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**FUNCTIONAL SKILLS**

English Level 1



**Area: Writing**

Criterion: 21. Spell words most often used in work, study and daily life, including specialist words

**Prefixes and suffixes**

When practising spelling, it can be useful to learn how to spell different **root words**.

Root words are words that prefixes and suffixes can be added to.

Examples include:

**Top tip:**To learn how to spell unfamiliar words, you can use the ‘look, cover, write, check’ method.

* heat
* tidy
* visible
* appear
* build

A **prefix** is a group of letters that is added to the beginning of a root word. If you add a prefix to these words, you can see their meaning will change.

Prefixes include *un-*, *dis-*, *in-*, *re-* and *pre-.*

*Pre-* means before. Adding pre- to heat to form the word preheat changes the meaning. For example, if you **pre**heat an oven, you are warming it up before you put food inside.

*Re-* means to do something again. If you are **re**building a house, that means it has been damaged and needs to be built again.

*Un-*, *dis- or in-* typically change the meaning to be the opposite of the root word.

* **Un**tidy
* **In**visible
* **Dis**appear

A **suffix** is added to the end of the word. This can change how the word functions, or its word type.

For example, *-ness* turns a word into a noun. Kind becomes kind**ness**.

-ful can turn a noun into an adjective. Help becomes help**ful**.

The suffix -ing shows the present tense. Walk becomes walk**ing**.

Similarly, -ed shows the past tense. Jump becomes jump**ed**.

-er can show a comparison. Smooth becomes smooth**er**.

The root word may need to be changed if you add a suffix.

For example, lonely becomes loneliness. The y changes to an i before the -ness is added.

Run becomes running. Another n is added before the -ing.

**Using the information provided above, answer the following questions.**

**Question 1**

Look at the words below. Try writing each word with either a prefix or a suffix.

|  |
| --- |
| 1. Clean 2. Safe 3. Trust 4. Play 5. Light 6. Heavy 7. Care 8. Lucky |

If you feel confident, you can try adding both a prefix and a suffix to a root word, such as:

* **un**helpful
* **re**appearance
* **mis**understanding

**Homophones**

Homophones are words that sound the same but have different meanings and spellings.

For example, there and their.

**There** refers to a place

‘I will meet you **there**.’

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**Their** shows possession/belonging

‘The children must put **their** coats on the rail.’

Another example is your and you’re.

**Your** shows possession/belonging

‘Can I borrow **your** pen?’

**You’re** is a contraction of you are

‘**You’re** going to run the marathon.’

It is also useful to know the difference between to, too and two.

**To** shows a direction, purpose or connection

 ‘Let’s go **to** the beach’ or ‘**To** Colin,’

**Too** – means also or an excessive amount

‘I would like a slice of cake **too.**’ or ‘It’s too warm in here.’

**Two** – the number, 2

‘She has **two** dogs.’

**Question 2**

Look at the sentences below. Choose the correct homophone to fill in the blank.

|  |
| --- |
| **There or their?**  Have you seen \_\_\_\_ new menu?  The book is over \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.  **Your or you’re?**  I like \_\_\_\_\_ dress.  \_\_\_\_\_\_ so clever!  **To, too or two?**  She lives \_\_\_ streets away.  This puzzle is \_\_\_ easy.  I am going \_\_\_ enter this competition. |

**Specialist words**

Specialist words relate to a specific topic or specific scenario.

For example, when discussing health and safety, you might use words like emergency, hazard or protective.

You can’t use a dictionary in your writing exam, so if you include specialist words that aren’t in the brief, you should read the word a few times to check your spelling.

**Top tip:** In your exam, check the task brief for the topic and specialist words you could include in your response.

**Question 3**

Look at the below categories and write down a few specialist words for each.

|  |
| --- |
| **Medicine:** |
| **Education:** |
| **Computers:** |

**Exam practice 1**

You have recently visited a company called ‘Techfix Repair’ and asked them to fix your phone. However, you were not happy with the service you received.

You decide to contact the company using their email address: techfixrepair@bizz.coz.

Write an **email** to the company that includes:

* what went wrong
* the issues you are having with your phone
* what you would like the company to do

You should take approximately **30 minutes** to complete this task.

**Suggested word count 150-200 words.**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**Answers**

**Prefixes and suffixes**

**Question 1**

*Please note that these are examples of learner answers and there are other correct responses.*

|  |
| --- |
| 1. Clean Prefix: Unclean Suffix: Cleaned 2. Happy Prefix: Unhappy Suffix: Happiness 3. Trust Prefix: Mistrust Suffix: Trusting 4. Play Prefix: Replay Suffix: Playful 5. Light Prefix: Relight Suffix: Lighter 6. Heavy N/a Suffix: Heaviest 7. Care N/a Suffix: Careful 8. Lucky Prefix: Unlucky Suffix: Luckier |

**Homophones**

**Question 2**

|  |
| --- |
| **There or their?**  Have you seen **their** new menu?  The book is over **there**.  **Your or you’re?**  I like **your** dress.  **You’re** so clever!  **To, too or two?**  She lives **two** streets away.  This puzzle is **too** easy.  I am going **to** enter this competition. |

**Specialist words**

**Question 3**

*Please note that these are examples of learner answers and there are other correct responses.*

|  |
| --- |
| **Medicine:**  Doctor Patient Illness Check-up Temperature  Nurse Diagnosis Treatment |
| **Education:**  Lesson Teacher Student Criteria Learning    Workbook Classroom Assessment |
| **Computers:**  Keyboard Mouse Wires Screen Internet  Email Password Secure |

**Exam practice**

**Exam practice 1**

*Please note that this is an example of a learner’s response. There are other correct responses.*

|  |
| --- |
| **To: techfixrepair@bizz.coz**  **From: examplelearner@highfield.coz**  **Date: 31/10/2024**  **Subject: Issues with my phone repair**  To whom it may concern,  I am writing to tell you about my recent experience using your service. I brought my phone to your company to have the screen repaired and to fix a problem with the battery life. When you returned my phone to me, I was assured that these issues had been fixed. However, I quickly discovered that the screen is still unresponsive and the battery is draining even faster than before.  I am disappointed with your service, as these are the main problems I asked you to look at. I rely heavily on my phone for work, so I need it to work properly.  I would appreciate it if you could arrange for the phone to be repaired or provide a refund, as the original issues were not resolved. Please let me know what actions you plan to take as soon as possible.  Regards,  Blair Smith |

**Your functional skills exam**

Your functional skills exams will consist of 2 papers.  
These papers will take place over the following time periods:

* Reading – 60 minutes
* Writing – 60 minutes

Further information on the format that your test will take can be obtained from your training provider.

**Hints and tips**

* Find out what format your exam will be in. It may be paper-based   
  or on-screen.
* Plan what you are going to revise in advance. Don’t leave it until the last minute.
* Do as many past papers as you can so you are prepared for the day. If possible, try to complete the past papers following the same format as the actual exam.
* Find a quiet place to study and revise. It helps to sit at a table or a desk, don’t revise in bed.
* Don’t stay up all night revising the night before your exam. It’s important to have a good rest so you feel refreshed and ready to go.
* Read the question 3 times. The first time to ensure you understand what is being asked, the second time to get an understanding of what you need to do, and a third time to figure out exactly what techniques you should be applying.
* If you are struggling with a question, skip it and come back to it later. Try not to sit getting worked up about a difficult question, it will only waste exam time. Move on and come back to it after you have answered the other questions.
* Take note of the number of marks available. This will give you an indication of how much working out you must show. For example, 1 mark will need an answer only and more marks will need you to show your working out.
* When you’ve finished the exam, go back and check your answers. If you still have time remaining, use it to check your answers and when you have checked your answers check them again.