ability

1 Verb + ability

Use the correct form of these verbs:

affect	*assess*
overestimate	*lose*
doubt	*show*

1. Examinations are not the only means of ..... someone's ability. There are other ways of measuring potential.
2. At first I questioned his abilities, but he has done the job so well. I'm now ashamed that I had so little confidence in him and that I ..... his abilities in the first place.
3. It is a well-known fact that even small amounts of alcohol can ..... your ability to drive safely.
4. She was so shocked by the accident that she ..... the ability to speak.
5. Although Peter ..... a lot of ability as a teenager, he just wasn't good enough to go professional.
6. I had to give up half way through the race. I had obviously ..... my ability to run a marathon.

Go back and underline all the verb collocations with *ability*.

2 Noun + preposition + ability

Use these nouns in the sentences:

confidence	*best*
lack	*reflection*
test	*use*

1. Tiger Woods may be the best golfer in the world, but the Open Championship next week will be a real ..... of his ability.
2. Raymond is very clever, but he doesn't make full ..... of his abilities.
3. I was surprised when he failed his examinations. His results are certainly not a true ..... of his abilities.
4. He's extremely competent and will do the job properly. I have every ..... in his ability.
5. He said that he would try to do the job to the ..... of his ability.
6. I believe he lost confidence. His failure was not due to a ..... of ability.

Go back and <u>underline</u> all the noun + preposition + *ability* collocations.

3 Common adjective collocations

Use these adjectives in the sentences:

average	*considerable*
mixed	*natural*
incredible	*proven*

1. Most of us have to work hard to learn to play a musical instrument. However, there are people who are born with a ..... ability and who learn effortlessly.
2. The students in my class are of ..... ability, so I teach them in groups according to their level.
3. I have no doubts that he has ..... ability, but I don't think his personality is suited to this kind of work.
4. We need somebody who has done this before – with the ..... ability to do the job.
5. I'm not a genius and I'm not stupid. I would describe myself as being of ..... ability.
6. I don't know how she does it, but Annie Lennox has this ..... ability to electrify her audience.

Go back and underline all the adjective + *ability* collocations in this exercise.

Notes

1. Here are three ways to describe 'great' ability:
   She has a remarkable ability to recall long poems after only reading them once.
   She has exceptional abilities as a musician.
   His examination results are proof of his outstanding ability.
2. Remember that an adjective collocation can come before or after the noun:
   She has remarkable ability.
   Her ability is remarkable.
3. Notice the use of 'best' in 2-5. 'Best' is usually an adjective, but it is used as a noun in the expression to 'do something to the best of your ability'.
4. We can talk about specific abilities:

musical ability	*physical ability*
linguistic ability	*technical ability*
artistic ability	*acting ability*

5. When we talk about very intelligent children, we often call them 'children of above average ability'.

LIVEWORKSHEETS