25 Commonly confused nouns: *habits*, *customs* and *practices*

1 Tick the correct sentence in each pair.

1 a As a tourist you should show respect for local behaviour.
  b As a tourist you should show respect for local customs.
2 a They encourage the practice of teachers reading aloud to young children.
  b They encourage the habit of teachers reading aloud to young children.

A *habit* is something a person does regularly in a particular way as part of their everyday life, often without thinking about it:
After a while, separating rubbish for recycling just becomes a ***habit****.*
People's ***eating habits*** *have changed. Families no longer eat meals together.*

A *custom* is something people in a particular country or of a particular religious or ethnic group do because it has been part of their culture or way of life for many years:
He studied Maori culture and ***customs****.*
The ***custom of*** *decorat****ing*** *eggs goes back hundreds of years.*

A *practice* is a method of doing something which is usually used, especially in a particular country, industry, etc. In this sense, *practice* is a countable noun.:
The report condemned ***the practice of*** *keep****ing*** *prisoners in chains.*
Modern ***agricultural practices*** *are to blame for the decline in wild flowers.*

Someone's *behaviour* is the way they behave generally or on a particular occasion. *Behaviour* is usually an uncountable noun and has no plural form:
The appalling ***behaviour of*** *a minority of fans ruined the event for everyone.*

2 Correct the mistake below.

It is ..... .

3 Underline the best noun to complete each of the sentences below.

1 The people of the island are proud of their history and *customs/behaviours.*
2 It is now a common *practice/custom* to allow calculators in maths lessons.
3 Parents need more control over their children's viewing *habits/practice.*
4 In accordance with Muslim *custom/habit,* he was buried within hours of his death.
5 He's picked up some bad *behaviours/habits* from his new friends.
6 We hope to end the *habit/practice* of employing children to work in the mines.
7 It is sometimes difficult to keep local *habits/customs* alive in a global age.
8 Should you reward children for good *behaviour/habit*?

LIVEWORKSHEETS