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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.



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.