



PSLE English Mastery
Synthesis /
Transformation
The Write Tribe

**ALTERNATIVE +
PREFERENCE**



2

Alternative and Preference

either ... or, neither ... nor

- You use **either ... or** to join two alternatives. You give equal emphasis to both alternatives. You use **neither ... nor** to make a negative statement about both alternatives. Both alternatives should have similar structures.

Remove "perhaps" when you join the sentences with "either ... or".



- Perhaps James was to blame for the accident. Perhaps Peter was to blame for it.
- Either** James **or** Peter was to blame for the accident.
- Some people in the gym were chatting with their friends. The others were exercising.
- The people in the gym were **either** chatting with their friends **or** exercising.

Change "some people in the gym" and "the others" to "the people in the gym" in the combined sentence.

Do not include the negative word "not" when you join the sentences with "neither ... nor".



- The children did not have ballet class yesterday. They did not have netball practice yesterday.
- The children had **neither** ballet class **nor** netball practice yesterday.

The original sentences are written in the past tense.
Remember to use "had" in the combined sentence.

Do not include the negative word "never" when you join the sentences with "neither ... nor".



- Jerry never gives me a birthday present. He never sends me a card either.
- Jerry **neither** gives me a birthday present **nor** sends me a card.

Remove "either" from the combined sentence.



Practice 1

Rewrite the given sentence(s) using the word(s) provided. Your answer must be in ONE sentence. The meaning of your sentence must be the same as the meaning of the given sentence(s).

- 1 I did not harm him. I did not have any bad intentions either.

	nor

- 2 We can climb the mountain by the usual route. Alternatively, we can explore another new route.

	either	

- 3 The children were not playing computer games. They were also not doing their homework.

	nor

- 4 Some vehicles stalled in the flood. The rest managed to move slowly.

	either	

- 5 A baby can't walk. A baby can't talk too.

	nor

- 6 The soup can be eaten cold. It can be heated up for a warm snack.

	either	

- When the phrase containing **either ... or** or **neither ... nor** is the subject of the sentence, the verb agrees with the noun or pronoun closest to it.
- My classmates were not able to answer the question. I was not able to answer the question.
- **Neither** my classmates **nor** I **was** able to answer the question.

The verb "was"
agrees with "I".

Do not include "alternatively"
in the combined sentence.



- Janice has taken my calculator. Alternatively, my brothers have taken it.
- **Either** Janice **or** my brothers **have** taken my calculator.

The verb "have" agrees
with "brothers".

- Mr Krishnan is going to wash the car. Alternatively, his children are going to wash it.
- **Either** Mr Krishnan **or** his children **are** going to wash the car.

The verb "are" agrees
with "children".

Use the plural form
when you use "and".



- Sam **and** his mother do not like to eat raw fish.
- **Neither** Sam **nor** his mother **likes** to eat raw fish.

The verb "likes" agrees
with "mother".

Use the plural form when
you use "both ... and".



- **Both** the comprehension questions **and** the composition topic were difficult.
- **Neither** the comprehension questions **nor** the composition topic **was** easy.

The verb "was" agrees
with "topic".



Change "difficult" to "easy" in the rewritten
sentence so that its meaning is the same as
the meaning of the original sentence.

Practice 2

Rewrite the given sentence(s) using the word(s) provided. Your answer must be in ONE sentence. The meaning of your sentence must be the same as the meaning of the given sentence(s).

- 1 Perhaps a rabbit has dug this hole. Perhaps a badger has dug it.

Either

- 2 Children do not pay the full fare. Old people do not pay the full fare too.

Neither

- 3 Both the pharmacies and the clinic do not sell this type of medicine.

Neither

- 4 Dad waters the plants. Alternatively, my sisters water them.

Either

- 5 Vegetables and fruit do not contain much fat.

Neither

- 6 Both whales and dolphins are not fish.

Neither