

## 4.6. VOCABULARY: COLLOCATION, FIXED/ SEMI FIXED EXPRESSIONS

### COLLOCATION

A collocation is made up of two or more words that are commonly used together in English. Think of collocations as words that usually go together.

Eg: 'crystal clear', 'middle management', 'nuclear family', & 'cosmetic surgery'.

#### 1. Common collocations:

make the bed - I need to make the bed every day.

do the homework - My son does his homework after dinner.

take a risk - Some people don't take enough risks in life.

give someone advice - The teacher gave us some advice on taking tests.

#### 2. Business collocations:

These collocations are used for specific situations in business:

open an account- Would you like to open an account at our bank?

forgive a debt- Do you think the bank would forgive a debt?

#### 3. Verb Collocations:

These sheets provide a matching game with some of the most common verb + noun collocations used in everyday situations. Here are some examples of the types of verb

#### collocations you will learn:

to feel free

to come prepared

to save time

to find a replacement

to make progress

to do the washing up

### **Different kinds of collocation:**

#### **1. adverb+ adjective**

- Invading that country was an utterly stupid thing to do.
- We entered a richly decorated room.
- Are you fully aware of the implications of your action?

#### **2. adjective + noun**

- The doctor ordered him to take regular exercise.
- The Titanic sank on its maiden voyage.
- He was writhing on the ground in excruciating pain.

#### **3. noun + noun**

- Let's give Mr Jones a round of applause.
- The ceasefire agreement came into effect at 11am.
- I'd like to buy two bars of soap please.

#### **4. noun+ verb**

- The lion started to roar when it heard the dog barking.
- Snow was falling as our plane took off.
- The bomb went off when he started the car engine.

**5. verb + noun**

- The prisoner was hanged for committing murder.
- I always try to do my homework in the morning, after making my bed.
- He has been asked to give a presentation about his work.

**6. verb + expression with preposition**

- We had to return home because we had run out of money.
- At first her eyes filled with horror, and then she burst into tears.
- Their behaviour was enough to drive anybody to crime.

**7. verb+ adverb**

- She placed her keys gently on the table and sat down.
- Mary whispered softly in John’s ear.

| <b>GET</b>  | <b>TIME</b>       | <b>HAVE</b>      | <b>DO</b>      | <b>MAKE</b>       |
|-------------|-------------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Get a job   | Bang on time      | Have a birth     | Do business    | Make a difference |
| Get angry   | Free time         | Have a good time | Do nothing     | Make money        |
| Get lost    | Late 20th century | Have a holiday   | Do the cooking | Make progress     |
| Get married | Next few days     | Have a problem   | Do your best   | Make an effort    |
|             |                   |                  |                |                   |

|                |                                |               |                     |                |
|----------------|--------------------------------|---------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Get home       | Early 12 <sup>th</sup> century | Have lunch    | Do the washing up   | Make a mistake |
| Get frightened | Past few weeks                 | Have sympathy | Do the housework    | Make a noise   |
| Get divorced   | Dead on time                   | Have a drink  | Do someone a favour | Make furniture |

**Exercise:**

1. She ----- tears when she heard the news.

- (a) burst into
- (b) blew up in
- (c) burst away
- (d) blew away

2. Working mothers often find that they are unable to -----time for their children.

- (a) waste
- (b) save
- (c) spare
- (d) spend

3. He wasn't sure if he would get an appointment but he was willing to go  
the CM's office and take a-----

- (a) opportunity
- (b) choice
- (c) break
- (d) chance

**Choose the suitable collocations:**

1. There was ----- (heavy/ high) rain in Ooty yesterday, yet we----- (went/  
walked) for trekking.
2. He was ----- (wearing/ using) sunglasses and -----(wearing/ carrying)  
an umbrella.
3. She was a/an ----- wife who loved her husband more than anything else in  
the whole universe. (devoted/ sincere/ intelligent)
4. It is a golden ----- If you miss it, you will regret it. (chance/opportunity/ offer)
5. His new novel has met with-----acclaim. (average/ great/dreadful)

**FIXED/ SEMI FIXED EXPRESSIONS**

When we speak to parents, family members, co-workers, friends or family in a social situation, some common expressions are used again and again. They are fixed expressions.

**I. Fixed Expressions**

E.g. How do you do?

Where are you put up?

How are you?

What is the matter?

How is your health?

What is your father?

May I come in?

What happened?

What about you?

## II. Semi-Fixed Expressions

Depend on the situation. It may vary. It is not necessarily the usage of the same words or phrases or sentences.

Eg. Shall I talk to Mr.Bean?

Could you please give us discount?

May I use your garage?

Eg: May I use your garage?

Is the house vacant?

There will be good monsoon this year.

### I. Fill in the blanks and mention whether the sentence is semi-fixed expression or fixed expression:

1. Look sharp. (Go fast) -----

2. I am afraid that he is on leave. (I am afraid means 'I am sorry')

3. That is a wonderful match/film/game. -----

4. Excuse me. .-----

5. May God Bless You. -----
6. Can you set the AC temp to 160? -----
7. Please bring lemons from the fridge-----
8. Will you please move a little? -----
9. God forbid-----
10. God willing. -----

**Choose the correct fixed expressions from the options given:**

1. Life is not \_\_\_\_\_ (a joyful trip/ a bed of roses).
2. He always come up with \_\_\_\_\_ for coming late (a lame excuse/ silly ideas).
3. It is difficult \_\_\_\_\_ such boring people (to put down with/ to put up with)
4. The answer was on \_\_\_\_\_ (the tip of my mouth/ tip of my tongue).

