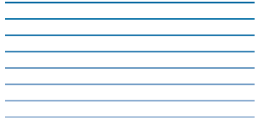


UNIT
3.8

Prepositions



Prepositions are generally short words such as ‘by’ or ‘at’, which have a variety of uses. They are important because different prepositions can change the meaning of a sentence. This unit explains how they can be understood, linking them to nouns, adjectives and verbs. Students should consult a standard English grammar for a full list of prepositional combinations.

1 Using prepositions

- Underline the prepositions in the following text (ignoring to + infinitives).

The purpose of this paper is to examine the development of the textile industry in Catalonia over the period 1780–1880. This clearly contributed to the region’s industrialisation, and was valuable for stimulating exports. In conclusion, the paper sets out to demonstrate the relationship between the decline in agricultural employment and the supply of cheap labour in the factory context.

- The following list gives the main ways of using prepositions. Find one example of each in the text.

Noun + preposition	<u>purpose of</u>
Verb + preposition	_____
Adjective + preposition	_____
Phrasal verb	_____
Preposition of place	_____

Preposition of time _____

Phrase _____

Note the difference between phrasal verbs and verbs with prepositions:

The cars are made in Korea. (verb + preposition = easy to understand)

The researcher made up some of his data. (phrasal verb = harder to understand)

2 Practice A

■ Study these further examples of preposition use and decide on their type.

- (a) There are a number **of** limitations to be considered . . . (noun +)
- (b) The results would be applicable **to** all children . . . (_____)
- (c) . . . the data was gathered **from** a questionnaire (_____)
- (d) All the items were placed **within** their categories (_____)
- (e) The results **of** the investigation are still pertinent . . . (_____)
- (f) The respondents had spent **on** average 4.9 years . . . (_____)
- (g) . . . most countries **in** sub-Saharan Africa . . . (_____)
- (h) . . . **within** a short spell of four years . . . (_____)

3 Prepositions and nouns

■ Insert a suitable preposition before or after the nouns in the sentences below.

- (a) Evidence is presented in support _____ the value of women's work.
- (b) A small change _____ wind direction can lead to large temperature changes.
- (c) Many examples _____ tax evasion were found.
- (d) The answer _____ the problem was 0.585.
- (e) Globalisation, _____ a political sense, involves a loss of national authority.
- (f) The second point is their impact _____ developing countries.

4 Prepositions in phrases

■ Complete the following phrases with the correct preposition.

- (a) _____ the whole
- (b) point _____ view
- (c) in respect _____
- (d) _____ spite of
- (e) in support _____
- (f) _____ the other hand
- (g) _____ order to
- (h) standard _____ living

5 Prepositions of place and time

Note the difference between ‘among’ and ‘between’:

Among 14 students in the class, only two were from Africa. (large group)

*He divided his time **between** the offices in Barcelona and Madrid.* (limited number)

■ Complete the following sentences with suitable prepositions of place or time.

- (a) _____ the respondents, few had any experience of working abroad.
- (b) The illiteracy rate declined gradually _____ 1976 _____ 1985.
- (c) Most workers _____ the European Union retire before the age _____ 60.
- (d) Leonardo da Vinci was born _____ Florence _____ 1452.
- (e) Chocolate sales fall _____ summer and peak _____ Christmas.
- (f) _____ the surface, there is no difference _____ male and female responses.
- (g) The countries _____ the Mediterranean held a meeting _____ May 20th.

6 Practice B

■ Complete the following text with suitable prepositions.

This study sets (a) _____ to answer the controversial question (b) _____ whether increased food supply (c) _____ a country makes a significant contribution (d) _____ reducing malnutrition (e) _____ children. It uses data collected (f) _____ 75 countries (g) _____ 1995 and 2005. The findings are that there was a considerable improvement (h) _____ the majority (i) _____ countries, despite increases in population (j) _____ the period. However, a clear distinction was found (k) _____ the poorest countries (e.g. (l) _____ South Asia), where the improvement was greatest, and the wealthier states such as those (m) _____ North Africa. Other factors, notably the educational level (n) _____ women, were also found to be critical (o) _____ improving childhood nutrition.

7 Verbs and prepositions

The following verbs are generally used with these prepositions:

<i>Verb + preposition</i>	<i>Example</i>
add to	The bad weather added to the team's difficulties.
agree with	Yu (1997) agrees with Martin and Jenks (1989).
associate with	Monetarism is an economic policy associated with Mrs Thatcher.
believe in	The survey showed that 65 per cent believed in life after death.
blame for	He blamed unfair questions for his poor exam results.
concentrate on (<i>also</i> : focus on)	She dropped all her hobbies to concentrate on her work.
consist of	Parliament consists of two Houses: the Commons and the Lords.
depend on (<i>also</i> : rely on)	The company depends on IT for a rapid flow of sales data.
derive from	Modern computers derive from wartime decoding machines.

divide into	Trees are divided into two main types: conifers and deciduous.
invest in	Far more money needs to be invested in primary education.
learn from	All successful students learn from their mistakes.
pay for	Goods delivered in April must be paid for by 30 June.
point out	Goodson (2001) points out the dangers of generalisation.
specialise in	This department specialises in French poetry.

8 Practice C

■ Complete the following with suitable verbs and prepositions.

- (a) The enquiry _____ the cause of the accident, not the consequences.
- (b) Dr Cracknell _____ that there were only two weeks before the deadline.
- (c) Fewer British students are _____ foreign languages.
- (d) The theory of relativity will always be _____ Albert Einstein.
- (e) A football pitch is _____ two halves.
- (f) A series of strikes were _____ the decline in production during May.
- (g) Millions of men died for the cause they _____.