12 Verbs after adjectives and prepositions

1 Tick the correct sentence in each pair.

1 a Young children often feel shy to talk to adults.
  b Young children often feel shy talking to adults.
2 a It is easy to understand why.
  b It is easy understanding why.

With *feel* + adjective we use the *-ing* form of the verb:
New students do not always ***feel comfortable speaking*** *English to other people.*

After *be* + adjective, *too* + adjective and adjective + *enough*, we use *to* + infinitive:
I ***was happy to see*** *her when she arrived.* (not ~~*I was happy seeing her*~~)
The lecture was ***easy enough to understand.*** (not ~~*enough easy*~~ or ~~*easy understanding*~~)

After all prepositions (*about, by, from, for, in, of, without*, etc.) we use the *-ing* form of the verb; we cannot use a clause (subject + verb):
They celebrated their anniversary ***by organising*** *a big party.*
Thank you ***for helping*** *me so much with my studies.*
He opened the door ***without thinking*** *about what would happen next.* (not ~~*without he thought*~~)

☆ Note that *despite, in spite of* and *instead of* are considered to be prepositions:
He did not get the job ***despite getting*** *excellent grades.* (not ~~*despite he got*~~)
She went to the library ***instead of going*** *straight home after school.* (not ~~*instead of she went*~~)

If the following verb is negative, we use *not* + *-ing*: *He got a job* ***despite not getting*** *good grades.*

2 Correct the mistake below.



Alice won the tournament ..... .

3 Underline the correct word or phrase in the sentences below.

1 It was easy *understanding* / *to understand* why they liked living close to the beach.
2 When they finally arrived, the students were too tired *cooking* / *to cook* anything.
3 I felt very nervous *presenting* / *to present* my assignment to the class.
4 The large tree prevented them from *getting* / *to get* wet in the rain.
5 I'm sorry for *causing* / *to cause* you so much trouble.
6 The lady in front was wearing a hat that was too big *seeing* / *to see* over.
7 They still couldn't afford the hotel in spite of *receiving* / *they received* a 10% discount.
8 They decided to rent a flat instead of *staying* / *to stay* in a hotel.

LIVEWORKSHEETS