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Using nouns: appearance and communication

1 Tick the correct sentence in each pair.

- 1 a Public art can have a considerable effect on the outlook of public spaces.
b Public art can have a considerable effect on the appearance of public spaces.
- 2 a We need better communications between parents and teachers.
b We need better communication between parents and teachers.

The *appearance* of something is the way it looks and a person's *appearance* is the way they look (their face, body, hair, etc.) and the way they dress:

Artificial ingredients are sometimes added to enhance the taste or appearance of food.
Many young women spend a lot of time on their appearance. (not *their appearances*)

A person's *looks* refers to how attractive they are – their face, etc. but not their clothes:
She had gone grey and lost her looks. (= she was not as attractive as before)

A person's *outlook* is the way they think about their life and the future:

The accident completely changed her outlook on life. She enjoys each day at a time.

Communication is an uncountable noun and refers to the act of talking to people:
The job requires excellent communication skills.

Email is now our main *means of communication*. (not *mean of communication*)

Communications (plural) refers to all the methods of sending information, for example by telephone, email, post, etc.:

They produce mobile phones and other communications equipment.

2 Correct the mistake below.



I don't think

3 Underline the correct words.

- 1 In a digital age, face-to-face *communication/communications* is still important.
- 2 He's rather scruffy and doesn't pay much attention to his *appearance/looks*.
- 3 People spend more money on their health and *beauty/appearance* than in the past.
- 4 Good *communication/communications* are essential for a successful business.
- 5 He denied that he got the film contract just because of his *looks/appearances*.
- 6 She's very different from her sister in *outlook/look* and attitudes.
- 7 Don't be put off by the external *appearance/looks* of the building.
- 8 Mobiles are now a vital means of *communication/communications* in remote areas.