

B Complete the sentences, using one word in each space.

- 1 Jeanne Calment, who died at the age of 122, has been verified as the world's _____ person.
- 2 At the Vaio X's launch in 2009, Sony claimed that it was the world's _____ laptop, weighing only 655g.
- 3 Of the three sections reviewed, marketing was performing _____ efficiently, and required an action plan to improve it.
- 4 Osaka is _____'s third largest city by population after Tokyo and Yokohama.
- 5 Mongolia, with only 1.8 people per square kilometre, is the _____ densely-_____ country _____ Earth.
- 6 Iceland's Althingi has _____ strongest claim to be the _____ ancient _____ the world's parliaments.
- 7 With an average rainfall of 211 mm, July is _____ month _____ New Delhi.
- 8 Tokyo takes the top position, but immediately afterwards, with a modest lunch costing as much as \$43, Oslo is now _____ expensive city _____ the planet, according to ECA rankings.

2.5 Modifying adjectives and adverbs

2.5 study

Comparative adjectives and adverbs are sometimes modified (i.e. made stronger, weaker, or more precise).

- *Start-up companies face certain difficulties, but while some of these are similar across all industries, others hit manufacturing businesses much harder than service enterprises.*

- 1 Words or phrases that modify *as ... as ...* structures include *just* (emphasizes the equality); *almost/nearly*; *not quite* or its opposite *not nearly*; *twice*, *three times*, *four times*, etc.
 - *Writing a good report can take almost as long as carrying out the market research itself.*
 - *Vitrack, though successful, is not quite as profitable a company as its competitors.* (= Vitrack is slightly less profitable than its competitors)

- *Building costs under the new designs are not nearly as high (as under the old designs).* (= the costs are much lower)
- *With some modifications to the operating theatre, procedures could be carried out twice as quickly (as before).*

- 2 Words or phrases that modify structures with *than* include *much*, *a great deal*, *far*, *considerably*, etc., or their opposites *slightly*, *a little*, *marginally*, etc.
 - *Significantly, it became far easier to obtain credit in the 1990s (than it was before).*
 - *Swanson plc is marginally more successful in the hi-tech sector than its competitors.*

You can also use *three times*, *four times*, etc. and percentages (but note that we would normally say *twice as heavy as* rather than *two times heavier than*).

- *Steel is three times heavier than aluminium.*
- *Growth is expected to be 0.5% higher in this quarter (than the last).*

TIP You can modify *twice*, *three times*, etc. themselves with words and phrases such as *nearly*, *more than*, *slightly more than*, *exactly*, or *approximately*.

- *Exactly twice as many patients were treated in the same period last year (as this year).*
- *Experts believe that the meteor entering the Earth's atmosphere was moving more than three times faster than was predicted last week.*

- 3 To modify superlatives, you can use *one of*, *almost/nearly*, *by far*, or *easily*.
 - *The Niger is one of Africa's longest rivers.*
 - *Arctic sea ice melted at almost its fastest pace in 2010.*
 - *Bob Hawke is by far the longest-serving Labor Prime Minister in Australia.*

2.5 test yourself

Circle the correct option.

- 1 The number of holidays taken abroad by UK citizens was more/22%/nearly lower than last year.
- 2 Private companies are twice/considerably/just more common in the UK than public ones.
- 3 Despite outperforming all of its competitors in tests, the Samson desktop publishing system is a little/not quite/almost the cheapest available.
- 4 It is an axiom in business that customers are not nearly/by far/a great deal as interested in describing good experiences as bad ones.
- 5 With their moveable thumbs, chimpanzees are exactly/just/slightly as capable of grasping objects as humans.
- 6 The traditional Mediterranean diet is one of/far/twice the healthiest in the world.
- 7 Observers have claimed that the Antarctic is losing ice by far/twice/a great deal as fast as ten years ago.
- 8 With the new software in place, companies such as Vasco plc have been able to process considerably/more/approximately twice as many claims as before.

2.6 Words and phrases for expressing similarity

2.6 study

Specific words and expressions, as well as adjectives and adverbs, can be used to compare and contrast. This section focuses on ways of saying that things are the same or similar (almost the same). (See also page 067 in unit 7 *Connectors* for more structures that express similarity, including *also*, *as well as*, *too*, and *not only ... but also*.)

1 (The) same

(The) same is frequently used to express similarity.

- *Cats and dogs have almost the same capacity to be domesticated.*

As is used as a connector.

- *The proposal from Mitchell plc is exactly the same as Barker's in its speed of delivery.*
- *When they are observed, people do not behave in the same way as they do in private.*

Note in the first two examples above how *the same* is modified by *almost* and *exactly*. Other modifiers include *just* and *precisely*.

2 Similar, similarity, similarly

The adjective *similar* is followed by *to* when things are linked with common features, and by *in* before describing the quality that things share.

- *Venus is quite similar to Earth in mass and size.*
(= *Venus and Earth are quite similar in mass and size.*)

Other modifiers, apart from *quite* above, include *slightly*, *superficially*, *fairly*, *remarkably*, *very*, and *extremely*.

Note also that the verb *resemble* means 'is similar to' (*Venus resembles Earth in mass and size*), and that *in* can be replaced by *in terms of*, *as regards*, or *with respect to*.

The noun *similarity* is used with *between* to compare two things, and with *in* to describe a shared quality.

- *The main similarity between the Senate and the House of Representatives is that both houses are directly elected.*
- *There was a similarity in the approach taken to the crisis by all three companies.*

Other modifiers with *similarity*, apart from *main*, include *slight*, *superficial*, *apparent*, *distinct*, *obvious*, *striking*.

Note how *similarity*, *similar* and the phrase *in common* can be used to express the same meaning.

- *All living organisms have several similarities.* =
All living organisms have several similar features. =
All living organisms have several features in common.

In common with can be used to link two or more things together.

- *According to Samuels, the European Union has a great deal in common with the United Nations.*

The adverb *similarly* can also be used.

- *Smog is damaging trees in the mountains of south China. Similarly, acid rain is harming forests in the north of the country. (or ... south China. Acid rain is similarly harming forests ...)*

3 Alike, like, likewise

Alike means the same as *similar*, and is normally used with the verb *be* after the things being compared.

- *France and Germany are alike in that both support a thriving rental sector in their housing markets.*

Like is also used with *be*, but between the things being compared (*France is like Germany in that ...*) and it is also used quite often on its own.

- *Dolphins, like porpoises, breathe through blowholes on the top of their heads.*

Modifiers with *alike* and *like* include (*very*) *much*, *rather*, *somewhat*, *quite*, and *a little*.

Note that *alike* is occasionally used on its own, when it cannot be modified (*Dolphins and porpoises alike breathe through ...*).

Likewise is used just like *similarly* (see 2 above: *Likewise, acid rain is ...*)

TIP Notice how, after words such as *alike* or *different* you can sometimes use *in* + a noun phrase (*Rats and mice are similar in their colouring*) or *in that* + a clause (*Rats and mice are similar in that they are both grey or brown in colour*).

2.6 test yourself

Complete each sentence with one of the words in the box. One word is not needed.

like to in similarly as that
similar similarities same

- 1 Indonesian and English are _____ in their word order, but the former language has no tense system.
- 2 The two colleges are very much alike in _____ both draw in a high proportion of international students, and focus on the subject areas of business and law.
- 3 Bowson Brothers, _____ Farston plc, export most of their products to Germany and France.
- 4 EasyJet targets exactly the same type of budget traveller _____ Ryanair.
- 5 Klein argues that there are distinct _____ between the working conditions in some Third World factories and those of 18th-century slave plantations.
- 6 Canterbury attracts tourists all year round. Bath _____ manages to maintain a significant number of visitors in summer and winter.
- 7 All successful leaders share some of the _____ characteristics.
- 8 A short sleep taken during the day is similar _____ type to non-rapid eye movement sleep at night.

2.7 Words and phrases for expressing contrast

2.7 study

This section focuses on ways of saying that things are different. (See also page 064 in unit 7 *Connectors* for more structures that express contrast, including *although*, *despite*, *however*, and *while/whereas*.)

1 Different, differ, difference

The adjective *different* and the verb *differ* normally follow the two things being compared.

- *After working for several months with fellow chemist Stevens, Schenke took a different path towards their goal.*
- *The approaches taken by the two companies are different/differ in that Brennan and Smith offer an ecologically sustainable solution.*

Notice how *dissimilar* and *unlike* could also be used in the sentence above. (*The approaches taken by the two companies are dissimilar/are unlike each other in that ...*)

Different + *from* and *differ* + *from* are normally used between the two things being compared.

- *In law, a 'responsive' brief is different from/differs from an 'original' brief in that it contains arguments directly responding to positions taken by the other side.*

Note that *dissimilar* + *to* and *unlike* could also be used in the above sentence. (*In law, a 'responsive' brief is dissimilar to/is unlike an 'original' brief in that ...*)

Different can be modified by *slightly/a little*, *rather*, *very*, *fundamentally*, *completely/quite*, *totally*, and *differ* can be modified by placing these words afterwards: *slightly/a little*, *fundamentally*, *completely*, *totally*.

Difference is used with *between* to compare two things. *In* + noun may be added to specify the context.

- *Parker explored the key difference between 'leadership' and 'management' in a series of seminars held in New York in early 2010.*
- *New research from Brown University has identified the difference in chewing between mammals and fish.*

Note that, as well as *key* above, there are many modifiers that you can use with *difference*, including *slight*, *minor*, *considerable*, *major*, and *significant*.

2 In contrast to, contrary to, unlike

These expressions are all used before noun phrases to point out the contrast between things.

- *An exit poll, in contrast to/contrary to/unlike an opinion poll, asks members of the public to reveal how they have just voted.*
- *In contrast to/Contrary to/Unlike earlier studies, Professor Cadogan's report found that cholesterol measured in middle or old age showed no link to dementia.*

Note that *in contrast to* and *in contrast with* are both acceptable, with no difference in meaning.

(See 1 above for another use of *unlike*.)

3 On the contrary, in contrast, on the other hand

These are all linking expressions that connect contrasting statements. Note, however, that *while on the contrary* contradicts an element of the previous statement, *in contrast* and *on the other hand* link two different but true situations.

- *Selecting the right PR company is by no means easy; on the contrary, (contradicts easy) it may involve a great deal of research.*
- *The 1989 earthquake in the Santa Cruz Mountains occurred during an exceptionally dry period, preventing any large-scale landslides. In contrast/On the other hand, the great 1906 earthquake occurred after an unusually wet winter.*

2.7 test yourself

Correct the incorrect sentences. Some sentences are already correct.

- 1 Swans, in contrast to many other species of bird, appear to mate for life.
- 2 The climate on the coast differs the humid interior in that it is often pleasantly cool and windy.
- 3 Gregory asserts that shale gas is not an energy solution to be welcomed. On the other hand, he argues, its environmental impact is likely to be devastating.
- 4 Contrary to northern hemisphere countries with their September start, the academic year in the southern hemisphere normally begins in January or February.
- 5 A significant political difference from the USA and the UK is that the former has a written constitution.
- 6 Some politicians support spending cuts as a means of reducing the deficit; on the contrary, others argue for a rise in personal taxation, particularly for wealthier citizens.
- 7 Steyn concludes that Japanese and British tourists have different expectations while on holiday.
- 8 Having a job at university provides a useful source of income; on the other hand, it can make life difficult when academic deadlines are imminent.