Reporting with passives; **It is said that ...**

**A**

We often use a passive to report what people say, think, etc., particularly if it is not important to mention who is being reported:

- People in the area **have been told** that they should stay indoors.
- Everyone **was asked** to bring some food to the party.

**B**

Another common way of reporting what is said by an unspecified group of people is to use **it + passive verb + that-clause** (see **Unit 33** for more on that-clauses). Using this pattern allows us to put important information at the end of the sentence (see **Units 22C and 22D**):

- **It is reported** that the damage is extensive. (**compare** The damage is extensive, according to government sources.)
- **It was decided** that the meeting should be cancelled. (**or** It was decided to cancel the meeting.)

*Also:* **allege, announce, assume, believe, calculate, claim, consider, demonstrate, discover, establish, estimate, expect, feel, find, know, mention, recommend, reveal, say, show, suggest, suppose, think, understand**

These verbs can also be followed by a **to-infinitive clause:** agree, decide, hope, intend, plan, propose

Note that many other verbs connected with reporting are **not** used with **it + passive verb + that-clause,** but can be used as in **A:**

- We **have been informed** that we have to leave.
  (*but not* It has informed us ...)

These verbs need a personal object before the **that-clause** in an active form (e.g. They have informed us that ...)

**C**

An alternative to **it + passive verb + that-clause** is to use **subject + passive verb + to-infinitive** if we want the subject to be the topic of the sentence (see **Unit 22C**). Compare:

- **It is reported** that the damage is extensive. **and**
- **The damage is reported** to be extensive.

Most of the verbs listed in the first white box in **B** can also be used in this pattern except for **announce, decide, mention, propose, recommend, suggest.**

We can only use **tell** in this pattern when it means ‘order’. So we can say:

- **I was told** (= ordered) to go with them to the railway station.
  but not ‘The accident was told (= said) to have happened just after midnight’.

**D**

With some verbs we can also use **it + passive verb + wh-clause** to report information given or found out:

- **It has now been revealed** who was responsible for the accident.
- The decision to build the bridge was taken before **it was established** whether it was actually needed.

*Also:* **discover, explain, find, know, reveal, show, understand**

**E**

When a **that-clause** begins **that + there ...,** we can make a corresponding passive form **there + passive verb to be** (present) / to have been (past). Compare:

- **It is thought** (that) there **are** / were too many obstacles to peace. **and**
- **There are thought to be** / to have been too many obstacles to peace.

We can use the same verbs in this pattern as with **subject + passive verb + to-infinitive** (see **C**).
Exercises

25.1 Which of the verbs in brackets can complete the sentence? Underline one or both. B & D

1. It was _____________ to hold new negotiations next month. (agreed / announced)
2. It has been _____________ that the crash was the result of pilot error. (proposed / shown)
3. It was _____________ that Mrs Ho would chair the meeting. (hoped / explained)
4. It has been _____________ to appoint Dr Ahmadi as head teacher. (decided / suggested)
5. It has not yet been _____________ who was responsible for the error. (claimed / explained)
6. It has now been _____________ that half of cancer cases are lifestyle-related. (established / revealed)
7. It is _____________ to create 500 more jobs in the factory. (expected / intended)
8. It is _____________ to close the library permanently from next April. (planned / recommended)
9. It is _____________ that another moon landing will take place next year. (assumed / thought)
10. It has been _____________ how spiders are able to travel across the sea. (discovered / said)

25.2 If possible, rewrite these newspaper headlines as passive sentences with it. If not, write X. A & B

1. AGREEMENT THAT UN WILL SEND IN TROOPS
   It has been agreed that the UN will send in troops.

2. PATIENTS REASSURED ABOUT HOSPITAL SAFETY

3. WATER DISCOVERED ON MARS

4. TERRORISTS BELIEVED TO BE OPERATING IN BERLIN

5. MOON ASTRONAUTS EXPECTED TO RETURN TODAY

6. EX-PRESIDENT JULIUS REVEALED AS SPY

7. WARNING GIVEN ABOUT COMPUTER VIRUS

8. KING SAID TO BE MAKING GOOD RECOVERY

9. RESTAURANT ESTABLISHED AS SOURCE OF FOOD POISONING OUTBREAK

10. POLICE TOLD TO WORK LONGER HOURS

25.3 Write two new sentences for each numbered sentence below, using it + passive verb + that-clause in one sentence and subject + passive verb + to-infinite in the other. (The second pattern may not always be possible.) C

1. It has been discovered that a mechanical fault caused the problem. / A mechanical fault was discovered to have caused the problem.

(1) We have discovered that a mechanical fault caused the problem. (2) We don’t think that the fault is serious. (3) We expect that it will take several weeks to correct the fault. (4) We have decided to postpone the next rocket launch, and (5) we suggest that the next launch should take place in May.
**Wh-questions with who, whom, which, how and whose**

**Who** refers to people, and can be used as subject, object or complement:
- Who owns that car?  
- Who did you meet?  
- Who was her father?

**Whom** is used as a formal alternative to who as object, and also directly after prepositions:
- Whom did you meet?  
- To whom were you talking?

**Which** is used to refer to people or things when we want to identify one of a group:
- Which is your brother? 'The one next to Luka.' (talking about a photograph)
  - and we can use which instead of who to talk about particular classes of people:
- Which do you think earns more, a teacher or a police officer? (or Who do you think …?)

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- Who owns that car?  
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- Which do you think earns more, a teacher or a police officer? (or Who do you think …?)

We usually use **which**, rather than **who** or **what**, in questions before one(s) and of, as which is commonly used to ask or talk about a choice between one or more things:
- I’ve decided to buy one of these jumpers. Which one do you think I should choose?  
- Which of you would like to go first? (rather than Who of …?)

When we use **who** or **what** as **subjects**, the verb that follows is usually singular, even if a plural answer is expected:
- What is there to see in the town? (expects an answer giving a number of things to see; not What are there to see in the town?)

However, the verb can be plural in echo questions (see Unit 27E) after a plural subject or a subject consisting of two or more noun phrases joined by **and**:
- 'Mr Almeida and his family are here to see you.' 'Who are here?' (or Who’s here?)
  - and when **who** and **what** function as **complements**:
- Who are those people over there?  
- What are the consequences of the decision?

**How or what?**

**How**
- How was the journey? (asking a general opinion)  
- How is your brother? (asking about general health)  
- How do you like your coffee? (asking about food and drink preferences)

**What**
- What was the journey like? (asking a general opinion)  
- What do you like about the job? (asking for details)  
- What if your plan doesn’t work? (asking about consequences)  
- What’s it called? (asking about a name)

**How / What (about)**
- How / What about a swim? (making a suggestion)  
- 'He’s a bit scary sometimes.' 'How / What do you mean?' (asking for more information)

We can use **whose** to ask about the person that owns or is responsible for something. **Whose** can be used either before a verb (as a pronoun):
- Whose are these boots?
  - or before a noun or noun phrase (as a determiner) introducing direct or indirect questions:
- Whose boots are these?
  - She asked me whose coat I was wearing.

In formal contexts we can use a preposition before **whose** (see also Unit 55B):
- In whose desk was it found? (less formally Whose desk was it found in?)

However, in questions without a verb a preposition comes before **whose**:
- 'We’re meeting at nine.' 'In whose house?' (not Whose house in?)
Exercises

26.1 Underline the correct option (or both if possible). A & B
1. To whom / who should the documents be sent?
2. Which / Who of you is Dr Hansen? I have a message for you.
3. A: Here’s a photo of our children at the fancy dress party.  B: Who / Which is Isabella?
4. A: Is your sister at home?  B: What / Which one do you want to speak to?
5. Whom / Who do you hold responsible for the damage?
6. Who / Which will captain the team if Zeinab isn’t available?
7. Which / Who would you rather be – a doctor or a vet?
8. Who / Whom translated the book?

26.2 Complete the sentences with an appropriate present simple form of the verbs in brackets. C
1. What _________ those cakes made from? (be)
2. Who _________ you for Maths and English? (teach)
3. What _________ there to see on the island? (be)
4. Who _________ the major decisions in the company? (make)
5. A: The Turners are in France.  B: Who _________ in France? (be)
6. Who _________ their textbook with them? Put your hands up. (have)

26.3 First, complete the sentences with how, what, or how / what if both are possible. Then choose an appropriate answer for each question. D
1. ‘__________ do you like about your new job?’
   a. ‘It’s really boring.’
   b. ‘I’d love one.’
   c. ‘I mean you’ve got to wear a suit.’
   d. ‘Tell him I’ll call back.’
   e. ‘It was great.’
   f. ‘Lucía García.’
   g. ‘It’s never boring.’
   h. ‘Quite well, thanks.’
   i. ‘We had an excellent time.’
   j. ‘She works us really hard.’

26.4 Correct any mistakes in the italicised words or, if necessary, suggest ways of making the sentence more natural. If the sentence is already correct, write ✓. B, C & E
1. Who’s caravan were you staying in?
2. Whose are all these books?
3. He asked us who’s car was parked in front of his house.
5. Whose going with you to Canada?
6. About whose travels in Nepal did Liam Wilson write a book?
7. What one of the following statements is true?
8. Who of us has not told a lie at some time in our lives?
9. A: Can you post the books to us?  B: Whose address to?
10. A: Ants have got into the fridge!  B: What has got into the fridge?
Negative questions

We usually make a negative yes / no or wh-question with an auxiliary verb (have, did, would, etc.) + -n’t to suggest, persuade, criticise, etc.

- Wouldn’t it be better to go tomorrow?
- Why don’t we go out for a meal?

In formal contexts, or when we want to give some special emphasis to the negative (perhaps to show that we are angry, very surprised, or to strongly persuade someone), we can use not after the subject in negative questions. This happens particularly in yes / no rather than wh-questions:

- Did she not realise that she’d broken it? (more emphatic than Didn’t she realise that …?)
- Can you not get there a bit earlier? (more emphatic than Can’t you …?)

We sometimes use negative words instead of -n’t such as never, no, nobody, nothing, nowhere:

- Why do you never help?
- Have you nowhere to go? (or Do you have nowhere to go?)

or less emphatically or more informally:

- Why don’t you ever help?
- Haven’t you got anywhere to go? (or Don’t you have anywhere …?)

We can make a suggestion with Why not + bare infinitive or Why don’t / doesn’t + subject + bare infinitive (but not Why do not / does not …):

- Why not decorate the house yourself? (or Why don’t you decorate …?)

Why didn’t … isn’t used to make a suggestion, but can show that we think an action was wrong. For example, depending on intonation and context, it can be used to criticise someone:

- Why didn’t you tell me that in the first place? (I’m annoyed that you didn’t)

We use negative question forms with falling intonation for exclamations when we expect agreement:

- Haven’t you grown!
- Doesn’t she look lovely!
- Didn’t it snow a lot!

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Exercises

27.1 Write negative questions for B in these dialogues, using -n’t with the words in brackets. A

1. A: Can you lend me €10?  
   B: Again? Haven’t you got any money left? (… money left?)

2. A: I’m annoyed that you didn’t come to the meeting.  
   B: Why? (… my email / on holiday?)

3. A: I’ve had to bring the children with me.  
   B: Why? (… babysitter?)

4. A: I’ll just finish my homework before I go to school.  
   B: But (… be supposed to / last night?)

5. A: I’ve put my bike in the sitting room.  
   B: The sitting room! (… outside?)

6. A: I’m taking the coach to Vienna.  
   B: But that will take ages. (… rather / plane?)

27.2 Use the notes to complete these dialogues with two negative questions. In the first use -n’t; in the second use never, no, nobody, nothing or nowhere. B

1. (ever / considered you might / wrong)  
   A: Haven’t you ever considered you might be wrong? / Have you never considered you might be wrong?

2. (you / any interest / maths at all)  
   A: No, I’ve always hated it.

3. A: I spent the night in the railway station. (could / find anywhere else / sleep)  
   B: ?

4. (can / remember anything about / accident)  
   A: ?

5. (why / ever do well / exams)  
   A: Perhaps you don’t revise enough.

6. (there anybody / you can ask / help)  
   A: I can’t think of anyone.

27.3 Complete the echo questions using appropriate question words or phrases. E

1. A: Jake’s going to Chile.  
   B: He’s going where? / He’s doing what? / He’s what?

2. A: He’s leaving at the end of next week.  
   B: He’s leaving when? / He’s doing what? / He’s what?

3. A: He’ll be away for three months.  
   B: He’ll be away for how long? / He’ll what?

4. A: It will cost about £15,000.  
   B: It’ll cost how much? / It’ll what?

5. A: He’s sold his house to pay for the trip.  
   B: He’s sold what? / He’s done what? / He’s what?

6. A: He’s going climbing in the Andes.  
   B: He’s going climbing where? / He’s doing what? / He’s what?

27.4 If necessary, correct any mistakes in these sentences. Put a tick if they are already correct. C, D & F

1. A: Mariam isn’t answering her phone.  
   B: Why do you not email her?

2. Who do you expect that will read your blog?

3. Why did they suggest that we should avoid using the motorway?

4. Was not it a brilliant film!

5. If she really wants to go rock climbing, why not let her?

6. What did you say that is in these biscuits?

7. How do you think that Twitter will have changed our lives in ten years’ time?

8. Why did not you tell me you’d changed your number?
Verbs, objects and complements

Some verbs can be either transitive or intransitive, allowing us to focus on either the person or thing performing the action, or the person or thing affected by the action. Compare:

- She closed the door. (transitive) and The door closed. (intransitive)
- I’ve ripped my shirt. (transitive) and My shirt has ripped. (intransitive)

Also: begin, bend, break, burn, change, decrease, drop, finish, increase, move, open, shut, start, vary, wake (most are ‘change’ verbs)

Some transitive verbs don’t need an object when the meaning is clear from the context:
- I often sing (songs) in the shower.
- She plays (the saxophone) beautifully.

Also: answer, ask, change, cook, dance, drink, drive, eat, fail, park, phone, read, smoke, study, wash, wash up, wave, win, write

After some verbs we usually add a complement – a phrase which completes the meaning of a verb, noun or adjective – which is an adverb or prepositional phrase:
- The disease originated in Britain. (not The disease originated. We need to add something about where or how it originated.)

Other verbs usually have a complement but may not. Compare:
- He paused for a few moments. and He paused. (no complement needed)

Some verbs are commonly followed by a particular preposition or prepositions and then an object (see also Unit 94):
- We had to deal with hundreds of complaints. (not We had to deal.)
- I’m sure that blue car belongs to Murad. (not I’m sure that blue car belongs.)

Also: adhere to, aspire to, culminate in / with, detract from, differentiate between, incline to / towards, specialise in

Some verbs are usually followed by an object + prepositional phrase complement:
- I always associate pizza with Italy. (not I always associate pizza.)
- She put the report on the floor. (not She put the report.)

Also: attribute … to, base … on / upon, equate … with, inflict … on, mistake … for, regard … as / with, remind … of

Some verbs are often followed by an object + adjective (or adjective phrase) complement:
- The people of this country will hold the government responsible.
- Conti pronounced herself fit for the match.

Also: assume, believe, consider, declare, find, judge, prove, report, think. (The object after declare, find, pronounce and prove is usually a reflexive pronoun, e.g. myself, yourself.)

Sentences with an object + adjective complement after these verbs are usually rather formal. Adding to be after the object or using a that-clause can make sentences less formal:
- Dr Adams argues that house prices will fall, but other economists believe the opposite true. (or less formally … believe the opposite to be true. or … believe that the opposite is true.)
Exercises

28.1 If it is possible to omit the object (in italics) after the underlined verbs, put brackets around it. B

Aya was (1) **reading** (a book) when the telephone rang. It was Val. She said, 'I called you earlier, but nobody (2) **answered** the phone. Would you like to come over to (3) **eat** dinner tonight with me and Tom? Is eight okay?’ Aya (4) **thanked** Val and said that she’d love to come. At about seven Aya started to get ready. She (5) **washed** herself and (6) **brushed** her hair. Then she (7) **changed** her clothes and (8) **put on** some makeup. After that, she (9) **drove** her car to Malstowe, the village where Val and Tom lived. Val was gardening when Aya (10) **reached** their house and she (11) **waved** her hand when she saw Aya. Aya (12) **parked** her car on the drive and walked over to Val. Val said, 'Tom’s still (13) **cooking** dinner, so I thought I had time (14) **to pick** some flowers. By the way, my sister Kate is staying with us. She’s (15) **studying** French at university, but is on holiday at the moment. I forgot to (16) **mention** her when I spoke to you earlier. I’ll (17) **introduce** you when we go inside.’ Aya (18) **enjoyed** the evening very much. The food was excellent and they talked a lot about their holiday plans. Aya hoped to go to Canada, but wasn’t sure yet that she could (19) **afford** it. Before she left, Aya helped (20) **wash up** the dishes. As she drove home, she decided that she must (21) **invite** Val and Tom for a meal at her house very soon.

28.2 Complete sentences 1–4 with a correct verb + preposition + noun phrase. Complete 5–8 with a correct verb + noun phrase + preposition. D & E

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbs</th>
<th>Prepositions</th>
<th>Noun phrases</th>
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<td>aspire</td>
<td>between</td>
<td>the black car</td>
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<tr>
<td>attribute</td>
<td>for</td>
<td>national leadership</td>
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<td>base</td>
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<td>culminate</td>
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<td>differentiate</td>
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<td>inflict</td>
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<td>her new novel</td>
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<td>specialise</td>
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<td>seafood</td>
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</table>

1 Electors deserve more from a political party that __________ the black car. __________ national leadership.
2 Years of research by Fleming __________ the discovery of penicillin.
3 This medical condition makes it difficult for some people to __________ the black car.
4 There’s a great restaurant by the harbour which __________ the first division leaders.
5 The team of amateur footballers __________ the first division leaders.
6 After Lewis’s victory, he __________ the advice of his new trainer.
7 It was dark and raining and she __________ a taxi.
8 Emilia Jakobsen has __________ events that took place in 16th-century Denmark.

28.3 Complete these sentences with any appropriate adjective. F

1 The scientific evidence proved him __________.
2 She declared herself __________ with the result.
3 They considered the food __________.
4 I’m surprised the plumber hasn’t turned up. I’ve always found him __________.
5 We believed her __________ at school.

Now write less formal versions using either to be after the object or a that-clause.

1 The scientific evidence proved him to be guilty. / The scientific evidence proved that he was guilty.
Verb + two objects

Some verbs can be followed by two objects. Usually the first object (= the indirect object (IO)) is a person or group of people and the second object (= the direct object (DO)) is a thing:

- Can you bring me (= IO) some milk (= DO) from the shops?
- He made himself (= IO) a cup of coffee. (= DO).

Many verbs that can have two objects may also be used with a DO only (e.g. I read a story). With many verbs that can have two objects, it is possible to reverse the order of the objects if we put for or to before the IO (this is then called a prepositional object). Compare:

- I built my daughter a doll’s house. and
- I built a doll’s house for my daughter.
- Can you pass me that bandage? and
- Can you pass that bandage to me?

Other verbs with for + object: book, buy, catch, choose, cook, fetch, find, get, make, order, pour, save

Other verbs with to + object: award, give, hand, lend, offer, owe, show, teach, tell, throw

We often use this pattern if we want to focus particular attention on the object after for / to. We also use it if the IO is a lot longer than the DO:

- Jasmin taught music to a large number of children at the school. (not Jasmin taught a large number of children at the school music.)

If the DO is a pronoun, a pattern with DO + preposition + IO is usual. Patterns without a preposition are avoided because they are considered to be bad style:

- I gave them to Isa. (rather than I gave Isa them. / I gave them Isa.)
- We bought it for them. (rather than We bought them it. / We bought it them.)

Some verbs can be used with either for or to. Often there is a difference in meaning: to suggests that there is a transfer of something to someone, and for suggests that someone benefits from something. Compare:

- I hadn’t got time to visit Mira, so I wrote a letter to her. and
- Mira had broken her wrist, so I wrote a letter for her.

Also: bring, leave, pay, play, post, read, sell, send, sing, take

Sometimes, however, the meaning is very similar:

- He played the piece to (or for) me.
- Can you sing that song again to (or for) us?

Note that when object + object is used after these verbs it usually has a similar meaning to the verb with object + to + object. For example:

- I sold him the car. (means I sold the car to him, not I sold the car for him.)

Some verbs that are followed by two objects cannot have their objects reversed with for / to:

- We all envied him his lifestyle. (but not We all envied his lifestyle for / to him.)

Also: allow, ask, cost, deny, forgive, guarantee, permit, refuse

Some verbs, such as describe and fix, can only have a second object if this is a prepositional object – with to (see also Unit 23A). Compare:

- She described the situation to me. (but not She described me the situation.) and
- She told this joke to me. or She told me this joke.

☆ with for. Compare:

- He fixed the tap for me. (but not He fixed me the tap.) and
- I booked a room for her. or I booked her a room.

Also: admit, announce, demonstrate, explain, introduce, mention, point out, prove, report, say, suggest

Also: collect, mend, repair
Exercises

29.1 Complete each sentence with a suitable form of a verb from the box and insert to or for in an appropriate place. Write to / for if either can be used. A & B

| choose | offer | pass | pay | post | read | save | sell | take | teach |

1. Elias hasn’t got any money so I’ll have to ___________ the bill ___________ him.
2. Kaspar hates going shopping. I have to ___________ his clothes ___________ him.
3. You’re staying with Dimitra at the weekend, aren’t you? Can you ___________ this present ___________ her?
4. I can’t reach the salt. Could you ___________ it ___________ me, please?
5. When Mr Durand bought the house, we ___________ all the carpets ___________ him as well.
6. He’s got a very rewarding job. He ___________ sports disabled children.
7. I haven’t got my glasses. Can you ___________ these instructions ___________ me, please?
8. Jane ___________ the letter ___________ on her way to work because I had flu and couldn’t go out.
9. I ___________ my old bike ___________ him, but he said he wanted something more modern.
10. I’ll be in late tonight. Can you ___________ some dinner ___________ me, please?

29.2 If necessary, correct these sentences. If the sentence is already correct, write ✓. C & D

1. He kindly collected me some library books.
2. He admitted his error for his colleagues.
3. I have to prepare a report for the meeting.
4. Can I ask a favour to you?
5. A special ticket allows entry for people to all the museums in the city.
6. I’d like to introduce you to my sister.

29.3 Complete these texts with objects chosen from the box. Give all possible word orders and add prepositions where necessary. A–D

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>the problem / our teacher</th>
<th>her photograph / me</th>
<th>the glass / him</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>another half an hour / us</td>
<td>his sister / me</td>
<td>three bedtime stories / him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an email / him</td>
<td>his broken car / him</td>
<td>the money / me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a drink / him</td>
<td>a paper aeroplane / him</td>
<td>the problem / him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a fortune / you</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. A: Samuel phoned. He wants to come and stay with us at the beginning of September.
   B: But that’s when my parents will be with us. I’ll have to send ___________ ___________ ___________ or ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________.
2. When he described ___________ ___________ ___________, I didn’t think I knew her, but when he showed ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________ I realised that I had seen her at work.
3. The clock on the wall was wrong. When we pointed out ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________, she allowed ___________ ___________ ___________ to finish the exam.
4. My three-year-old nephew, Luis, always keeps me busy when I babysit. Last night I first had to make ___________ ___________ ___________, then I had to mend ___________ ___________ ___________ and after that he insisted that I read ___________ ___________ ___________.
5. A: Your new motorbike must have cost ___________ ___________ ___________.
   B: Well, actually, my parents lent ___________ ___________ ___________.
6. I poured ___________ ___________ ___________, and gave ___________ ___________ ___________.
