

1 Creativity

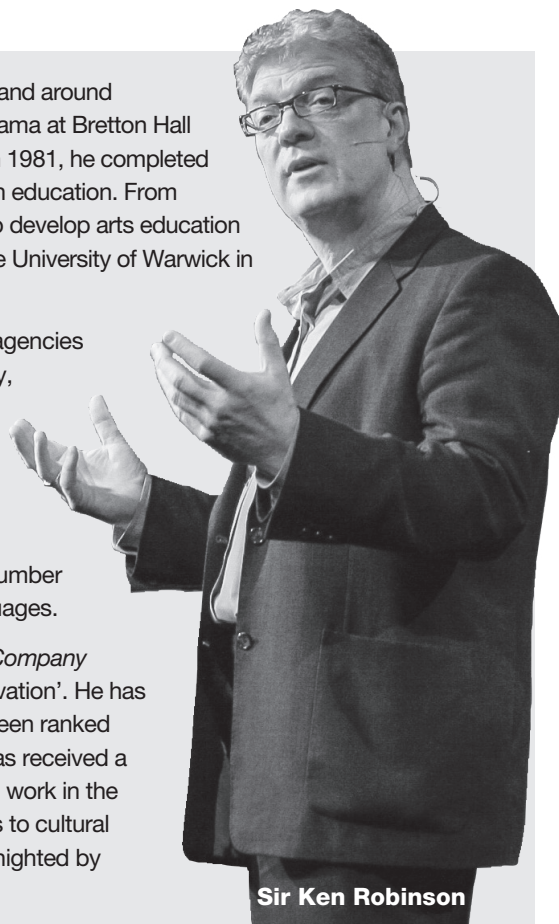
1.1 Do schools kill creativity?

TED TALKS

Sir **KEN ROBINSON** was born in Liverpool, UK, in 1950. He was educated in and around Liverpool and then studied for a BEd (Bachelor of Education) in English and drama at Bretton Hall College of Education, graduating in 1972. He then worked as a teacher and, in 1981, he completed a PhD at the University of London, researching the role of drama and theatre in education. From 1985 to 1988, he was the Director of the Arts in Schools Project, an initiative to develop arts education throughout England and Wales. He then became Professor of Education at the University of Warwick in the UK, where he is now professor emeritus.

Sir Ken works with governments, education systems, businesses and other agencies and organizations across the world, advising on the development of creativity, innovation and human resources in education and in business, an area in which he is recognized as one of the world's leading authorities. He is also recognized as one of the world's leading speakers on these topics and videos of his famous TED Talks have been seen by a record estimated 250 million people in over 150 countries. In fact, his 2006 talk *Do schools kill creativity?* became the most viewed in TED's history. He has also written a number of best-selling books, some of which have been translated into over 20 languages.

Sir Ken has received many prestigious awards and accolades. In 2011, *Fast Company Magazine* listed him as 'one of the world's elite thinkers on creativity and innovation'. He has also been named as one of *TIME/Fortune/CNN*'s 'Principal Voices' and has been ranked among the Thinkers50 list of the 'world's top business thought leaders'. He has received a number of honorary degrees from UK and US universities in recognition of his work in the arts and education, the Benjamin Franklin Medal for outstanding contributions to cultural relations between the United Kingdom and the United States and has been knighted by Queen Elizabeth II for his services to the arts.



Sir Ken Robinson

CAREER PATHWAYS

1 Read the text. Answer the questions.

1 In terms of academic background, what were Sir Ken Robinson's two main fields of study?

2 What is Sir Ken Robinson a global expert in?

3 What TED Talk records did Sir Ken achieve?

4 In which areas has Sir Ken's work been recognized?

5 For what did he become 'Sir' Ken Robinson?

TED PLAYLIST

2 Other TED speakers are interested in topics similar to Sir Ken Robinson's TED Talk. Read the descriptions of four TED Talks at the top of page 5. In your opinion, which is the best title for this playlist, a, b or c?

- a Celebrating the individual in learning
- b Unlocking the doors to learning
- c Leaving the textbook at the classroom door

3 Read the TED playlist again. Find a speaker who ...

- 1 realized their method of teaching was ineffective.
- 2 wants a switch of focus from academic to practical learning.
- 3 is making an appeal specifically to other teachers.
- 4 wants education to be adapted to individual learning styles.

▶ **Sir Ken Robinson: Bring on the learning revolution**

In this poignant, funny follow-up to his fabled 2006 talk, Sir Ken Robinson makes the case for a radical shift from standardized schools to personalized learning – creating conditions where kids’ natural talents can flourish.

▶ **Ramsey Musallam: 3 rules to spark learning**

It took a life-threatening condition to jolt chemistry teacher Ramsey Musallam out of ten years of ‘pseudo-teaching’ to understand the true role of the educator: to cultivate curiosity. In a fun and personal talk, Musallam gives three rules to spark imagination and learning, and get students excited about how the world works.

▶ **Rita F. Pierson: Every kid needs a champion**

Rita Pierson, a teacher for 40 years, once heard a colleague say, ‘They don’t pay me to like the kids.’ Her response: ‘Kids don’t learn from people they don’t like.’ A rousing call to educators to believe in their students and actually connect with them on a real, human, personal level.

▶ **Geoff Mulgan: Intro to the Studio School**

Some kids learn by listening; others learn by doing. Geoff Mulgan gives a succinct introduction to the *Studio School*, a new kind of school in the UK where small teams of kids learn by working on projects that are, as Mulgan puts it, ‘for real’.

4 Find adjectives in the TED playlist that describe the talks as ...

- a inspiring b touching c legendary
d entertaining e concise

5 Which talk would you most like to see? Why? Watch the talk at TED.com.

AUTHENTIC LISTENING SKILLS

Rhythm and stress

6 1 01 You are going to hear a podcast in which a member of the *Keynote* team talks about Rita F. Pierson’s TED Talk, *Every kid needs a champion*. Circle the content words in the sentence below. Then listen and underline the stressed words and syllables. Were they the same?

I’ve seen this talk quite a few times and I still get really emotional watching it.

7 1 02 Now listen to the next sentence and write in the missing content words. Then underline all the stressed words.

I _____ it has _____ to do with the kind of _____ – _____ even – that Rita F. Pierson _____ her students.

LISTENING

8 1 03 Listen to the full podcast. Choose the correct words to make true sentences.

- Paul is a teacher and *lecturer* / *teacher trainer*.
- Paul admires Rita F. Pierson as a teacher because of the emphasis she puts on human *dignity* / *connections*.

9 1 03 Listen again. Complete the reasons.

- Why Paul gets emotional watching this TED Talk:
a) Rita F. Pierson’s kindness to her pupils b) the _____ of her pupils c) Pierson’s power as a(n) _____ .
- Why Paul says some teachers emphasize discipline: they’ve failed to _____ their students.
- Why kids underperform at school: they’re born into
a) _____ b) the wrong _____ .
- Why Paul thinks the talk should be renamed: so that _____ sees it.

VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT

10 Read the extracts from the podcast. Choose the correct meaning of the words in bold.

- ... they’re from disadvantaged backgrounds and that sort of **tugs at the heartstrings** too.
Makes you feel: a sympathetic b upset
 c hurt
- I’ve had kids so educationally **deficient** I could have cried.
a unintelligent b lacking c uninterested
- The best teachers are the ones who seem to befriend their pupils and **win them over** ...
Get someone to: a obey you
 b agree with you c admit they are wrong
- She put a smiley face on his paper and told him he was **on a roll**.
a not being serious b making good progress
 c falling behind
- Kids have to feel that you’re on their side and **rooting for** them.
a supporting b working for
 c explaining things for

1.2 What have you been up to?

GRAMMAR Definite and indefinite time

1 Read the text about creativity in the professions. Match the events or situations (1–10) with what they are expressing (a–c).

- a finished event or situation in a finished time
b finished event or situation in an unfinished time
c event or situation that continues to the present

Creativity ¹ *has for a long time been seen* as important in a number of professions. But until recently, only a limited number of fields ² *were considered* to be primarily creatively driven: the arts, product design and marketing. Architecture is also an area which ³ *has always been* associated with creativity. By contrast, fields such as science and engineering ⁴ *have traditionally experienced* a less explicit relation to creativity. However, a number of studies in recent years ⁵ *have shown* how some of the major scientific and industrial advances of the 20th century ⁶ *came about* as a direct result of the creativity of individuals. And a 2010 study, which ⁷ *interviewed* around 1,500 company CEOs, ⁸ *showed* that the leadership trait, that today is considered to be most crucial for success, is creativity. This suggests that the world of business ⁹ *has begun* to accept that creativity is of value in a range of industries, rather than being simply the preserve of the more traditional creative industries. But this is not such a new concept. In the early part of the 20th century, many economists ¹⁰ *considered* creativity to be the key factor in economic growth.

2 Choose the correct words or phrases to complete the quotations.

I think the human race ¹ *made/has made* a big mistake at the beginning of the industrial revolution, we ² *leaped/have leaped* for the mechanical things; people need the use of their hands to feel creative.

Andre Norton, writer

I think it's fair to say that personal computers ³ *became/have become* the most empowering tool we ⁴ *ever created/have ever created*. They're tools of communication, they're tools of creativity, and they can be shaped by their user.


Bill Gates, businessman and co-founder of Microsoft

Without this playing with fantasy, no creative work ⁵ *ever yet came/has ever yet come* to birth. The debt we owe to the play of the imagination is incalculable.

Carl Jung, psychiatrist

I ⁶ *didn't see/haven't seen* it then, but it ⁷ *turned out/has turned out* that getting fired from Apple was the best thing that could have ever happened to me. The heaviness of being successful ⁸ *was replaced/has been replaced* by the lightness of being a beginner again, less sure about everything. It ⁹ *freed/has freed* me to enter one of the most creative periods of my life.

Steve Jobs, businessman and co-founder of Apple

3  1 04 Read the extract from an interview with a psychologist, who is talking about creativity and the brain. Complete the interview using the correct verb form: present simple, present perfect continuous, past simple or past continuous. Then listen and check your answers.

Interviewer: Is it true that to be creative you need to be right-brained?

Psychologist: This idea that right-brained people are more creative and imaginative and that left-brained equals logical and analytical ¹ _____ (be) around for a long time. But it's an oversimplification and possibly simply untrue.

We ² _____ (know) since the 19th century that the two hemispheres of the brain function differently, but most functions in fact involve the two sides working together. Furthermore, a recent study, which ³ _____ (involve) scanning the brains of over 1,000 people, ⁴ _____ (find) no evidence for people being predominantly either right-brained or left-brained. So, even though we ⁵ _____ (talk) about this distinction for a long time, it seems we may ⁶ _____ (be) misguided all along.

Interviewer: What about the idea that the most creative people are loners and eccentric geniuses?

Psychologist: Yes, this stereotype of a highly creative person as a lonely, perhaps eccentric, artist or poet ⁷ _____ (be) around for a long time. Indeed, recent research suggests that people tend to consider work to be of higher quality and have greater value if they ⁸ _____ (be told) that the person who ⁹ _____ (produce) it was eccentric. The reality, however, is that creativity is, more often than not, a result of collaboration. For example, Thomas Edison, who is often considered as a lone genius, ¹⁰ _____ (have) a great deal of input and support from a large group of scientists and engineers. Similarly, Michelangelo, when he ¹¹ _____ (paint) the Sistine Chapel, ¹² _____ (work) in collaboration with a creative team of artists.

4 Complete the sentences using the verb given in: the present perfect simple, the present perfect continuous, the past simple and the past continuous.

1 *work*

- a** She _____ on a couple of similar projects already.
b She _____ on this project for over six months now.
c She _____ on her new project when I last spoke to her.
d She _____ on a similar project in her old company.

2 *finalize*

- a** They _____ the schedule for a few days now.
b I think they _____ the schedule a few days ago.
c _____ they _____ the schedule yet?
d They _____ the schedule this morning. I'm not sure if it's ready yet.

3 *wait*

- a** I saw you earlier. You _____ for a bus outside the university.
b We _____ and _____, but he didn't turn up. So, we went without him.
c We _____ only _____ for a few minutes so far. Let's give him a little longer.
d Come on, let's go. We _____ long enough.

4 *go*

- a** Sorry I couldn't stop for a chat. I _____ to my creative writing class.
b I _____ to my creative writing class last night.
c I _____ to creative writing classes for about a year now.
d I _____ to my creative writing class only once this term.

LANGUAGE FOCUS Expressions with statistics

5 Complete the sentences. Use the words in the box.

almost	significant	small	vast
good	relatively	sizeable	tiny


- 1** Only a _____ handful of startups go on to become successful businesses.
2 The _____ majority of people, around 90%, are right-handed.
3 Research suggests that the effect of environmental factors on children's creativity is _____ negligible.
4 A _____ number of people with dyslexia work in creative fields such as graphic design.
5 Only a _____ fraction of new patents go on to become successfully commercial products.

- 6** In many countries, a _____ proportion of students leave school with no qualifications.
7 _____ few people consider themselves to be creative.
8 A _____ deal of research suggests that creativity can be as valuable as intelligence in terms of employability.

6 Find and correct the mistakes in each sentence.

- 1** Globally, about one of eight males have some form of colour blindness, whereas only about one from 200 women is colour blind.
2 About one in each sixteen Americans plays a musical instrument.
3 In most of countries, over 99 per cents of all students graduating in medicine find jobs or enter further study within six months of graduating.
4 Geography is the worst degree for gaining employment in a number countries, with only around three out from every ten graduates in subject-related employment six months after graduating.
5 Research suggests that only one from four employees believe they are allowed to fulfil their creative potential at work.
6 According to a study, about four in of every ten people consider themselves to be in some way artistic.

DICTATION

7  **1 05** Listen to someone talking about the Italian architect Renzo Piano. Complete the sentences.

Renzo Piano is an Italian architect and engineer, born in Genoa in 1937, who is known for his ground-breaking and creative designs. He ¹ _____. In 2006, *TIME Magazine* ² _____ in the world and as the tenth most influential person in the Arts and Entertainment category. In 2013, ³ _____ in the Italian Senate.

Over his career, Piano ⁴ _____, including Louis Kahn, Richard Rogers and Gianfranco Franchini. With Franchini he ⁵ _____ Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, which ⁶ _____ 'turned the architecture world upside down'.

Since 1981, Piano ⁷ _____ Renzo Piano Building Workshop and, since 2004, he ⁸ _____ for the Renzo Piano Foundation. This ⁹ _____ to promote the architectural profession through education. Recently, a number of Piano's ¹⁰ _____ . These include the Shard in London, at the time Europe's tallest skyscraper, and The New York Times Building in Manhattan.

1.3 How talent thrives

READING

1 Read the first paragraph of the text. What kind of text is it?

- a an academic essay
- b a text book extract
- c a book review

2 Read the whole text. Which is the best summary?

- a An account of how certain working practices tend to be associated with certain fields of creativity.
- b A description and analysis of how different people prefer different working practices.
- c An explanation of how changes in working practice can negatively affect the creative process.

3 Read the text again and answer the questions.

1 Which of the paragraphs (1–4) has each purpose (a–d)?

- a Summarizes what the book gives the reader.
- b Describes the broad concept of the book.
- c Gives examples of working practices.
- d Explains the origins of the book.

2 What is Mason Currey's main source of information?

- a The individuals themselves and their associates.
- b The work of other writers and academics.
- c A combination of the above.

3 Which of the people mentioned in the text:

- a had a strict quota of work to be done each day?
- b worked in short bursts?
- c had a novel way of refocussing the mind?

Working habits of creative minds

When aspiring to complete a particular project or task, we may look to the example set by former greats for inspiration about how best to organize our time and optimize creativity and productivity. This is exactly what author Mason Currey did and, after discovering that great minds don't think so alike after all, he set about writing a book on the subject. *Daily Rituals: How artists work* describes the habits and routines of some of history's most creative minds, breaking their days down into where and when they ate, slept, attended work, exercised and dedicated time to their crafts.

Based on each individual's letters, diaries and interviews, and drawing on some secondary sources, the book summarizes and analyzes the daily rituals of over 160 world famous novelists, poets, musicians, playwrights, painters, philosophers, scientists and mathematicians. The poet W. H. Auden, for example, who once said that 'routine is a sign of ambition', set himself an exacting timetable, in which eating, drinking, writing, shopping, and even doing crossword puzzles, were all timed to the minute. The writer Thomas Wolfe only wrote standing up in his kitchen, using the top of the refrigerator as a desk. Novelist Anthony Trollope forced himself to write 3,000 words (250 words every fifteen minutes for three hours) every morning before going off to his job at the postal service, which he kept for 33 years during the writing of more than two dozen books. In contrast, novelist and poet Gertrude Stein could never sustain writing for more than half an hour at a time. The choreographer George Balanchine did his ironing while working, while Igor Stravinsky had to be absolutely sure he was out of earshot in order to compose. Additionally, when suffering from creative block, he stood on his head to 'clear the brain'. Charles Darwin started the day by doing exercise.

Charles Dickens did several hours' exercise in the afternoon. And while the writer Mary Flannery O'Connor worked only in the morning, Franz Kafka generally only wrote at night, often until dawn, and then slept for most of the afternoon.

Bizarrely, Currey's own book was a product of procrastination while trying to write a story for an architecture magazine. As he did everything but write the article – reading *The New York Times* online, tidying his desk, making endless cups of coffee – he decided to search the Internet for information about how other writers managed to focus. Finding the results highly entertaining, he started to collect them. These soon became a blog, and later evolved into the book.

By writing about the mundane details of artists' daily schedules, Currey initially hoped to shine new light on their personalities and careers. But what the reader gains insight into is how grand creative visions are often the product of efforts made in small daily increments and how working habits themselves strongly influence the end product. *Daily Rituals* is a fascinating book about the raw mechanics of genius and eccentricities of the personalities behind it.



- 4 What initial event led to the publication of the book?
- Currey was looking for ideas to help him concentrate on his work more.
 - Currey wanted to find out how to efficiently combine work and leisure.
 - Currey felt being entertained would help him and others work better.
- 5 What was Currey's original aim for the book?
- To write a novel based on the entertaining personalities he had researched.
 - To relate an individual's working practice to their character and personality.
 - To show how creativity and working practices are dependent on each other.

4 Complete definitions (a–f) with words or phrases from the text.

- _____ = separating into parts (paragraph 1)
- _____ = using something that is available to you (paragraph 2)
- _____ = needing a lot of effort and care (paragraph 2)
- _____ = the act of delaying something that you should do (paragraph 3)
- _____ = not interesting or exciting (paragraph 4)
- _____ = a small section or part of something (paragraph 4)

VOCABULARY Creativity collocations

5 Complete the sentences with a word from each box.

broke	build	came	came	devoted
express	follow	had	take	

angle	convention	experience	freely	hobby
idea	inspiration	path	work	

- The creative arts, be it painting, music, dance or writing, allow you to *express* yourself *freely* with few constraints.
- Chester Greenwood always claimed that the idea for the earmuff, which he invented in 1873 at the age of 15, came to him after he _____ a flash of _____ while ice skating.
- People had been using the wheel on its side to make pottery for hundreds of years before someone _____ up with the _____ of putting it upright and using it for transport.
- Talking about his debut album *In The Lonely Hour*, singer Sam Smith said he wanted to write an album about love that _____ from a different _____.
- Studies suggest that if you really want to stay sharp in old age you need to _____ up a new _____ to boost your memory.
- After the death of her husband Pierre in a road accident in 1906, Marie Curie _____ herself to her _____ on radioactivity.

- Romanticist landscape artists such as Constable _____ with _____ to change the way we see the world.
- Most creative geniuses first _____ on the _____ of others before they _____ their own _____ and start to create a niche of their own.

WORD FOCUS *create*

6 Complete the words with the correct endings.

- It is thought that the Ancient Greeks are responsible for the **creat**_____ of the first true alphabet.
- Brazilian footballer Pelé is widely regarded as one of the most **creat**_____ players of all time.
- Tim Berners-Lee is best known as the **creat**_____ of the World Wide Web.
- Creat**_____ is increasingly recognized as an essential higher-order skill for learning.
- Studies indicate that teachers who teach **creat**_____ and enthusiastically tend to be more popular with their students.
- The temple, one of the oldest in Asia, is a truly impressive **creat**_____.
- A recent online trend is to make short films **recreat**_____ famous movie scenes.
- Creat**_____ is the belief that the universe and life originated from acts of divine creation. Those who believe in this are known as **creat**_____.

7 Complete the sentences. Use the words in the box.

demonstrate	force	foster	highly
impression	stifling	streak	thinking

- For a student to get high marks, he or she needs to clearly _____ creativity and originality in academic thinking and writing, whatever the discipline.
- Creative _____ requires a very different set of skills to critical thinking.
- Most of us have a creative _____ hiding somewhere inside us, be it for music, art, dancing, writing poetry or just having a vivid imagination.
- Steven Spielberg was for many years the biggest creative _____ in the world of cinema.
- Because of her flamboyant style, the singer tended to create an _____ wherever she went.
- Research suggests that _____ creative children often require more individualized attention at school.
- Many would say that having too much objective assessment and testing in schools is _____ creativity or even inhibiting it completely.
- The course aims to encourage and _____ creativity in a number of ways, from course design to lesson planning.

1.4 It's not really my thing

DESCRIBING LIKES AND DISLIKES

1 1 06 Listen to two people talking about likes and dislikes. Tick (✓) what they like and cross (✗) what they don't like.



Conversation 1:

- 1 films in general
- 2 psychological thrillers
- 3 more lightweight films

Conversation 2:

- 4 rugby
- 5 football
- 6 live sport

Conversation 3:

- 7 Van Gogh
- 8 contemporary art
- 9 Turner

2 1 06 Complete the sentences. Then listen and check your answers.

- 1 Well, yeah, **I'm not that** _____ films to be honest. **It's** _____ **really my** _____ .
- 2 I _____ **like** a good psychological thriller, though ... But **I'm** _____ **so** _____ **on** the more lightweight stuff.
- 3 What sports **are you** _____ ?
- 4 **I'm** _____ **huge** rugby _____ . My favourite sport by a mile. **I'm** _____ **really** _____ football. It's OK, but **I can** _____ **it or** _____ **it**.
- 5 **I'm** _____ **big** _____ **of** Van Gogh.
- 6 I _____ **really get** _____ **about** much contemporary art, to be honest. **It just doesn't** _____ **to me** at all.

DESCRIBING TALENTS AND ABILITIES

3 1 07 Listen to four people talking about what they are good at and not good at. Tick (✓) what they are good at and cross (✗) what they are not good at.

- | | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 playing the piano | <input type="checkbox"/> | singing | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 teaching | <input type="checkbox"/> | administrative tasks | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 making tea | <input type="checkbox"/> | cooking | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 shopping | <input type="checkbox"/> | saving money | <input type="checkbox"/> |

4 1 07 Put the words into the correct order to make sentences. Then listen again and check your answers.

- 1 Well, I play the piano, so I guess *quite / one / at / I'm / thing / that's / good* _____

- 2 *great / I'm / singing / not / at* _____

- 3 *I'm / a / teaching / think / I / quite / at / natural* _____

- 4 *a / not / when it comes to / most definitely / I'm / natural*
all the admin side of it. _____

- 5 *my / can't / a cup of tea / I / to / make / life / save* _____

- 6 *a / I / for / talent / do / cooking / have* _____

- 7 *it / I'm / at / saving / hopeless / pretty* _____

- 8 *born / I'm / a / spendaholic* _____

5 Use the words to write full sentences.

- 1 I / not / fan / rock music

- 2 Football / OK / but / I / take / leave

- 3 I / can't / excited / modern art / just / not / appeal


- 4 Anna / natural / when / comes / learning languages

- 5 I / cook / save / life

- 6 He / born / leader

PRONUNCIATION

Emphasis and de-emphasis

- 6  1 08 Underline the words you think will be stressed. Then listen and check your answers.

- 1 I do like watching a good film.
- 2 I really want to learn the piano one day.
- 3 The lecture was quite good, but I thought it was a bit slow in places.
- 4 Modern art's really not my thing, I'm afraid.
- 5 I quite like modern art, actually. Especially earlier modern art.
- 6 Sam does tell a good story.
- 7 I did enjoy that film last night.
- 8 I know it's quite expensive, but I really do think it's worth it.

WRITING SKILL Nominalization

- 7 Complete the sentences so the meaning is similar. Use a noun and any other words necessary.

- 1 We intend to submit the proposal later this week.
Our _____ to submit the proposal later this week.
- 2 It has been decided that we will extend the trial period by a further two weeks.
The _____ to extend the trial period by a further two weeks.
- 3 It is vital that departments communicate clearly and openly with each other at all times.
_____ departments is vital at all times.
- 4 Satisfaction levels have increased significantly since the new system was implemented.
There _____ satisfaction levels since _____ the new system.
- 5 Not many people responded to the survey and a number of people complained about its length.
There _____ to the survey and _____ about its length.
- 6 We need to further consult about distributing the new product.
We need _____ about _____ the new product.

- 8 Rewrite the sentences using noun phrases in place of the phrases or clauses in bold. Make any other changes necessary.

- 1 **When it was published, it** caused a sensation.
Its publication caused a sensation.

- 2 **If you don't get sufficient sleep it** can affect your concentration.

- 3 **They have changed a number of things in** the proposal.

- 4 **Technology is advancing alarmingly.**

- 5 I think **what the marketing department is proposing** is too technical and **unnecessarily complicates things.**

- 6 Thanks for your email. I'm just about to go away on a work trip, but I'll have a think about **what you suggest** and get back to you **when I get back** in a couple of weeks.

- 9 Rewrite the short progress report using nouns in place of the words in bold. Make any other changes necessary.

Online marketing: A progress report

We **attempted** on two separate occasions to market the product online, but neither **succeeded** very well. In hindsight, the way we **developed** the two sites was not based on any kind of comprehensive e-commerce strategy. We didn't think enough about the way we **designed** them and the way they **functioned**. In addition, we didn't properly **implement** how to **process** credit card transactions and the way we **fulfilled** orders was inefficient. Looking forward, we have been **consulting** with a specialist e-commerce firm and we are currently **discussing** with the board about additional financial and human resources **being available**.

There were two separate attempts to market the product online, but neither was very successful. In hindsight, ...

YOUR IDEA

1 Read what each person says about discovering their talent and answer the questions a–f.

1 Joel: I have a very analytical mind. I was good at school, doing well in subjects like maths and science. That’s not very cool, though, is it? Being good with numbers has served me well in my career – I’m an accountant – but I never thought it could lead to anything very exciting. Then I read something about how mathematical patterns and classical music might be related. I did a lot of reading around the subject and decided I wanted to learn a musical instrument to find out if there really was a link between maths and music. I took up violin classes at a local music school and just loved it. It hasn’t always been easy and it takes me a long time to pick up different tunes. My teacher is great though, and she’s always pushing me to do better. In fact she entered me for a talent show.

2 Tammy: When I was younger, I didn’t take part in school sports activities. I was excluded from most activities for health and safety reasons – being in my wheelchair, I could watch and cheer on my classmates, but I couldn’t get involved. I didn’t think that you could be an athlete and be in a wheelchair. That all changed when I went to see a wheelchair marathon. I was so interested that I bugged my parents to find out how I could train to be like the marathon competitors. I ended up going to a try-out at a local sports club and raced for the first time in an upright chair. Luckily my time was good enough to join the team and since then I’ve trained and raced in a proper racing wheelchair. I’m looking forward to my next track meet – I’ve got a great chance of winning a medal.

3 Claudia: I think I was quite misunderstood as a child. My mum always told me that I seemed to have unlimited energy – I’d never sit still and always fidgeted. I think the teachers at school agreed, and there was some talk of taking me to see a doctor. Not all of them though, thankfully. One of my teachers, Mrs Giles, suggested something different to my parents. She was really passionate about dance and theatre and gave my mum and dad the idea of taking me along to dance classes. To be honest, I’ve never really looked back – now I run my own dance school and our students compete all over the world. I sometimes wonder what would have happened if Mrs Giles hadn’t been there to give me the push I needed. I might never have discovered that I had a real knack for dancing.

- Who wasn’t fully involved in sporting activities at school? _____
- Who experienced difficulty at school? _____
- Who did well academically at school? _____
- Who received encouragement from a teacher? (2 people) _____
- Who is confident they will succeed because of their talent? _____
- Who sometimes thinks about what their life would have been like without their talent? _____

2 Write notes about a talent you have or would like to have.

3 Answer the following questions about your talent or a talent you would like to have.

If you have a talent ...

1 How did you discover your talent? How do you think you could develop it?

2 Who helped you develop your talent? Who could help you?

3 What opportunities does having this talent give you?

If you would like to have a talent ...

1 How do you think you could develop this talent?

2 Who could help you develop this talent?

3 What opportunities would having this talent give you?

4 Practise describing your talent out loud. Remember to practise using humour in your presentation, but remember ...

- its purpose is to relax people.
- it should illustrate the point you are making and not distract from it.
- it should not offend any group or individual.
- it helps if the humour is based on an anecdote about you or your experience, which others can easily relate to.
- it’s essential to test any jokes on friends or colleagues before your presentation.

ORGANIZING YOUR PRESENTATION

5 Match the five steps of a presentation (1–5) with the examples of useful language (a–e).

- Introduce yourself and your topic
- Say what talent you’re talking about
- Say who or what helped you develop this talent
- Say what opportunities this talent would give you
- Finish

- I left my office job and I’ve opened my own art gallery to showcase my and my friends’ work.
- Hello everyone. Welcome to my presentation today. I’m going to talk about a talent I am lucky to have.
- I’m very fortunate to have had the support of my partner while I attended evening classes.
- I wasn’t very artistic as a child, but I’ve been able to develop my skills as a painter.
- That brings us to the end of my presentation. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask them.

YOUR PRESENTATION

6 Read the useful language on the left and make notes for your presentation.

<p>1 Introduce yourself and your topic</p> <p>Hello everyone. Welcome ... The purpose of the presentation is to ...</p>	
<p>2 Say what talent you're talking about</p> <p>I've been able to ... Something I'm good at is ... Something I'd like to do is ...</p>	
<p>3 Say who or what helped you develop this talent</p> <p>... has/have been so helpful to me. I couldn't have done this without ... I would need ... to help me ... They could help me by ...</p>	
<p>4 Say what opportunities this talent would give you</p> <p>Now I've ... I'd be able to ...</p>	
<p>5 Finish</p> <p>That brings us to the end of ... If you have any questions, please ...</p>	

7 Film yourself giving your presentation or practise in front of a mirror.

Give yourself marks out of ten for ...

- using humour in your presentation. /10
- acting naturally as you talk. /10
- following the five steps in Exercise 6. /10
- using correct grammar. /10