Advanced Phrasal Verbs – Worksheet 1

Name: Class: Date: Score: / 39

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Exercise 1: Match the meanings

Match each phrasal verb with its meaning from the box. There are two extra meanings you do not need.

WORD BOX

try to find out someone's opinion informally

choose one person or thing from a group for special attention

stop yourself from showing a feeling or doing something **cause something to happen**

suggest an idea or plan for others to consider **accept a responsibility or a piece of work**

become successful again after a difficulty **reduce the amount of something**

1. sound somebody out → _____
2. single somebody out → _____
3. hold back → _____
4. bring about → _____
5. put forward → _____
6. take on → _____

Exercise 2: Choose the phrasal verb

Complete the sentences with the phrasal verbs from the box. There are two extra phrasal verbs.

Example: Before you sign, ___ the advantages and disadvantages carefully. → weigh up

WORD BOX

iron out **phase out** **crack down on** **brush up on** **opt out of** **pull off** **live up to** **drag on** **bounce back**

7. The engineers still need to _____ a few technical problems before the launch.
8. The government plans to _____ petrol cars gradually over the next decade.
9. The city council has promised to _____ illegal parking in the centre.
10. Before the interview in Lyon, I really want to _____ my French.
11. Staff who prefer a private plan can _____ the company pension scheme.
12. Nobody expected such a small team to _____ such an ambitious project.

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13. Unfortunately, the sequel didn't _____ the enormous expectations.

Exercise 3: Use the correct form

Complete each sentence with the correct form of the phrasal verb in brackets.

Example: Police have ___ (rule out) any connection between the two cases. → ruled out

14. The negotiations _____ (drag on) for nearly six months before an agreement was finally reached.
15. Despite a disastrous first half, the team _____ (bounce back) and won 3–2.
16. I keep meaning to reply to Amira's email, but I haven't _____ (get round to) it yet.
17. The minister has been accused of _____ (play down) the seriousness of the crisis.
18. Eventually, Tomás _____ (own up to) breaking the neighbour's window.
19. The study _____ (carry out) by an independent team of scientists last year.
20. Our plans to buy the flat _____ (fall through) when the bank refused the loan.

Exercise 4: Nouns from phrasal verbs

Form a noun from the phrasal verb in capitals to complete each sentence.

Example: The ___ of the meeting was positive for everyone. (COME OUT) → outcome

21. Scientists hailed the discovery as a major _____ in cancer research. (BREAK THROUGH)
22. Voter _____ was unusually low in this year's local elections. (TURN OUT)
23. The only _____ of the scheme is that it is extremely expensive. (DRAW BACK)
24. The knee injury was a serious _____ in her athletic career. (SET BACK)
25. He says his strict _____ taught him the value of hard work. (BRING UP)
26. An _____ of flu forced the school to close for a week. (BREAK OUT)
27. The economic _____ has led to thousands of job losses. (TURN DOWN)

Exercise 5: Correct the mistakes

Each sentence has one mistake. Rewrite the sentence correctly.

Example: She came up a great idea. → She came up with a great idea.

28. We need to come up a better solution before Friday.

29. The union refused to back up, so the strike continued.

30. Leila put forward a proposal, but the board turned it off.

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31. I came across with an old photo while I was tidying the attic.

32. The company took up twenty new employees last month.

33. The project ran against a number of unexpected obstacles.

Exercise 6: Rewrite the sentences

Rewrite each sentence using the phrasal verb in brackets so that the meaning stays the same.

Example: They postponed the meeting. (put off) → They put off the meeting.

34. The match was cancelled because of the storm. (call off)

35. We can't exclude the possibility of further delays. (rule out)

36. I really admire and respect my older sister. (look up to)

37. Hana invented a brilliant excuse for being late. (make up)

38. The factory is going to stop producing its oldest model in stages. (phase out)

39. I tolerated his rude behaviour for far too long. (put up with)

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Answer key – Advanced Phrasal Verbs – Worksheet 1

Exercise 1: Match the meanings

1. **try to find out someone's opinion informally**
   To sound someone out is to discover their views in an informal way.
2. **choose one person or thing from a group for special attention**
   To single out means to pick one from a group, for praise or criticism.
3. **stop yourself from showing a feeling or doing something**
   To hold back means to control or restrain yourself, e.g. hold back tears.
4. **cause something to happen**
   To bring about change means to cause it to happen.
5. **suggest an idea or plan for others to consider**
   You put forward a proposal, idea or plan.
6. **accept a responsibility or a piece of work**
   To take on a task or responsibility means to accept it.

Exercise 2: Choose the phrasal verb

7. **iron out**
   To iron out problems means to solve small remaining difficulties.
8. **phase out**
   To phase out means to stop using something in stages.
9. **crack down on**
   To crack down on means to deal with a problem more strictly.
10. **brush up on**
    To brush up on a skill means to improve it after not using it for a while.
11. **opt out of**
    To opt out of means to choose not to take part in something.
12. **pull off**
    To pull off means to succeed in doing something difficult.
13. **live up to**
    To live up to expectations means to be as good as people hoped.

Exercise 3: Use the correct form

14. **dragged on**
    The simple past 'dragged on' is correct, and the past perfect forms 'had dragged on' and 'had been dragging on' are also correct because they describe a situation that continued over a period up to a point in the past, when the agreement was reached.
15. **bounced back**
    Past simple for a completed past event; bounce back = recover quickly.
16. **got round to**
    Present perfect with yet needs the past participle; get round to = finally find time to do something.
17. **playing down**
    After a preposition (of) we use the -ing form; play down = make something seem less important.
18. **owned up to**
    Past simple; own up to = admit doing something wrong.
19. **was carried out**
    Passive past simple because the study is the object of the action.
20. **fell through**
    Past simple; fall through = fail to happen as planned.

Exercise 4: Nouns from phrasal verbs

21. **breakthrough**
    A breakthrough is an important new discovery or development.
22. **turnout**
    Turnout is the number of people who attend or vote.
23. **drawback**
    A drawback is a disadvantage.
24. **setback**
    A setback is a problem that delays progress.
25. **upbringing**
    Upbringing is the way a child is raised; note the particle comes first.
26. **outbreak**
    An outbreak is the sudden start of a disease; the particle comes first.
27. **downturn**
    A downturn is a fall in economic activity; the particle comes first.

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Exercise 5: Correct the mistakes

28. **We need to come up with a better solution before Friday.**
    The phrasal verb is come up with (three parts) when followed by an object.
29. **The union refused to back down, so the strike continued.**
    Back down means to stop insisting on something; back up means to support.
30. **Leila put forward a proposal, but the board turned it down.**
    To reject a proposal is to turn it down.
31. **I came across an old photo while I was tidying the attic.**
    Come across (find by chance) takes a direct object without with.
32. **The company took on twenty new employees last month.**
    Take on means to employ new staff.
33. **The project ran up against a number of unexpected obstacles.**
    'Run against' is not the correct phrasal verb here: both 'ran up against' and 'ran into' are correct because they mean to meet a difficulty or obstacle unexpectedly.

Exercise 6: Rewrite the sentences

34. **The match was called off because of the storm.**
    Call off means cancel; keep the passive structure.
35. **We can't rule out the possibility of further delays.**
    Rule out means to exclude something as a possibility.
36. **I really look up to my older sister.**
    Look up to someone means to admire and respect them.
37. **Hana made up a brilliant excuse for being late.**
    Make up means to invent a story or excuse.
38. **The factory is going to phase out its oldest model.**
    Phase out already means to stop something gradually, in stages.
39. **I put up with his rude behaviour for far too long.**
    Put up with means to tolerate something unpleasant.

Notes for teachers: Start with the matching exercise to activate meaning, then let learners work through the controlled exercises in pairs before checking answers together. Typical mistakes include dropping the second particle in three-part verbs (come up with, run up against), choosing the wrong particle (back up instead of back down), and forgetting to change the verb form after prepositions (accused of playing down). As a follow-up, ask learners to write a short news report or email using at least six of the phrasal verbs and phrasal nouns from the worksheet.

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