

Elizabeth : We will wait for you.

Use 4: Meaning issued or published

Violet : Have you published your book on the uses of prepositions?

Lucy : Yes, the book was **out** in June last year.

Violet : Could you please give me a copy of the book?

Lucy : Oh, yes.

Practice 34

OUTSIDE

Use 1: Beyond the limits of an enclosed area

Edward : If you go **outside** the house, you will enjoy the beauty of the evening sun.

Lily : Let's go then.

Edward : Wait for five minutes. I think the dog is **outside** the garden.

Lily : I will fetch him.

Use 2: Introducing a time, meaning “not in”

Laura : Why do you shout at him?

Evelyn : He is concentrating on his work in the office.

Laura : Just ask him to do the personal work **outside** office hours.

Use 3: Indicating “distant from”

Daniel : Glad to meet you after two years.

Henry : I have been waiting for the day to meet you.

Daniel : I hope you are fine.

Henry : Everything is fine on my side. Where do you live now?

Daniel : My house is 20 minutes **outside** New Mexico.

Practice 35

OVER

Use 1: Indicating “above/on and to the other side”

Blake : Why has Jane climbed **over** the wall?

Laura : She stole rose flowers from our garden.

Blake : She looks **over** the wall at us to know our reaction.

Laura : She is, after all, a little girl.

Use 2: Indicating “so as to pass above and beyond,” instead of “reading and hitting”

Oliver : I fixed at the thief.

Leo : Was he shot dead?

Oliver : No. The bullet passed **over** him and hit the tree.

Leo : Please, don't shoot anyone in your career.

Use 3: Meaning “on, and overlapping on both sides”

Marley : Mercy is a very kind woman.

Read : How do you say?

Marley : When she saw a few beggars shivering in the cold on the roadside, she threw blankets **over** them.

Read : New blankets.

Marley : Yes, she bought them for the beggars.

Use 4: Indicating “more than”

Tom : What is the price of your laptop?

Booker : I don't know the exact amount, but I am sure that it costs **over** \$1000.

Tom : Where is the showroom?

Booker : It is on the West Avenue. It takes **over** an hour for you to travel in a car.

Use 5: Indicating “on all parts of the surface of” or “from place to place on the surface”

William : Somebody has broken the Jam bottle.

Lincoln : Your little boy might have broken it.

William : That's not important. The broken glass pieces lie scattered all **over** the floor.

Lincoln : Don't worry. I will clean the floor.

Use 6: Indicating “on the other side of”

Hudson : It is a beautiful river.

Jackson : Yes. I take my bath in the river everyday.

Hudson : Your house must be near the river.

Jackson : My house is **over** the river.

Use 7: Introducing a period of time, meaning “from beginning to end of”

Scarlett : It is a huge building.

Lucy : I think the construction might have taken a few years.

Scarlett : Really. My husband told me that the construction work was extended **over** five years.

Lucy : Oh, it looks like a palace.

Use 8: Indicating “upon, as an influence”

Shaw : He was irresponsible till last month. Now he is good.

Kinsley : Unbelievable. How?

Shaw : The change came **over** him due to his lady love.

Kinsley : When I was young, a change came **over** me due to my father’s sacrifice.

Practice 36

PAST

Use 1: Denoting “later than” or “after”

James : Did you attend the birthday party yesterday?

Parker : Yes. About 200 people attended the party.

James : When was the party over?

Parker : The party continued ***past*** midnight, but I did not know when it was over.

Use 2: Denoting “further than (in position)” or “after passing”

Ramesh : It is a pleasant surprise for me to see you here.

Karan : I am here to meet Charles. Do you know where his house is?

Ramesh : He lives in the third house ***past*** the Lord Siva Temple.

Karen : Thank you very much.

Practice 37

PER

Use 1: Used after words of number/quantity, meaning “for/in each/every”

Cynthia : How much do these apples cost?

Tina : 0020 These apples cost \$5 ***per*** dozen.

Cynthia : I think apples are costly here.

Tina : No. In other places, they are costlier.

Cynthia : Why are apples costlier now?

Tina : This is not the season for apples.

Use 2: Meaning “by means of”

Helen : How will you send the books to me?

Linda : I will send them *per* post.

Helen : Why don't you send them by train?

Linda : It is expensive.

Helen : Thank you.

Practice 38

ROUND/AROUND

Use 1: Indicating circular motion

Molly : Keats's name went *round* the world.

Sylvia : Why? What is his achievement?

Molly : All because of his wonderful creations, that is, poems.

Sylvia : I must read his poems.

Molly : I'll give you a copy of his anthology.

Sylvia : Thank you very much.

Use 2: Meaning in various/all directions. Or here and there

Lisa : Reaching the top of the hill, I just looked around and saw nothing but dense snow.

Rena : It is indeed a thrilling experience.

Lisa : Yes. I felt I was flying in the air.

Rena : Is it?

Use 3: Meaning “to various people”

Olivia : How many chocolates do you have?

Emily : Why? Do you want them?

Olivia : No. If you have many, you can have your chocolates **round**.

Olivia : No problem. I have a box full of chocolates.

Use 4: Meaning “in the neighbourhood of” or “near”

Amelia : I want to meet Smith. Is he at home?

Sydney : Not at home. He must be **round** somewhere.

Amelia : Can I meet him now?

Sydney : Wait, please. I will call him through somebody.

Practice 39

SINCE

Use 1: Denoting “continuously from a certain time to the time referred to”

Sandra : How long have you been living in New York?

Michael : I have been here *since* 2015.

Sandra : Where did you live before 2015?

Michael : I lived in New Mexico.

Sandra : How long were you there?

Michael : For about thirty years. I was born and brought up there.

Sandra : So, you are familiar with everything about this place.

Michael : Yes. I have explored the nook corner of New Mexico.

Practice 40

THROUGH

Use 1: Indicating “from one side/end to the other”

James : Was the thief here in your room?

Rex : No. He just ran *through* the room and escaped.

James : Did he threaten you?

Rex : No. He seemed to be in fear.

Use 2: Indicating “across,” meaning that the move-

ment begins beyond the limits of the thing concerned

Smith : To get to Greece, do I have to go **through** Germany?

Jack : Yes. Not only **through** Germany, but also Belgium, Austria, and Yugoslavia as well.

Smith : Thank you for your valuable information.

Jack : It is my pleasure.

Use 3: Indicating “by means of”

Mary : How do you collect money from the vendors?

James : I collect money **through** an agent.

Mary : Is your agent reliable?

James : Yes. He has been with us for more than two decades.

Use 4: Meaning “because of”

Rajesh : Why has he failed in the examination?

Prakash : He failed **through** lack of preparation.

Rajesh : Has he realized it?

Prakash : I don't think so.

Rajesh : How old is he now?

Prakash : He has just completed 25 years of age.

Use 5: Meaning “everywhere in” or “all over”

Albert : Could you see the dry neem leaves scattered *through* the roof?

Sam : Yes. It is all because of the rain yesterday.

Albert : If you allow the leaves to remain there, drainage pipes will be Clogged, and consequently, they will be damaged.

Sam : I do understand what I say. I am not able to get any worker to clean the roof.

Albert : I'll send someone to clean the roof tomorrow.

Sam : I will do that. Don't worry.

Practice 41

THROUGHOUT

Use 1: Meaning “during the whole of”

Charles : I would like to rent a house in Kentucky.

Mason : Do you want to rent a house for a year?

Charles : How long will the celebrations go on here?

Mason : Three months.

Charles : Then I would like to rent a house *throughout* the celebrations.

Mason : Could you pay the advance the house owner demands?

Charles : I have money. How much will he ask?

Mason : Usually, three months' rent.

Charles : No problem. I can give the advance amount.

Practice 42

TILL/UNTIL

Use 1: Meaning “upon the time of”

Jack : Immensely happy to meet you after several years.

Leo : Happy to meet your family after a gap of twenty years.

Jack : Sometimes I felt like travelling to Chicago to be with you for a few days.

Leo : If you had told me your desire, I would have made all the arrangements for your travel.

Jack : I could not get leave from the company.

Leo : No problem. When you get the leave the next time, please inform me. I will make all arrangements.

Jack : Definitely. Thank you. Stay with us **till** Friday.

Leo : I must be in New York on Thursday. I will stay with you all **until** Wednesday.

Jack : Very kind of you, Leo.

Practice 43

TO

Use 1: Indicating movement in the direction of and actually reaching something

Michal : Where is Stevens?

Sarah : He has gone **to** market.

Michal : Why do you read in semi-darkness? Bring your book **to** light.

Sarah : Thank you.

Use 2: Introducing the person/thing addressed.

John : I will talk **to** you tomorrow.

Smith : I will be waiting for your call.

John : What poem are you teaching our students now?

Smith : I am teaching "*Ode to the West Wind*."

Use 3: Meaning "before"

Edward : When does the train start?

Brian : It starts at 10 minutes **to** 6 O'clock in the evening.

Edward : It's 5 O'clock right now. Can we reach the station in time?

Brian : We can be there in half an hour earlier.

Use 4: Meaning "motion and purpose," followed by a noun without an article

Thomas : The little boy has gone **to** school.

John : How old is he?

Thomas : He is just an eight-year old boy.

John : I think your wife has also gone out.

Thomas : She has gone **to** Church just now.

Use 5: Introducing something against which something is compared

Robert : To my surprise, the climate here is pleasant.

Jane : It is always pleasant here.

Robert : This is contrary **to** what my friend told me in Japan.

Jane : It is all due to ignorance.

Use 6: Meaning “in honour of,” as an expression of good wishes

Charles : Why do you take off your hat to the ladies?

Sam : They are great human beings. I respect them very much.

Charles : You are great.

Sam : Thank you. Let's drink **to** the success of our business.

Use 7: Meaning “in respect of”

Greene : Have you decided to go abroad?

Smith : Yes. I am leaving next month.

Greene : What has your father said **to** your plan?

Smith : Initially, he hesitated, but later consented.

Use 8: Meaning “in contact with”

Joseph : Are you applying chalk to the floor?

Mason : Yes. Only then the floor will be smooth.

Joseph : But the floor will become slippery. I am afraid older people will fall.

Mason : The chalk we use will not make the floor slippery.

Use 9: Meaning “agreement/suitability” in accordance with

Helen : We should not have asked for soup in this hotel.

Jane : Why? Is it not good?

Helen : The soup here is not **to** my taste.

Jane : I understand.

Use 10: Meaning “to the accompaniment of”

Lucas : I have set five of my poems **to** music.

William : Great. Who’s the music director?

Lucas : Kalaimamani M.S. Martin.

William : Where does he live?

Lucas : He lives in Chennai. He runs a music school there.

William : Where did you first meet him?

Lucas : At Annamalai University. He was a student of the Department of Music.

William : When will you release the album?

Lucas : In February.

Practice 44

TOWARDS

Use 1: Indicating movement in the direction of and so as to approach

Reeta : Why did the tourists run in fear?

Suma : An elephant ran **towards** them.

Reeta : Oh my god.

Suma : Luckily, all of them escaped.

Use 2: Indicating direction without motion

Ganesh : Why do you look for a house facing **towards** the south?

Nataraj : The astrologer has recommended for buying a house facing **towards** south.

Ganesh : I am surprised. You are a scientist, but you rely on an astrologer.

Nataraj : I believe in it.

Use 3: Introducing the object of behaviour/feeling

Kinsley : You always behave very well **towards** your children.

Aliena : Otherwise, we cannot expect them to be good in future.

Kinsley : Exactly. But often, I lose control and use abusive language **towards** my children.

Aliena : If you don't control yourself, your children will be spoiled.

Practice 45

UNDER

Use1: Meaning “a position physically beneath/ below something”

Jacob : Where is the dog?

Lucy : He is sleeping **under** the sofa.

Jacob : I have been searching for him.

Lucy : He is clever like you.

Use 2: Meaning “a position beneath the surface of the ground/water”

Harper : He is a famous swimmer.

Darcy : Is it?

Harper : Last year, he broke the world record by swimming ***under*** the water for three hours.

Darcy : Great.

Use 3: Meaning “at the foot of”

Tom : Where is your village?

Smith : My village lies ***under*** a small hill.

Tom : Where are your friends?

Smith : They all sit together ***under*** the wall in your garden.

Use 4: Meaning “affected by something” and subject to something

Prem : Consider our request for a raise in our salary.

Sekar : We will consider your request once the company’s income increases.

Prem : You know well that we work ***under*** great difficulties.

Sekar : We know your difficulties. Please wait for a few months.

Use 5: Indicating protection, care, or kindly interest

Laura : Both of you are employed. Who will take care of your children when you go to office?

Nora : We have entrusted the responsibility ***under*** the care of a trained nurse.

Laura : Is she sincere?

Nora : Not only sincere, but also very caring. So, we are peaceful.

Practice 46

UNDERNEATH

USE 1: Meaning vertically down, beneath or below in physical position

Manickam : Has anyone seen my bag?

Rani : I haven't seen it.

Daughter : Dad, your bag is *underneath* the computer table.

Manickam : Thank You.

Meaning 2: Meaning below/beneath (clothing/ covering)

Lakshmi : I know you wear a shirt *underneath* your overcoat.

Sekar : What is your doubt then?

Lakshmi : The colour of your shirt doesn't suit you.

Sekar : Thank you. Next time I will wear a different colour shirt.

Practice 47

UP

Use 1: Indicating motion/direction, meaning from a

lower position to a higher position

Harper : Why did your wife go **up** the stairs very slowly?

Leo : She had suffered a severe fever for a week.

Harper : Is she all right now?

Leo : No fever now, but she has become weak.

Use 2: Meaning “so as to remove from the horizontal”

Lucy : Why do you dig **up** these plants from the garden?

Rose : They are all weeds.

Lucy : What will you do after removing them?

Rose : I would like to plant roses.

Use 3: Meaning so as to abandon something

Noah : They want to sell **up** their old house.

Jack : Why?

Noah : They are in debt.

Jack : Are they going to rent a house?

Noah : No. There are several other houses.

Use 4: Meaning “above the usual/natural level”

Robert : Why do the villagers vacate their houses?

Smith : They are all moving to town.

Robert : Have they foreseen any possibility of a flood?

Smith : Yes. Due to heavy rain, the water level in the river has risen **up**.

Use5: Meaning “to the notice” or “for the attention of someone”

Dinesh : When do we have the meeting today?

Ram : The meeting starts at 5:00p.m.

Dinesh : How long will it go?

Ram : I am not sure. We have five subjects **up** for discussion.

Practice 48

UPTO

Use 1: Meaning “as for/high as”

Johnson : Have you completed reading the novel?

Eliza : No. I have just read **upto** the end of page 73.

John : You seem to be a slow reader.

Use 2: Meaning “until a time” or “until the time of”

Lily : Is any restaurant open now?

Alice : What is the time now?

Lily : 11 O'clock at night.

Alice : Many hotels remain open ***upto*** midnight.

Lily : Thank You.

Use 3: Meaning “towards” or “in the direction of”

Clara : Draw your chair ***upto*** the entrance of our house.

Daisy : Why, mummy?

Clara : The doors are open, and I am in the garden.

Daisy : OK, mummy.

Use 4: Meaning “capable of”

William : I will join you on the march tomorrow.

Smith : Are you ***upto*** for walking seven miles.

William : I can.

Smith : Then join the march at Four Square.

Practice 49

WITH

Use 1: With is followed by what is used or supplied to do

Jake : Your grandma seems to be shivering in the cold.

Charlie : What shall I do, dad?

Jake : Switch off the fan and cover her **with** a blanket.

Charlie : OK, dad.

Use 2: Meaning “in the company of”

James : I went to the theatre **with** Tom.

Daniel : I was in the shopping complex **with** Jessie.

James : Did you return home **with** her?

Daniel : No. She went **with** her brother.

Use 3: With is followed by a noun, meaning manner or under what circumstances.

Lisa : Why did Jasmine resign from the job?

Lanra : The Manager teased him.

Lisa : She should have retorted.

Lanra : She was patient. When it became intolerable, she left the office **with** a smile.

Lisa : The manager is a sadist.

Lanra : She sent her resignation letter through the mail.

Use 4: Meaning “accompanied by” or “and”

Miles : Do you know the judgement?

Read : Yes. He was sentenced to twenty years imprisonment **with** hard labour.

Miles : He deserves punishment.

Read : He must be sentenced to death.

Use 5: Meaning “including”

Mike : He wants five rooms.

Manager : How many of you would like to stay?

Mike : We are all fifteen, **with** children.

Manager : Please wait for five minutes.

Use 6: Meaning “in the hands of”

Evelyn : He was a millionaire, but now he is in the streets.

Hudson : How has this happened?

Evelyn : All the property remained **with** his brother. He cheated his own brother.

Hudson : Really miserable is his life.

Use 7: Introducing phrases of purpose

Greyson : Why did he join M.A. English?

Pipe : He joined the programme **with** the idea of becoming a College lecturer in future.

Greyson : It seems to be his ambition.

Pipe : Yes. He is also intelligent.

Practice 50

WITHIN

Use 1: Meaning “not more than” (a certain distance)

Graham : Do you meet John every week?

Edward : Yes. He lives *within* five miles of me.

Graham : Unfortunately, I am far away from you.

Edward : No problem. We can meet whenever we can.

Use 2: Meaning “before the end of”

Blake : When will you complete the work?

Preston : We will complete the work *within* two weeks.

Blake : I will be happy if you complete it *within* five days.

Preston : Practically, it's impossible. We need two weeks.

Use 3: Meaning “inside”

Sawyer : The palace looks ugly.

Nash : Only outwardly. But there are priceless treasures *within* the palace.

Sawyer : Is it?

Nash : All the vessels **within** are made of pure gold.

Practice 51

WITHOUT

Use 1: Meaning “with absence/ lack of something”

Jane : I called you at about 7 O’clock at night.

Bradley : I went to Church **without** my mobile phone.

Jane : I waited for your call till 9 O’clock.

Bradley : I returned home late at night because of the rain.

Use 2: Meaning “with no help/support from”

Harley : If you need my help, call me.

Tanner : Thank you. I can do this work **without** you.

Harley : How much time do you need to complete it?

Tanner : I will complete it in five hours.

Use 3: Meaning “If there is not”

Edgar : The weather is scorching. We cannot work **without** an air conditioner.

Franklin : Not only in the office, but also at home.

Edgar : We will suffer this climate for three months.

Franklin : But in villages, the climate is not this much hot.
