

9 Check and Check Again



Remember that your **Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English** can help you with:

- Collocations – typical combining words are shown in bold in most entries, while important entries have Collocation Boxes with definitions and real-life examples.
- Level of language – formal and informal labels warn you when a word isn't suitable for all contexts.
- Grammar – which adverb or preposition follows a particular verb.

A. Look at this piece of student homework.

The teacher has underlined some mistakes.

What was the student's mistake in each case?

Choose one of the following:

- The student used the wrong word.
- The student used language that was too informal, or spoken rather than written English.
- The student used the wrong adverb or preposition after a verb.

For example, the word **chap** in the first line is too informal. (Answer: **b**).

I used to know a chap called John who decided to leave school when he was only fourteen. He was more interested at money than work so he decided to rob cars. The only problem was that he worked at a snail's speed and so before long he was arrested and taken to court. He was charged with pinching a car without the owner's consent.

At his trial he pleaded good. He said he was only making a joke on people, but he was found guilty. The judge said she was appalled with the growth in childish crime and so she was going to do an example of John. She sentenced him for six years in prison.

In prison John started to study, and now he's a university professor. End of story.

B. Looking at your dictionary when you need it, correct the student's mistakes.



More help with collocations is at your fingertips. Simply click on the "Phrase bank" panel to find out how to make your English sound natural.

...to contracts. | [+for] They have to ... the river for their water.

re-main [sɪˈweɪn] /rɪˈmeɪn/ v

1 [I] always + adv/prep, linking verb) to continue to be in the same state or condition: *Please remain seated until all the lights are on.* | *We remained friends.* | *The boy remained silent.* | [+as] *Despite the job losses, Parker remained as manager.* (remain unclear/unchanged/unanswered etc) *Many scientists remain unconvinced by the current evidence.*

2 [I] formal to stay in the same place without moving away; **stay**: [+at/in/with etc] *She was too ill to remain at home.* | *The refugees were allowed to remain in the UK.* **Δ** In spoken English it is more usual to use **stay**.

3 [I] to continue to exist or be left after others have gone, been used, or been destroyed: *Little of the original building remains.* | *The score is tied, with fifteen minutes remaining.* | *What remains of his original art collection is now in the city museum.*

4 [I] to be left after other things have been dealt with: **remain to be done** *Several points remain to be settled.* | *There remained a few jobs still to be finished.* | *The fact remains that racism is still a considerable problem.*

5 **it remains to be seen** used to say that it is still uncertain whether something will happen or is true: *It remains to be seen whether the operation was successful.*

Teacher's Notes

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Time: 15–20 minutes

Aims:

- To encourage students to check their own written work carefully.
- To encourage students to really use the dictionary, checking for information about word combinations, levels of formality and word grammar.

1. Explain that one of the most important stages of writing is looking through what you have written so that you can improve it. Even the best writers (in any language) check what they have done and make changes. And when a teacher hands back homework, it is important to write the correct version of the mistakes he or she has found.
2. Tell students they are going to look at a piece of student homework. The teacher has underlined some words. They must say why the teacher has done this, choosing one of the three reasons (wrong word or word combination, too formal or spoken, wrong word grammar). For each mistake they should look the word in question up in the **Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English**.
3. Go through the answers with the class.
4. Have students write a correct version of the homework. They can do this in pairs using their dictionaries to ensure that they use the right words.
5. Go through the homework with the students offering the alternatives given in the answers here.

Answers:

A.

chap – b

interested at – c

rob cars – a

at a snail's speed – a

pinching – b

pleaded good – a

making a joke on people – a

childish crime – a

do an example of – a

sentenced him for six years – c

end of story – b

B.

chap ♦ man, young man, boy

interested at ♦ interested in

rob cars ♦ steal cars

at a snail's speed ♦ at a snail's pace

pinching ♦ stealing

pleaded good ♦ pleaded innocent

making a joke on people ♦ playing a joke on people

childish crime ♦ juvenile crime

do an example of ♦ make an example of

sentenced him for six years ♦ sentenced him to six years

end of story ♦ and that's the end of the story