Rephrasing tutorial 4

Transformation exercises to practise
for the University Access Exam

These are some other types of questions you may find in the sentence transformation exercise of the University Access Exam. These are a few not very common ones. Read the examples and explanations, and answer the questions.

19 Sentences with USED TO + V

Examples:

- When I lived in London I used to eat a lot of canned food.
- Did you use to cook for yourself?
- No, I didn't use to cook anything, but I would use the microwave oven every day.

Remember: USED TO + V (in infinitive) describes past habits.

For repeated past actions we can also use WOULD, but not for past states.

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?	Transform a sentence using the USED TO past.
HOW WILL I KNOW THIS?	From the context. Look out for phrases that refer to past periods of time and contexts that describe past habits or states in those periods.

Example:

In those days I listened to the radio, but I don't any more.

I used...

I used to listen to the radio in those days.

TIP: Remember to use an infinitive after USED TO, and to remove the -d when using DID in questions and negatives (sometimes English speakers forget to do this, because the pronunciation is the same).

Example:

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Now he likes his cousin, but years ago he didn't.

He didn't ...

He didn't use to like his cousin years ago.

Practice:

1.- When I was young I walked everywhere, but now I don't. (?)

I …

2.- Now I have fewer friends than years ago. (?)

Years ago I ...

20 Sentences with BE USED TO + V-ing / noun

Examples:

- Do you mind if I watch TV while you are reading?
- No, I'm used to reading with a lot of noise around. /
  No, I'm used to noise while I'm reading.

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?	Transform a sentence using the BE USED TO structure.
HOW WILL I KNOW THIS?	Again, from the context. Look out for phrases that express the idea of being accustomed to doing something now because you have done it repeatedly:

Example:

I don't mind ironing my own clothes, I do it all the time.
I'm ...

I'm used to ironing my own clothes.

TIP: Sometimes you will have to transform a sentence with USED TO + V into one with BE USED TO + Ving, as in the next example:

I used to get up early when I was a student, so I didn't mind.
I was ...

I was used to getting up early when I was a student, so I didn't mind.

Practice:

LIVEWORKSHEETS

3.- You don't mind working hard when you do it often. (?)
When you're ...

4.- I often write my own teaching materials. (?)
I'm ...

21 Sentences with WOULD RATHER / HAD BETTER

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO? Transform a sentence using one of those structures. They tend to be confused because the auxiliary verbs are contracted in the same way:

I'm getting tired. I'd rather go home.
= I would prefer to go home.

It's getting late. I'd better go home.
= I should go home.

You must think carefully which expression is more appropriate for the context:

- WOULD RATHER refers to what you personally prefer.

- HAD BETTER refers to what is sensible to do.

HOW WILL I KNOW THIS? From the context. Look out for phrases like the ones in the examples above (I would prefer to..., I should..., it would be better if I...).

Example:

I don't enjoy visiting the dentist, but I need to do it soon.
I'd ...

I'd better visit the dentist soon, although I don't enjoy it.
I'd rather not visit the dentist, but I need to do it soon.

TIP: you can use THAN after WOULD RATHER, because you are comparing two options and saying which one you prefer.

Watching a film on TV is not as enjoyable as at the cinema.
I'd …

I'd rather watch a film at the cinema than on TV.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

TIP 2: if you change the subject after WOULD RATHER, you should use a past tense, or WOULD if it is something that you find unpleasant and other people could do (or stop doing) if they wanted to:

I prefer you to come with me to the doctor's.
*I'd rather **you came** with me to the doctor's.*

I prefer you not to make that noise when you eat your soup.
*I'd rather **you wouldn't** make that noise when you eat your soup.*
*I'd rather **you didn't** make that noise when you eat your soup.*

Practice:

5.- If I were you, I would start working on that project right now. (?)
You'd ...

6.- I would prefer you not to open the window. (?)
I'd ...

22 Other sentences

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO? If you have discarded all the previous typical transformations, you will have to guess what your examiner wants you to write: a correct future tense, a verb followed by a gerund or infinitive,...

HOW WILL I KNOW THIS? You will have to use your knowledge of grammar to find out what you must say.

Example:

I fear a sharp rise in prices in January.
I'm ...

I'm afraid there will be a sharp rise in prices in January.
OR *I'm afraid prices will rise sharply in January.*

TIP: Learn how to identify quickly all the typical kinds of transformations so that you can discard them all.

Example (very tricky one):

LIVEWORKSHEETS

7.- I don't know how to do these exercises. (?)
I have …

8.- He's unwilling to make a hasty decision. (?)
He doesn't ...

Mixed types mini-test:

9.- I've arranged a meeting with our partners next week.
I'm...

10.- We can't consider nuclear power a clean source of energy.
Nuclear...

11.- I was so tired after the journey I went to bed straight away.
It was...

12.- I think I last saw Joe fifteen years ago.
The last...

13.- I think I last saw Joe fifteen years ago.
I haven't...
(Don't use "… since 2002… ", in the next one, please, because then I would have to change the correct answer every year!)

14.- I think I last saw Joe fifteen years ago.
It's been...

15.- "Please, Peter, keep quiet for a minute," his father said.
Peter's...

16.- He's too lazy to keep a job for long.
He isn't...

LIVEWORKSHEETS

17.- People vote for fascist parties because they don't know any history.
If...
(Resist the temptation to change just a couple of words:
"If people vote for fascist parties it is because they don't know any history".)

18.- I prefer to live in Spain than in any other country.
I'd ...

19.- Why don't you ask a doctor?
You...

20.- It's essential that you learn to work in a group.
You...

21.- I visited Paris in 1987.
I haven't...

22.- I'm not sleepy yet as I usually go to bed late.
I'm...
(Avoid just copying the sentence using a synonym of the connector – that would be too easy: *"I'm not sleepy yet because I usually go to bed late"*).

23.- Eating at a good restaurant is better than eating at a fast food one.
I'd ...

24.- Are you still working?
Haven't...

25.- I watched a lot of TV in the past, but now I prefer my computer.
I...

LIVEWORKSHEETS