

### 1 AVOIDING UNNECESSARY DETAIL

a Complete the conversations with *bit*, *stuff*, or *thing*.

- 1 A Are you getting the train back to uni?  
B No, luckily my parents said they'd drive me. I've got loads of \_\_\_\_\_ and it'll be much easier to just put it all in the car.
- 2 A What's wrong with your pen?  
B The top \_\_\_\_\_'s dropped off and I can't get it to work.
- 3 A What do you think of the hotel?  
B Well, there's one \_\_\_\_\_ I'm not very keen on.  
A What's that?  
B Well, the bar's nice, but it's really noisy, and you can hear the music from our room.

b 1.2 Listen and check. Then match the words to the definitions.

- 1 We use \_\_\_\_\_ (in singular or plural) to refer to an object or situation which isn't described.
- 2 We use \_\_\_\_\_ (in singular or plural) to refer to a part or section of something, often when we don't know the exact word that describes it.
- 3 We use \_\_\_\_\_ (only in singular, uncountable) to refer to more than one object. It can also be used to talk about ideas, e.g. *There was all this ~ in his speech about the environment which I didn't really understand.* We can also use it after *and* to avoid giving a long list of things, e.g. *I'm just not into going to parties, getting dressed up, and all that ~.*

### 2 BEING IMPRECISE USING -ISH

1.3 Listen to the three conversations. Then answer the questions.

- 1 A What colour are her eyes?  
B A sort of greenish brown.
- 2 A What time do you usually get up?  
B Well, normally 6-ish, but later at weekends.
- 3 A Are you hungry?  
B Ish. I don't mind stopping for lunch if you want to?

- 1 What phrase could you use instead of *sort of* in 1?
- 2 What meaning does *-ish* give when added to an adjective or time?
- 3 What does *-ish* mean when used on its own?

### 3 BEING IMPRECISE ABOUT QUANTITY AND TIME

a Complete the answers with *around*, *least*, *most*, *odd*, *so*, or *something*.

**How many people were there at the demonstration?**

Oh, <sup>1</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ 500.

There must have been 500 or <sup>2</sup> \_\_\_\_\_.

Maybe 500-<sup>3</sup> \_\_\_\_\_?

At <sup>4</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ 450, and at <sup>5</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ 525.

**How old were most of the demonstrators?**

Oh, 20-<sup>6</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, I'd say.

b 1.4 Listen and check. Which expressions mean 'maximum' and 'minimum'?

### 4 WHATEVER, WHENEVER, ETC.

a Complete the conversations with *whatever*, *whenever*, *wherever*, *whoever*, *whichever*, or *however*.

- 1 A What time do you want us to be there?  
B \_\_\_\_\_ suits you, really. 7-ish?

- 2 A Is it OK if I ask Sean and Jerry to the party?  
B Ask \_\_\_\_\_ you like, so long as it's not more than 20-odd people.

- 3 A Nice menu! I really fancy the lobster, or is it too expensive?  
B Have \_\_\_\_\_ you like! The company's paying.

- 4 A That's it. Checkmate.  
B You're so annoying. \_\_\_\_\_ well I play, you always win!

- 5 A Tea or coffee?  
B \_\_\_\_\_'s easiest. I'm happy with either.

- 6 A Did you know the dog's chewing your slipper?  
B Not again! \_\_\_\_\_ I hide them, he always finds them.

b 1.5 Listen and check. What meaning does *ever* add to *what*, *when*, etc.?

#### 🔍 A one-word answer with *Whatever*

*Whatever* is sometimes used to be vague in an impolite way, e.g.

**Father:** You spend far too much time on your phone.

**Daughter:** Whatever!