33 Studying English and taking exams

A How are they getting on?*

This is what Nastya, an English teacher, thinks about some of her students.



Nastya

"Jade has a **wide vocabulary** [knows a lot of words] and speaks very **accurately** [without mistakes], but she needs to practise her speaking more in order to become more **fluent** [able to speak naturally without stopping]."

"Angel is quite fluent, but his **accent** [the way he pronounces words] is not very good. In particular, he has problems with certain **consonants** [letters of the **alphabet** (a–z), which are not the **vowels** a, e, i, o, u]."

"Jose has no problem **making himself understood** [saying things in a way people understand], but he needs to **increase** his vocabulary [make it bigger], because at the moment it's quite **basic** [elementary; *syn* **simple**]."

"Olga is always **willing to** [happy and ready to] **experiment** with language [try something new to see what it is like]. For that reason she sometimes **gets things wrong** [makes mistakes], but she learns from her mistakes and she's making a lot of progress."

"Andreas is a fantastic language learner. He **picks** things **up** [learns things without trying] very quickly, and he **has a good ear for language** [is good at hearing, repeating and understanding sounds and words]."

*What progress are they making?

Common mistakes

We use adjectives with nouns, and adverbs with verbs.
He's a **fluent** speaker. (NOT He's a ~~fluently~~ speaker.) She speaks **accurately**. (NOT She speaks ~~accurate~~.)
I need to speak English **well**. (NOT I need to speak English ~~good~~.)

B Examinations

Language help

You can **take** or **do** an exam (NOT ~~make~~ an exam). If you are successful and do well, you **pass;** if you are not successful and do badly, you **fail**. Before taking an exam, you **revise for** the exam. [study /prepare for the exam] Sometimes you can also **retake** an exam. [do it again]

"My students are **taking** the Cambridge English: First **exam** in June, and for some of them it will be **hard work**[1]. I think Angel might fail, but he's **doing his best**[2], so with a bit of luck he might pass. I expect most of the others to pass. Andreas is a strong **candidate**[3], and I'm sure he'll get a good **grade** (*syn* **mark**). I think Jade and Olga will also **do well**.

At the moment I'm trying to **get through**[4] the coursebook so that we can do some **revision**[5]. I think the most important thing is to do some **exam preparation**[6]. Today I want the students to **do/write an essay**[7]. Most of them still find it difficult to write accurately, so I need to **work on** that with them."

[1] work that requires a lot of effort
[2] making as much effort as he can; *syn* **trying his best**
[3] someone who is taking an exam
[4] finish
[5] revise for the exam
[6] getting ready for the exam
[7] a short piece of writing about a particular subject

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Exercises

33.1 Choose the correct word to complete the sentences. Sometimes both are correct.

1 We *made* / *got* something wrong in the first question.
2 I had to *do* / *write* an essay.
3 My sister picks *up* / *out* languages very quickly.
4 I will have to *revise for* / *revise* my exam next week.
5 The students always *do* / *make* their best.
6 Tomas wants to *do* / *take* the exam in June.
7 Karin *failed* / *lost* the exam, but she can retake it next year.

33.2 Complete the sentences. The first letter has been given to help you.

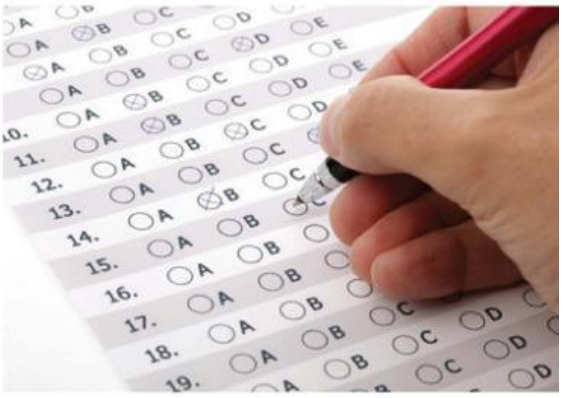
1 There are twenty-six letters in the a*lphabet*.
2 A+ is the highest g..... you can get.
3 There are over 100 c..... taking the exam.
4 We had to write an e..... for homework in not more than 200 words.
5 I need to w..... on my grammar; it's not very good.
6 I need to i..... my vocabulary; it's still very b.....
7 A and E are v.....; B, C and D are c.....
8 Studying for my exam is h..... w....., but it will be worth the effort.
9 Our teacher was always w..... to help us with our exam preparation.

33.3 Rewrite the sentences on the left starting with the words given. Keep a similar meaning.

1 Can you retake the exam?	Can you do *the exam again*?
2 They will need to revise for the exam.	They will need to do some .....
3 I will work as hard as I can.	I will do .....
4 We need to prepare for the exam.	We need to do some .....
5 I make mistakes.	I get .....
6 I can listen and repeat things accurately.	I have a good .....

33.4 Complete the dialogues.

1 A: Do you think Natasha will do well?
B: Yes, I'm sure she'll *pass* the exam.
2 A: Is her pronunciation good?
B: No, she has quite a strong .....
3 A: Can Elke speak naturally without stopping?
B: Yes, she's quite .....
4 A: And does she make many mistakes?
B: No, she's quite ..... when she speaks.
5 A: Does Victor know a lot of English?
B: No, but he can make himself .....
6 A: Will you finish the book?
B: Yeah, we should get ..... it.
7 A: Did Amy do ..... in her exam?
B: Yes, she got 80%.



33.5 Over to you

Answer the questions. If possible, ask someone else the same questions.

Do you think you …

… can make yourself understood?	… have a wide vocabulary?
… have a strong accent?	… have a good ear for language?
… are quite accurate?	… pick things up quickly?
… are quite fluent?	… often experiment with new language?

LIVEWORKSHEETS