

Talk a Lot

Politics

Sentence Blocks

1. (*Present Simple*) The Foreign Secretary deals with foreign affairs.

Who

2. (*Present Continuous*) We're going to a demonstration tomorrow, to support striking union members.

Where

3. (*Past Simple*) Tony voted Conservative in the last election, because they promised to bring down taxes.

Why

4. (*Past Continuous*) Carl's brother was waiting to speak in the school debate.

What

5. (*Present Perfect*) I've just briefed Sean on the phone about the campaign meeting.

Who

6. (*Modal Verbs*) The opposition should be a lot more critical of the government's plans for schools.

Which

7. (*Future Forms*) The polls open around the country in fifteen minutes.

When

8. (*First Conditional*) If we don't speak out against the injustice in our society, things will get worse.

What

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*Note: the last two lines of each sentence block will vary. Below there are examples given for each sentence block, but students should think of their own way to get the negative forms in the last line. See the **Talk a Lot Elementary Handbook** for full instructions (available free from <https://purlandtraining.com/>).*

Answers

1. (Present Simple) The Foreign Secretary deals with foreign affairs. / Who deals with foreign affairs? / The Foreign Secretary does. / Does the Foreign Secretary deal with foreign affairs? / Yes, he / she does. / Does the Home Secretary deal with foreign affairs? / No, he / she doesn't. The Home Secretary doesn't deal with foreign affairs.
2. (Present Continuous) We're going to a demonstration tomorrow, to support striking union members. / Where are you going tomorrow, to support striking union members? / To a demonstration. / Are you going to a demonstration tomorrow, to support striking union members? / Yes, we are. / Are you going to a meeting tomorrow, to support striking union members? / No, we aren't. We aren't going to a meeting tomorrow, to support striking union members.
3. (Past Simple) Tony voted Conservative in the last election, because they promised to bring down taxes. / Why did Tony vote Conservative in the last election? / Because they promised to bring down taxes. / Did Tony vote Conservative in the last election, because they promised to bring down taxes? / Yes, he did. / Did Tony vote Conservative in the last election, because he agreed with all of their policies? / No, he didn't. Tony didn't vote Conservative in the last election, because he agreed with all of their policies.
4. (Past Continuous) Carl's brother was waiting to speak in the school debate. / What was Carl's brother waiting to do? / Speak in the school debate. / Was Carl's brother waiting to speak in the school debate? / Yes, he was. / Was Carl's brother waiting to use the photocopier? / No, he wasn't. Carl's brother wasn't waiting to use the photocopier.
5. (Present Perfect) I've just briefed Sean on the phone about the campaign meeting. / Who have you just briefed on the phone about the campaign meeting? / Sean. / Have you just briefed Sean on the phone about the campaign meeting? / Yes, I have. / Have you just briefed Victoria on the phone about the campaign meeting? / No, I haven't. I haven't just briefed Victoria on the phone about the campaign meeting.
6. (Modal Verbs) The opposition should be a lot more critical of the government's plans for schools. / Which plans should the opposition be a lot more critical of? / The government's plans for schools. / Should the opposition be a lot more critical of the government's plans for schools? / Yes, it should. / Should the opposition be a lot more critical of the government's plans for a new staff restaurant? / No, it shouldn't. The opposition shouldn't be a lot more critical of the government's plans for a new staff restaurant.
7. (Future Forms) The polls open around the country in fifteen minutes. / When do the polls open around the country? / In fifteen minutes. / Do the polls open around the country in fifteen minutes? / Yes, they do. / Do the polls open around the country in half an hour? / No, they don't. The polls don't open around the country in half an hour.
8. (First Conditional) If we don't speak out against the injustice in our society, things will get worse. / What will happen if we don't speak out against the injustice in our society? / Things will get worse. / Will things get worse, if we don't speak out against the injustice in our society? / Yes, they will. / Will things get better, if we don't speak out against the injustice in our society? / No, they won't. Things won't get better, if we don't speak out against the injustice in our society.

Sentence Block Extensions

For all of the sentence block starting sentences there are at least two different wh- question words that can be used to make sentence blocks. In one case seven different sentence blocks can be made from the same starting sentence when using different wh- question words. There isn't room here to print in full all of the sentence block extensions from this unit. Hopefully, the answers given above will give you the teacher (or you the student) enough guidance to be able to make the sentence block extensions for this unit with confidence.

For example, let's look at the third starting sentence from this unit:

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Tony voted Conservative in the last election, because they promised to bring down taxes.

On the handout the wh- question word that is given is "Why", but this starting sentence also works equally well with six other wh- question words: "What", "When", "Who", "Which" (x2), and "How":

What did Tony do in the last election? / He voted Conservative, because they promised to bring down taxes.

When did Tony vote Conservative, because they promised to bring down taxes? / In the last election.

Who voted Conservative in the last election, because they promised to bring down taxes? / Tony did.

Which party did Tony vote for in the last election, because they promised to bring down taxes? / The Conservative Party.

In **which** election did Tony vote Conservative, because they promised to bring down taxes? / In the last election.

How did Tony vote in the last election? / Conservative.

The idea is easy. Change the wh- question word each time and you can make several completely different sentence blocks from the original starting sentence, simply by finding the relevant information for the answer in the starting sentence. As you can see below, sometimes the same wh- question word can be used more than once to make different sentence blocks.

You could cut out and give the section below to students:

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Make new sentence blocks from the starting sentences in this unit using different "wh-" question words:

	WHAT	WHERE	WHEN	WHO	WHY	WHICH	HOW
1.	what (x2)					which	
2.	what (x2)		when	who	why	which	
3.	what		when	who		which (x2)	how
4.		where		who whose		which	
5.	what (x2)	where	when			which	how
6.	what			who (x2)		which (2 nd)	how
7.	what (x2)	where					how soon
8.	what (2 nd)		when				how

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Sentence Blocks

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Sentence Blocks – Sentence Stress and Vowel Sounds

Task 1: Circle the content words in the following starting sentences. (For answer, see Task 2 below.)

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1. The Foreign Secretary deals with foreign affairs.
2. We're going to a demonstration tomorrow, to support striking union members.
3. Tony voted Conservative in the last election, because they promised to bring down taxes.
4. Carl's brother was waiting to speak in the school debate.
5. I've just briefed Sean on the phone about the campaign meeting.
6. The opposition should be a lot more critical of the government's plans for schools.
7. The polls open around the country in fifteen minutes.
8. If we don't speak out against the injustice in our society, things will get worse.

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Sentence Blocks – Sentence Stress and Vowel Sounds

Task 2: Underline the stressed syllable in each content word, shown in black. (For answer, see Task 3 below.)

Politics

1. The Foreign Secretary deals **with** foreign affairs.
2. **We're** going to a demonstration tomorrow, to support striking union members.
3. Tony voted Conservative **in** the last election, because they promised to bring down taxes.
4. Carl's brother **was** waiting to speak in the school debate.
5. I've just briefed Sean **on** the phone about the campaign meeting.
6. The opposition should be a lot more critical of the government's plans for schools.
7. The polls open around the country in fifteen minutes.
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Sentence Blocks – Sentence Stress and Vowel Sounds

Task 3: Write the correct vowel sound above each stressed syllable (underlined). (For answer, see below.)

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4. Carl's brother was waiting to speak in the school debate.
5. I've just briefed Sean on the phone about the campaign meeting.
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Sentence Blocks – Sentence Stress and Vowel Sounds

Each content word (shown in black) contains one syllable with a strong stress, which is underlined. Each stressed syllable has one vowel sound. The vowel sounds on stressed syllables are the most important sounds in the sentence. They make the "sound spine" of the sentence. To improve communication, try to get the sound spine right.

Politics

1. The Foreign Secretary deals with foreign affairs.
/ɒ/ /e/ /i:/ /ɒ/ /eə/
2. We're going to a demonstration tomorrow, to support striking union members.
/əʊ/ /eɪ/ /ɒ/ /ɔ:/ /aɪ/ /u:/ /e/
3. Tony voted Conservative in the last election, because they promised to bring down taxes.
/əʊ/ /əʊ/ /ɜ:/ /ɑ:/ /e/ /ɒ/ /ɪ/ /aʊ/ /æ/
4. Carl's brother was waiting to speak in the school debate.
/ɑ:/ /ʌ/ /eɪ/ /i:/ /u:/ /eɪ/
5. I've just briefed Sean on the phone about the campaign meeting.
/ʌ/ /i:/ /ɔ:/ /əʊ/ /eɪ/ /i:/
6. The opposition should be a lot more critical of the government's plans for schools.
/ɪ/ /ɒ/ /ɪ/ /ʌ/ /æ/ /u:/
7. The polls open around the country in fifteen minutes.
/əʊ/ /əʊ/ /ʌ/ /ɪ/ /ɪ/
8. If we don't speak out against the injustice in our society, things will get worse.
/əʊ/ /i:/ /aʊ/ /ʌ/ /aɪ/ /ɪ/ /e/ /ɜ:/