1 Tick the correct sentence in each pair.

1 a Their main complain is related to the quality of the food.
  b Their main complaint is related to the quality of the food.
2 a Technology has greatly affected our lives.
  b Technology has greatly affected our lifes.

The verb *complain* and the noun *complaint* are often confused:
*Some people **are** always **complaining**.*
*We didn't hear any **complaints**.*

Other commonly confused forms are:

- *advise* (verb) and *advice* (noun):
  *It's better not to give **advice** to people who don't ask for it.*
- *live* (verb) and *life / lives* (noun):
  *This diet has changed my **life**.*
- *sit / sat* (verb) and *seat* (noun):
  *Could we have **seats** at the front of the cinema, please?* (not ~~*could we have **sits***~~)
- *pay / paid* (verb) and *payment* (noun):
  *Which method of **payment** do you prefer – cash or credit card?* (not ~~*method of **paying***~~)
- *stay* (verb) and *stay* (noun):
  *I hope you enjoy your **stay** in Britain.* (not ~~*your **staying***~~)

2 Correct the mistake below.



My .....

3 Underline the correct word.

1 What's the most frequent *complain / complaint* you receive from students?
2 Mainly, they *complain / complaint* that there are too many students in the class.
3 Change is inevitable – you've come to a turning point in your *life / live*.
4 How would you like to be *pay / paid* for your work – cash or cheque?
5 When we go to the theatre, we buy the best *sits / seats* we can afford.
6 A good piece of *advice / advise* is, 'Don't worry!'
7 Unfortunately, every business will receive its share of *complains / complaints*.
8 Jenny enjoyed her *stay / staying* in America, but was glad to get home.

How do I use negative prefixes?

1 Tick the correct sentence in each pair.

1 a The coach driver was very unpolite and unfriendly.
  b The coach driver was very impolite and unfriendly.
2 a In fact the whole tour was quite dissatisfactory.
  b In fact the whole tour was quite unsatisfactory.

These prefixes give words a negative meaning: *un-*, *in-*, *im-*, *dis-*, *mis-* and *non-*.

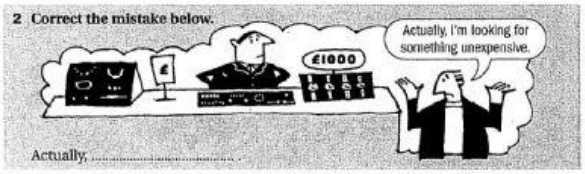
The most common negative prefix is *un-*. Some words taking *un-* are:
unavailable, uncomfortable, unconditional, unconscious, unconvincing, undemanding, undoubtedly, unforgettable, unforgivable, unlimited, unnecessary, unoccupied, unpolluted, unprejudiced, unsatisfactory, unscheduled

in- is also a commonly-used prefix. Words taking *in-* are:
inadequate, inadvisable, inappropriate, incapable, incompetent, incomplete, inconvenient, ineffective, inexcusable, inexpensive, inexperienced, insecure, insufficient, intolerable

We use *im-* before words beginning with *p* and *m*:
impolite, impossible, impractical, improper, immature

Words taking *non-* are: *non-existent, non-native*
Words taking *mis-* are: *mislead, misunderstand*
Words taking *dis-* are: *discourage, disobedient, disorganised, dissatisfied*
☆ We say ***unsatisfactory*** (adj), but ***dissatisfaction*** (noun) and ***dissatisfied*** (adj).

2 Correct the mistake below.



Actually, ...

3 Complete each sentence with a negative form of the word in brackets.

1 The College canteen is ..... and needs to be improved. *(adequate)*
2 You ..... my meaning or you wouldn't have taken offence. *(understand)*
3 I don't accept that my behaviour was in any way ..... . *(proper)*
4 I'm writing to express my ..... with your firm. *(satisfy)*
5 We're most unhappy with the ..... service you provided. *(satisfy)*
6 I'm afraid your report is ..... *(complete)*
7 For a ..... speaker, your pronunciation is excellent. *(native)*
8 Thank you for a(n) ..... holiday. *(forget)*

LIVEWORKSHEETS