

4.6. VOCABULARY: COLLOCATION, FIXED/ SEMI FIXED EXPRESSIONS

COLLOCATION

A collocation is made up of two or more words that are commonly used together in English. Think of collocations as words that usually go together.

Eg: 'crystal clear', 'middle management', 'nuclear family', & 'cosmetic surgery'.

1. Common collocations:

make the bed - I need to make the bed every day.

do the homework - My son does his homework after dinner.

take a risk - Some people don't take enough risks in life.

give someone advice - The teacher gave us some advice on taking tests.

2. Business collocations:

These collocations are used for specific situations in business:

open an account- Would you like to open an account at our bank?

forgive a debt- Do you think the bank would forgive a debt?

3. Verb Collocations:

These sheets provide a matching game with some of the most common verb + noun

collocations used in everyday situations. Here are some examples of the types of verb

collocations you will learn:

to feel free

to come prepared

to save time

to find a replacement

to make progress

to do the washing up

Different kinds of collocation:

1.adverb+ adjective

- Invading that country was an utterly stupid thing to do.
- We entered a richly decorated room.
- Are you fully aware of the implications of your action?

2. adjective + noun

- The doctor ordered him to take regular exercise.
- The Titanic sank on its maiden voyage.
- He was writhing on the ground in excruciating pain.

3. noun + noun

- Let's give Mr Jones a round of applause.
- The ceasefire agreement came into effect at 11am.
- I'd like to buy two bars of soap please.

4. noun+ verb

- The lion started to roar when it heard the dog barking.
- Snow was falling as our plane took off.
- The bomb went off when he started the car engine.

5. verb + noun

- The prisoner was hanged for committing murder.
- I always try to do my homework in the morning, after making my bed.
- He has been asked to give a presentation about his work.

6. verb + expression with preposition

- We had to return home because we had run out of money.
- At first her eyes filled with horror, and then she burst into tears.
- Their behaviour was enough to drive anybody to crime.

7. verb+ adverb

- She placed her keys gently on the table and sat down.
- Mary whispered softly in John’s ear.

GET	TIME	HAVE	DO	MAKE
Get a job	Bang on time	Have a birth	Do business	Make a difference
Get angry	Free time	Have a good time	Do nothing	Make money
Get lost	Late 20th century	Have a holiday	Do the cooking	Make progress
Get married	Next few days	Have a problem	Do your best	Make an effort

Get home	Early 12 th century	Have lunch	Do the washing up	Make a mistake
Get frightened	Past few weeks	Have sympathy	Do the housework	Make a noise
Get divorced	Dead on time	Have a drink	Do someone a favour	Make furniture

Exercise:

1. She----- tears when she heard the news.

- (a) burst into
- (b) blew up in
- (c) burst away
- (d) blew away

2. Working mothers often find that they are unable to----- time for their children.

- (a) waste
- (b) save
- (c) spare
- (d) spend

3. He wasn't sure if he would get an appointment but he was willing to go
the CM's office and take a-----

- (a) opportunity
- (b) choice
- c) break
- (d) chance

Choose the suitable collocations:

1. There was ----- (heavy/ high) rain in Ooty yesterday, yet we----- (went/
walked) for trekking.
2. He was ----- (wearing/ using) sunglasses and ----- (wearing/ carrying)
an umbrella.
3. She was a/an ----- wife who loved her husband more than anything else in
the whole universe. (devoted/ sincere/ intelligent)
4. It is a golden ----- If you miss it, you will regret it. (chance/opportunity/ offer)
5. His new novel has met with ----- acclaim. (average/ great/dreadful)

FIXED/ SEMI FIXED EXPRESSIONS

When we speak to parents, family members, co-workers, friends or family in a social situation, some common expressions are used again and again. They are fixed expressions.

I. Fixed Expressions

E.g. How do you do?

Where are you put up?

How are you?

What is the matter?

How is your health?

What is your father?

May I come in?

What happened?

What about you?

II. Semi-Fixed Expressions

Depend on the situation. It may vary. It is not necessarily the usage of the same words or phrases or sentences.

Eg. Shall I talk to Mr.Bean?

Could you please give us discount?

May I use your garage?

Eg: May I use your garage?

Is the house vacant?

There will be good monsoon this year.

I. Fill in the blanks and mention whether the sentence is semi-fixed expression or fixed expression:

1. Look sharp. (Go fast) -----

2. I am afraid that he is on leave. (I am afraid means 'I am sorry')

3. That is a wonderful match/film/game. -----

4. Excuse me. .-----

5. May God Bless You. -----
6. Can you set the AC temp to 160? -----
7. Please bring lemons from the fridge-----
8. Will you please move a little? -----
9. God forbid-----
10. God willing. -----

Choose the correct fixed expressions from the options given:

1. Life is not _____ (a joyful trip/ a bed of roses).
2. He always come up with _____ for coming late (a lame excuse/ silly ideas).
3. It is difficult _____ such boring people (to put down with/ to put up with)
4. The answer was on _____ (the tip of my mouth/ tip of my tongue).

