

For questions 9-16, read the text below and think of the word which best fits each gap. Use only one word in each gap. There is an example at the beginning (0).

Write your answers IN CAPITAL LETTERS.

Example: (0) **HAVE**

Double act

What **0** _____ Laurel and Hardy, French and Saunders and Ant and Dec got in common? Even **9** _____ you haven't the faintest idea who they are, the clue lies **10** _____ the pairing of names: they are - or were - 'double acts'.

A double act **11** _____ also known as a comedy duo, a form of comedy performance traditional in the UK and USA. Two artists perform **12** _____ one, either on stage or on screen. Many **13** _____ so for their entire working lives, forming a close bond with each other and establishing themselves as a mainstay of TV entertainment.

Traditionally, one of the performers is the 'straight' man - or woman - who sets up the jokes for the 'comic', but there are other variations **14** _____ less defined roles.

Why has this perhaps odd-sounding form of comedy long **15** _____ such a success? Maybe because we see two good mates having a laugh together, and it reminds us of our own friendships. **16** _____ the reason, the double act, it seems, is here to stay.

Answers and explanations

9. **If.** We cannot use ‘though’ - it could work, if the sentence went like, ‘Even though you might not have the faintest idea...’.
10. **In/with.** A clue is a hint, a piece of information that helps us find the answer to something. The word ‘clue’ can work with both prepositions in this context.
11. **Is.** A common passive structure that explains what a double act is. Be careful to use the present tense, not the past.
12. **As.** The preposition ‘as’ points at the manner of performance – both people perform as if they were one, either figuratively (very good coordination) or literally (pretending to be two personalities of the same man or woman).
13. **Do.** ‘To do so’ refers to the previous statement – many act as a duo for the entirety of their professional lives. This is a common structure that allows you to avoid repeating the same word or idea that has been previously mentioned and it is clear what you refer to.
14. **With.** Variations of performance that have roles that are not so well-defined. Answering ‘of’ is wrong – we cannot refer to variations of less-defined roles, because nothing of that sort has been mentioned.
15. **Been.** The past participle form of the verb ‘to be’ is what we need for this sentence in the present perfect tense.
16. **Whatever.** The general idea here is that it doesn’t matter what the reasons are - ‘whatever the reasons’.