

Rephrasing tutorial 2

Transformation exercises to practise
for the University Access Exam

These are some standard types of questions you may find in the sentence transformation exercise of the University Access Exam. Read the examples and explanations, and answer the questions.

LOGICAL CONNECTORS OR LINKS

- WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?** Replace a linking word with a different one, and change the model sentence, or the word order, accordingly.
- HOW WILL I KNOW THIS?** The model sentence is a compound of two main clauses, joined with a linking word. You will be given a linking word to use, or you will be given the start of a sentence which will force you to use a different connector from that in the model sentence.

Example:

Although it was raining, I didn't take my umbrella.
It...
It was raining. However, I didn't take my umbrella.

TIP: Learn the correct translation of the main linking words, then translate the model sentence into Spanish to do the exercise, and translate back into English.

Don't forget that after "despite" and "in spite of" you need to have a noun; if you want to use a full sentence, begin it with "the fact that":

Although it was raining, I didn't take my umbrella.
Despite...
Despite the rain, I didn't take my umbrella.

or: *Despite the fact that it was raining, I didn't take my umbrella.*

Practice:

- 1.- I brought you your money because I knew you'd be here. (?)
I knew

2.- They raised taxes, but inflation kept on rising.

(?)

In spite

I wish... / If only...

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO? Rephrase a sentence using "I wish..." or "If only..." (they both mean the same).

HOW WILL I KNOW THIS? The model sentence expresses some kind of wish or regret. If you're lucky, you will also be given two words to start your sentence, but you might also get only one; be careful – at first sight it may look like a conditional sentence.

Example:

I would love to be able to drive a car.

If...

If only I could drive a car!

or: *If only I was able to drive a car!*

TIP: If you have the verb "regret" followed by a gerund, you will have to express a wish about something you did or didn't do in the past; in that case, use the past perfect:

I regret going on that journey.

I wish...

I wish I hadn't gone on that journey.

TIP 2: to express impatience or annoyance, use "would":

Why don't you ever do the ironing?

I wish...

I wish you would sometimes do the ironing.

Practice:

3.- What a pity Peter couldn't come to Hawaii with us!

(?)

I wish

4.- Why doesn't it rain?

(?)

I wish

Have something done

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?	Rephrase a sentence using the pattern "have something done" or "get something done" (they both mean the same).
HOW WILL I KNOW THIS?	The context is usually about someone paying a professional to do a job.

Example:

This is a kind of passive in which you give someone the task of doing something for you: I got (or had) my house painted last week. The only difference in meaning is that "have" implies that you want it done, whereas "get" can be used for accidents, etc.: "You're going to get yourself killed if you insist in visiting that country in the middle of a war". It is rather difficult to translate into Spanish ("Vas a hacer que te maten si visitas ese país en mitad de una guerra"). Basically you will find a sentence similar to this:

An artist is going to paint a portrait of my grandmother.
 My grandmother...
My grandmother is going to have her portrait painted by an artist.

TIP: As with ordinary passives, you should leave out any agents that do not express any important information:

The mechanic's going to repair my car.
 I...
I'm going to get my car repaired (by the mechanic).

Practice:

- 5.- An English architect designed my house. (?)
 I
- 6.- The dentist will have to take out your tooth. (?)
 You

MODAL AUXILIARY VERBS

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?	Rephrase a sentence using the correct modal auxiliary.
HOW WILL I KNOW THIS?	Modal auxiliaries have a wide variety of meanings. Depending on the verb you are expected to use, the model sentence will have words that express several things (see below):

- Obligation (must, have to):
It's your duty to... = You must...
- Prohibition (mustn't, can't):
It is forbidden to... = You mustn't...
It is not allowed to... = You mustn't...
They don't let me... = I can't...
- Necessity (need):
It's necessary to... = We need to...
- Absence of obligation (needn't):
It's not necessary to... = We needn't... / We don't need to...
- Deduction (must/can't for certainty, may/might/could for possibility, can't/couldn't for impossibility):
I'm sure he... = He must...
I'm sure he... not... = He can't... / He couldn't have...
Perhaps she... / It's possible she... = She may / might / could...

Use "have" if the action refers to the past: may have / might have / could have

I'm sure he has... = He must have...

Perhaps she has... = She may / might / could have...

It's possible she didn't... = She may not have / might not have... (don't use "could not have": it means the same as "can't have").

- Advice (should, ought to):
My advice is... = You should... / You ought to... / You should have... / You ought to have...
- Permission (can, may):
Am I allowed to...? = May I...?
- Willingness (will, would):
Do you want to...? = Will / Would you...?

Etc.

TIP: Study all the possible meanings of modal auxiliaries with examples to learn when and how to use them. Click on this link for a full list of modal verbs.

The following question looks like a reported speech question, but in fact it's also a modal auxiliaries question. Think of an appropriate modal auxiliary verb to report your doctor's advice.

Practice:

- 7.- My doctor advised me to stop smoking. (?)
My doctor told
- 8.- It's impossible he drove his car that day. (?)

VERBS + -ING OR TO+INF

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO? Rephrase a sentence using a verb followed by another verb. You must know whether the second verb has to be in the infinitive, with or without "to", or in the gerund (-ing form).

HOW WILL I KNOW THIS? You will either be given a specific verb to use, or you will have to think of an appropriate synonym to replace a verb and rephrase the model sentence.

I didn't steal the jewels.
He denied...
He denied stealing the jewels.

TIP: Sometimes this type of exercise appears as a reported speech exercise:

He said he wouldn't do the job.
He refused...
He refused to do the job.

"Could you open the door for me, please?", Ann said.
Ann...
Ann asked me to open the door for her.

"You must write your composition again, Karen", Mr Smith insisted.
Mr Smith insisted on...
Mr Smith insisted on Karen's writing her composition again.

TIP 2: If you use a verb as the subject of a sentence, it is usually in gerund:

Smoking is a silly habit.
It's...

However, if you use an "anticipatory it", and the main verb comes after BE (usually followed by an adjective), it's used in the infinitive, preceded by TO:

It's a silly habit to smoke.

Practice:

9.- "Why don't we go to the cinema?", said Charles.

(?)

Charles suggested

10.- I don't like lying in the sun. I prefer swimming.

(?)

I prefer

COMPARISON OF ADJECTIVES

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO? Rephrase a comparative sentence. You will often have to replace an adjective with its opposite, and change the comparative form accordingly.

HOW WILL I KNOW THIS? You will always have some type of comparison.

- “More + adj. + than” (for long adjectives) or “adj.-er” (for short ones) in comparatives of superiority.
- “The most + adj. + (in/on)” (for long adjectives) or “the + adj.-est” (for short ones) in superlatives (comparatives of absolute superiority).
- “As + adj. + as” or “less + adj. + than” in all comparatives of equality. In negative sentences it's frequent to use also “not so + adj. + as”.

Examples:

This exercise is more difficult than yesterday's.

Yesterday's...

Yesterday's exercise was easier than today's.

There aren't any planes faster than this one.

This...

This is the fastest plane.

The blue dress is more expensive than the red one.

The blue dress isn't...

The blue dress isn't as cheap as the red one.

TIP: Translate the example and do the exercise in Spanish first, then translate your answer into English. Sometimes common sense is essential:

The world is now more polluted than ever.

The world used...

The world used to be less polluted than it is now.

Practice:

11.- Our new model is not as cheap as last year's.

(?)

Last

12.- No car in the world is as expensive as a Rolls Royce.

Mixed types mini-test:

13.- I think I have done all I can, but I will try again.

I think

14.- It was freezing cold, yet he was wearing only a jumper.

In spite

15.- You'd better start revising for your final test as soon as possible.

You

16.- Learning Chinese is more difficult than learning English.

Learning English

17.- It is not necessary to learn by heart all the tense combinations
in conditional sentences.

One doesn't

18.- I am sure someone left that packet on your desk yesterday.

Someone

19.- This valve needs replacing.

I must

20.- He was a defender of nature. He was also a pacifist.

In addition

21.- Our teacher always gives us a lot of homework.

I wish

22.- It's impossible that he has arrived so soon.

He

23.- It is forbidden to cross this fence.

We

24.- We have found many new planets, but no signs of life have been detected.

Even

25.- Sugar makes it impossible for bacteria to grow on jam.

Sugar prevents

26.- I am so sorry I didn't phone you last night!

If only