

Part 1

For questions 1-8, read the text below and decide which answer (A, B, C or D) best fits each gap. There is an example at the beginning (0).

Example:

A band	B set	<u>C branch</u>	D series
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What is genealogy

Genealogy is a **0** _____ of history. It concerns family history, **1** _____ than the national or world history studied at school. It doesn't merely involve drawing a family tree, however - tracing your family history can also **2** _____ in learning about your roots and your identity. The internet enables millions of people worldwide to **3** _____ information about their family history, without great **4** _____.

People who research their family history often **5** _____ that it's a fascinating hobby which **6** _____ a lot about where they come from and whether they have famous ancestors. According to a survey involving 900 people who had researched their family history, the chances of discovering a celebrity in your past are one in ten. The survey also concluded that the **7** _____ back you follow your family line, the more likely you are to find a relation who was much wealthier than you are. However, the vast majority of people who **8** _____ in the survey discovered they were better off than their ancestors.

1	A instead	B rather	C except	D sooner
2	A cause	B mean	C result	D lead
3	A accomplish	B access	C approach	D admit
4	A fee	B price	C charge	D expense
5	A describe	B define	C remark	D regard
6	A reveals	B opens	C begins	D arises
7	A older	B greater	C higher	D further
8	A attended	B participated	C included	D associated

Part 2

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). In the exam, write your answers **IN CAPITAL LETTERS** on the separate answer sheet.

Example: AS

Motorbike stunt rider

I work **0** _____ a motorbike stunt rider - that is, I do tricks on my motorbike at shows. The Le Mans race track in France was **9** _____ I first saw some guys doing motorbike stunts. I'd never seen anyone riding a motorbike using

FCE Reading and Use of English Test 10

just the back wheel before and I was **10** _____ impressed I went straight home and taught **11** _____ to do the same. It wasn't very long before I began to earn my living at shows performing my own motorbike stunts.

I have a degree **12** _____ mechanical engineering; this helps me to look at the physics **13** _____ lies behind each stunt. In addition to being responsible for design changes to the motorbike, I have to work **14** _____ every stunt I do. People often think that my work is very dangerous, but, apart **15** _____ some minor mechanical problem happening occasionally during a stunt, nothing ever goes wrong. I never feel in **16** _____ kind of danger because I'm very experienced.

Part 3

For questions **17-24**, read the text below. Use the word given in capitals at the end of some of the lines to form a word that fits in the gap in the same line. There is an example at the beginning (0).

In the exam, write your answers **IN CAPITAL LETTERS** on the separate answer sheet.

Example: COMMONLY

An incredible vegetable

Garlic, a member of the Liliaceae family which also includes onions, is **0** _____ used in cooking all around the world. China is currently the largest **17** _____ of garlic, which is particularly associated with the dishes of northern Africa and southern Europe. It is native to central Asia and has long had a history as a health giving food, used both to prevent and cure **18** _____. In Ancient Egypt, workers building the pyramids were given garlic to keep them strong, while Olympic athletes in Greece ate it to increase their resistance to infection.

The forefather of antibiotic medicine, Louis Pasteur, claimed garlic was as **19** _____ as penicillin in treating infections. Modern-day **20** _____ have proved that garlic can indeed kill bacteria and even some viruses, so it can be very useful for people who have coughs and colds. In **21** _____, some doctors believe that garlic can reduce blood **22** _____.

The only **23** _____ to this truly amazing food is that the strong and rather **24** _____ smell of garlic is not the most pleasant!

0.COMMON
17.PRODUCT
18.ILL
19.EFFECT
20.SCIENCE
21.ADD
22.PRESS
23.ADVANTAGE
24.SPICE

Part 4

For questions **25-30**, complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given. You must use **between two and five words**, including the word given. Here is an example (0).

Example:

0. A very friendly taxi driver drove us into town.

DRIVEN

We _____ a very friendly taxi driver

Example: 0. WERE DRIVEN INTO TOWN BY

FCE Reading and Use of English Test 10

25. Joan was in favour of visiting the museum.

IDEA

Joan thought it would be _____ to the museum.

26. Arthur has the talent to become a concert pianist.

THAT

Arthur is so _____ could become a concert pianist.

27. 'Do you know when the match starts, Sally?' asked Mary.

IF

Mary asked Sally _____ time the match started.

28. I knocked for ages at Ruth's door but I got no reply.

LONG

I _____ knocking at Ruth's door but I got no reply.

29. Everyone says that the band is planning to go on a world tour next year.

SAID

The band _____ planning to go on a world tour next year.

30. I'd prefer not to cancel the meeting.

CALL

I'd rather _____ the meeting

Part 5

You are going to read an extract from a novel in which a young woman called Caitlin talks about her life on an island. For questions 31-36, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

We live on the island of Hale. It's about four kilometres long and two kilometres wide at its broadest point, and it's joined to the mainland by a causeway called the Stand - a narrow road built across the mouth of the river which separates us from the rest of the country. Most of the time you wouldn't know we're on an island because the river mouth between us and the mainland is just a vast stretch of tall grasses and brown mud. But when there's a high tide and the water rises a half a metre or so above the road and nothing can pass until the tide goes out again a few hours later, then you know it's an island.

We were on our way back from the mainland. My older brother, Dominic, had just finished his first year at university in a town 150 km away. Dominic's train was due in at five and he'd asked for a lift back from the station. Now, Dad normally hates being disturbed when he's writing (which is just about all the time), and he also hates having to go anywhere, but despite the typical sighs and moans - why can't he get a taxi? what's wrong with the bus? - I could tell by the sparkle in his eyes that he was really looking forward to seeing Dominic.

So, anyway, Dad and I had driven to the mainland and picked up Dominic from the station. He had been talking non-stop from the moment he'd slung his rucksack in the boot and got in the car. University this, university that, writers, books, parties, people, money, gigs.... And when I say talking, I don't mean talking as in having a conversation, I mean talking as in jabbering like a mad thing. I didn't like it ... the way he spoke and waved his hands around as if he was some kind of intellectual or something. It was embarrassing. It made me feel uncomfortable - that kind of discomfort you feel when someone you like, someone close to you, suddenly starts

acting like a complete idiot. And I didn't like the way he was ignoring me, either. For all the attention I was getting I might as well not have been there. I felt a stranger in my own car.

As we approached the island on that Friday afternoon, the tide was low and the Stand welcomed us home, stretched out before us, clear and dry, beautifully hazy in the heat - a raised strip of grey concrete bound by white railings and a low footpath on either side, with rough cobbled banks leading down to the water. Beyond the railings, the water was glinting with that wonderful silver light we sometimes get here in the late afternoon which lazes through to the early evening.

We were about halfway across when I saw the boy. My first thought was how odd it was to see someone walking on the Stand. You don't often see people walking around here. Between Hale and Moulton (the nearest town about thirty kilometres away on the mainland), there's nothing but small cottages, farmland, heathland and a couple of hills. So islanders don't walk because of that. If they're going to Moulton they tend to take the bus. So the only pedestrians you're likely to see around here are walkers or bird-watchers. But even from a distance I could tell that the figure ahead didn't fit into either of these categories. I wasn't sure how I knew, I just did.

As we drew closer, he became clearer. He was actually a young man rather than a boy. Although he was on the small side, he wasn't as slight as I'd first thought. He wasn't exactly muscular, but he wasn't weedy-looking either. It's hard to explain. There was a sense of strength about him, a graceful strength that showed in his balance, the way he held himself, the way he walked...

31. In the first paragraph, what is Caitlin's main point about the island?

- A It can be dangerous to try to cross from the mainland.
- B It is much smaller than it looks from the mainland.
- C It is only completely cut off at certain times.
- D It can be a difficult place for people to live in.

32. What does Caitlin suggest about her father?

- A His writing prevents him from doing things he wants to with his family.
- B His initial reaction to his son's request is different from usual.
- C His true feelings are easily hidden from his daughter.
- D His son's arrival is one event he will take time off for.

33. Caitlin emphasises her feelings of discomfort because she

- A is embarrassed that she doesn't understand what her brother is talking about.
- B feels confused about why she can't relate to her brother any more.
- C is upset by the unexpected change in her brother's behaviour.
- D feels foolish that her brother's attention is so important to her.

34. In the fourth paragraph, what is Caitlin's purpose in describing the island?

- A to express her positive feelings about it
- B to explain how the road was built
- C to illustrate what kind of weather was usual
- D to describe her journey home

35. In 'because of that' in Paragraph Five (underlined), 'that' refers to the fact that

- A locals think it is odd to walk anywhere.
- B it is easier for people to take the bus than walk.

- C people have everything they need on the island.
D there is nowhere in particular to walk to from the island.

36. What do we learn about Caitlin's reactions to the boy?

- A She felt his air of confidence contrasted with his physical appearance.
B She was able to come up with a reason for him being there.
C She realised her first impression of him was inaccurate.
D She thought she had seen him somewhere before.

Part 6

You are going to read a newspaper article in which a former ballet dancer talks about the physical demands of the job. Six sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences A-G the one which fits each gap (37-42). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

Good preparation leads to success in ballet dancing

A former classical ballet dancer explains what ballet training actually involves.

What we ballet dancers do is instinctive, but instinct learnt through a decade of training. A dancer's life is hard to understand, and easy to misinterpret. Many a poet and novelist has tried to do so, but even they have chosen to interpret all the hard work and physical discipline as obsessive. And so the idea persists that dancers spend every waking hour in pain, bodies at breaking point, their smiles a pretence.

As a former dancer in the Royal Ballet Company here in Britain, I would beg to question this. **37** _____. With expert teaching and daily practice, its various demands are easily within the capacity of the healthy human body. Contrary to popular belief, there is no need to break bones or tear muscles to achieve ballet positions. It is simply a question of sufficient conditioning of the muscular system.

Over the course of my dancing life I worked my way through at least 10,000 ballet classes. I took my first at a school of dance at the age of seven and my last 36 years later at the Royal Opera House in London. In the years between, ballet class was the first thing I did every day. It starts at an early age, this daily ritual, because it has to. **38** _____. But for a ballet dancer in particular, this lengthy period has to come before the effects of adolescence set in, while maximum flexibility can still be achieved.

Those first classes I took were remarkably similar to the last. In fact, taking into account the occasional new idea, ballet classes have changed little since 1820, when the details of ballet technique were first written down, and are easily recognised in any country. Starting with the left hand on the barre, the routine unrolls over some 75 minutes. **39** _____. Even the leading dancers have to do it.

These classes serve two distinct purposes: they are the way we warm our bodies and the mechanism by which we improve basic technique. In class after class, we prove the old saying that 'practice makes perfect'. **40** _____. And it is also this daily repetition which enables us to strengthen the muscles required in jumping, spinning or lifting our legs to angles impossible to the average person.

The human body is designed to adapt to the demands we make of it, provided we make them carefully and over time. **41** _____. In the same way, all those years of classes add up to a fit-for-purpose dancing machine. This level of physical fluency doesn't hurt; it feels good.

42 __. But they should not be misled: there is a difference between hard work and hardship. Dancers have an everyday familiarity with the first. Hardship it isn't.

A. Through endless tries at the usual exercises and frequent failures, ballet dancers develop the neural pathways in the brain necessary to control accurate, fast and smooth movement.

B. The ballet shoe offers some support, but the real strength is in the muscles, built up through training.

C. As technology takes away activity from the lives of many, perhaps the ballet dancer's physicality is ever more difficult for most people to imagine.

D. Ballet technique is certainly extreme but it is not, in itself, dangerous.

E. The principle is identical in the gym - pushing yourself to the limit, but not beyond, will eventually bring the desired result.

F. No one avoids this: it is ballet's great democratiser, the well established members of the company working alongside the newest recruits.

G. It takes at least a decade of high-quality, regular practice to become an expert in any physical discipline.

Part 7

You are going to read a newspaper article about a young professional footballer. For questions 43 - 52, choose from the sections (A - D). The sections may be chosen more than once.

Which paragraph...

43. states how surprised the writer was at Duncan's early difficulties? __

44. says that Duncan sometimes seems much more mature than he really is? __

45. describes the frustration felt by Duncan's father? __

46. says that Duncan is on course to reach a high point in his profession? __

47. suggests that Duncan caught up with his team-mates in terms of physical development? __

48. explains how Duncan was a good all-round sportsperson? __

49. gives an example of how Gavin reassured his son? __

50. mentions Duncan's current club's low opinion of him at one time? __

51. mentions a personal success despite a failure for the team? __

52. explains how Duncan and his father are fulfilling a similar role? __

Rising Star

Margaret Garelly goes to meet Duncan Williams, who plays for Chelsea Football Club.

A

It's my first time driving to Chelsea's training ground and I turn off slightly too early at the London University playing fields. Had he accepted football's rejections in his early teenage years, it is exactly the sort of ground Duncan Williams would have found himself running around on at weekends. At his current age of 18, he would have been a bright first-year undergraduate mixing his academic studies with a bit of football, rugby and cricket, given his early talent in all these sports. However, Duncan undoubtedly took the right path. Instead of studying, he is sitting with his father Gavin in one of the interview rooms at Chelsea's training base reflecting on Saturday's match against Manchester City. Such has been his rise to fame that it is with some disbelief that you listen to him describing how his career was nearly all over before it began.

B

Gavin, himself a fine footballer - a member of the national team in his time - and now a professional coach, sent Duncan to three professional clubs as a 14 year-old, but all three turned him down. 'I worked with him a lot when he was around 12, and it was clear he had fantastic technique and skill. But then the other boys shot up in height and he didn't. But I was still upset and surprised that no team seemed to want him, that they couldn't see what he might develop into in time. When Chelsea accepted him as a junior, it was made clear to him that this was more of a last chance than a new beginning. They told him he had a lot of hard work to do and wasn't part of their plans. Fortunately, that summer he just grew and grew, and got much stronger as well.'

C

Duncan takes up the story: 'The first half of that season I played in the youth team. I got lucky - the first-team manager came to watch us play QPR, and though we lost 3-1, I had a really good game. I moved up to the first team after that performance.' Gavin points out that it can be beneficial to be smaller and weaker when you are developing - it forces you to learn how to keep the ball better, how to use 'quick feet' to get out of tight spaces. 'A couple of years ago, Duncan would run past an opponent as if he wasn't there but then the other guy would close in on him. I used to say to him, "Look, if you can do that now, imagine what you'll be like when you're 17, 18 and you're big and quick and they won't be able to get near you." If you're a smaller player, you have to use your brain a lot more.'

D

Not every kid gets advice from an ex-England player over dinner, nor their own private training sessions. Now Duncan is following in Gavin's footsteps. He has joined a national scheme where people like him give advice to ambitious young teenagers who are hoping to become professionals. He is an old head on young shoulders. Yet he's also like a young kid in his enthusiasm. And fame has clearly not gone to his head; it would be hard to meet a more likeable, humble young man. So will he get to play for the national team? 'One day I'd love to, but when that is, is for somebody else to decide.' The way he is playing, that won't be long.

Answer Keys

Part 1

1. **B - rather.** 'Rather than' is used to contrast it with the second clause and means 'instead of, as opposed to'. 'Instead' shouldn't be picked as it is used with 'of' [preposition](#).
2. **C - result.** 'To result in something'. The only verb here that works with the 'in' preposition. 'Lead' fits lexically, however it should be used with 'to': 'Increased unemployment might lead to higher crime rates'.
3. **B - access.** To get access, to use, to be allowed to use something.
4. **D - expense.** The focus here is people who spend money, not the providers of such information, therefore 'charge' shouldn't be used.
5. **C - remark.** 'To remark' is to point out, to mention, to say what you notice.
6. **A - reveal.** To reveal is to make known, to uncover, to learn something that remained a mystery.
7. **D - further.** The bigger part of one's family past you take, the more likely you are to find something.
8. **B - participated.** To participate in something. 'Included' would need the passive passive here, so we can't choose it.

Part 2

9. **where.** The author goes back in time - using 'when' conjunction.
10. **so.** 'So' is used for emphasis and as a reason to do something.
11. **myself.** The sentence that follows the gap makes it clear that the author is talking about himself.
12. **in.** A degree in something - meaning that the person had that subject as their major at college or university.
13. **which/that.** Both determiners can be used here - they help us understand the meaning and connection in the sentence - what kind of physics exactly the author means here.
14. **out/on/at.** Different prepositions change the meaning slightly. 'To work out' is to understand how something works. 'To work on' is to spend your time doing something, similarly to 'work at'.
15. **from.** Apart from here has a similar meaning to 'other than'.
16. **any.** The author doesn't feel any danger at all because of all the excitement. 'Some' shouldn't be used here because it would change the message - the author feels very confident, and 'any kind of danger' illustrates that.

Part 3

17. **producer.** A noun-forming suffix '-er' is used.
18. **illness(es).** Note that the word is spelled with double 'l' and double 's'. Both plural and singular forms are acceptable as they do not change the meaning.
19. **effective.** A comparison is made using 'as... as...' structure.
20. **scientists.** The plural form is needed as the verb 'have' is used in plural. Another word with tricky spelling - make sure to get it right, otherwise it won't be scored.
21. **addition.** 'In addition' means 'what is more, also'.
22. **pressure.** 'Blood pressure' is a commonly used medical term, so this one shouldn't cause any difficulties.
23. **disadvantage.** A negative prefix 'dis-' is used to change the meaning of the word to fit the context.
24. **spicy.** An adverb is formed by adding '-y' ending and dropping the letter 'e'.

Part 4

25. **a good idea to go.** 'To be in favour of something' is paraphrased as 'to think that something would be a good idea', then changed accordingly to grammatically fit the context.
26. **talented that he/she.** 'So talented that' means 'talented enough to'.
27. **if he/she knew what/the.** We don't really know if Sally is a boy or a girl, so both pronouns are acceptable. In the second part, the determiner 'what' and the definite article 'the' are interchangeable as the meaning remains unchanged.
28. **spent/took/was a long time.** Any of the three verbs are fine, as they collocate well with the verb in Continuous tense.
29. **are/is said to be.** Both plural and singular of the auxiliary verb 'to be' can be used, as we can either think of it as a single group or as a number of individuals.
30. **not call off OR you/we didn't/did not call off.** I'd rather not means 'I would prefer not to'. The second option is more group-oriented, meaning that a group of people are in charge of making the decision to cancel the meeting.

Part 5

- 31.**C.** Answers A and D are not mentioned. Answer B is not addressed either - she talks about the size of the island, but that's all. Caitlin says that you only realise that you live on an island during high tide, when you get completely cut off from the mainland for a few hours.
- 32.**D.** Her father's usual reaction to being disturbed is irritation and indignation. However, this time he quite surprisingly agrees to meet Dominic. Answer A is not correct, as he himself chooses to do his writing almost all the time. Answer B is wrong, as if we talk about 'initial' reaction we imply that later he changes his way of looking at it, which he doesn't do. There is no information relating to Answer C.
- 33.**C.** Caitlin couldn't understand the reason behind her brother's change of behaviour: '*... that kind of discomfort you feel when someone you like, someone close to you, suddenly starts acting like a complete idiot*'. Answer A is not mentioned. Answer B is wrong - she couldn't relate to him because of the way he had changed. Answer D is not mentioned.
- 34.**A.** Throughout the description given by Caitlin in Paragraph Four we can clearly see how fond she is of the place she calls home.
- 35.**D.** Nothing can be found immediately outside the island, that is the reason people do not normally walk from it, but rather take buses to ride further away where civilisation begins.
- 36.**C.** At first Caitlin thought him to be a little boy, but as they got closer, she realised that he was a young man, albeit not that tall.

Part 6

- 37.**D.** The previous sentence ends with '*... I would beg to question this*'. Question what? The fact that ballet is all about pain and suffering. Sentence D then dispels that myth.
- 38.**G.** Both this and the previous sentence talk about the importance of regular, thorough exercising in order to achieve something.
- 39.**F.** The sentence that follows the gap helps us pick the right answer - even the greatest dancers do this routine. It is a great 'democratiser' - a thing that makes people more even. Both the new dancers and the professionals do the same thing, they do the training routine.
- 40.**A.** It is by means of endless exercising that ballet dancers manage to achieve perfect balance of strength and accuracy of movements.
- 41.**E.** '*... pushing yourself to the limit, but not beyond...*' continues the idea from the previous sentence, where it states how we should be careful about what we demand of our bodies.
- 42.**C.** A sentence to introduce the last paragraph and put the fact of declining popularity of physical exercising in perspective.

Part 7

- 43.**A.** Last sentence mentions how the author struggles to believe the difficulties that Duncan had at the very beginning of his sports career.
- 44.**D.** 'An old head on young shoulders' is an expression that the author uses to talk about Duncan. It means that he seems to be quite wise and reasonable, especially for his age.
- 45.**B.** Duncan's father was very upset at the fact that no team wanted to take his son.
- 46.**D.** Last sentence says that the day he will be playing for a national team is not that far away.

- 47.**B.** Last summer, the boy shot up in height as well as gained more strength, closing the gap between himself and his peers.
- 48.**A.** The author mentions football, rugby and cricket in order to show how Duncan was good at all of the sports.
- 49.**C.** Gavin pointed out how being small can teach you better control of the ball and how you have to work with what you have.
- 50.**B.** His current club told him that Duncan is not a part of their plans, and how he has to work really hard.
- 51.**C.** Despite losing 3-1, Duncan performed well, winning him a place in the first team.
- 52.**D.** *'Now Duncan is following in Gavin's footsteps'.*

Vocabulary

The vocabulary below is meant to help you with the more difficult words. If the word isn't on the list then you are either supposed to know it or it is too specific to be worth learning and you don't have to know it to answer the question. Symbols in brackets mean part of speech (see bottom of the list). Sentences in italics give examples of usage for some more complex words and phrases.

And remember — you are not given a vocabulary list (or a dictionary) at your real exam.

Part 1

Concern (v) - (here) to have something as a subject of study or research, to be connected with.

Merely (adv) - only, just. *He was merely an amateur, not a real athlete, even though he was quite talented.*

Trace (v) - to follow something in order to understand where it comes from, find its origins.

Ancestor (n) - a person of your family line that lived before you, i.e. your grandparents, great grandparents and so on.

Part 2

Stunt (n) - a dangerous maneuver, either on or off a vehicle that looks impressive but could potentially injure or kill you if you do it wrong.

Earn a living - to make enough money to cover expenses such as bills, rent and food. *Being a single parent and having to earn a living at the same time is extremely challenging.*

Degree (n) - a formal education in a particular field. You get it after you spend several years at a college, university or other place providing higher education. *My economics degree really helped me to start my career as a business consultant.*

Part 3

Resistance (n) - if you have resistance to something, you can fight it effectively, such as a disease or infection. *To increase your resistance to colds you should get your body used to low temperatures.*

Forefather - (used figuratively here) the ancestor (see Part 1). In this context, the forefather means the creator or inventor of something.

Cough (n) - a medical condition when your throat is irritated by the virus and you force air out of it. *I caught a really nasty cold yesterday so I guess I'm going to start coughing any day now.*

Part 5

Causeway (n) - a road or a path that is raised off the ground to connect to pieces of land. Like a bridge, but made from earth with a road on top.

Vast (adj) - extremely large. *The vast deserts of Sahara.*

High tide (n) - a natural phenomenon when sea level rises due to moon phase change.

Sigh (n) - letting air out of your lungs through your mouth or nose when you feel upset or relieved. *I could swear I could almost feel a sigh of relief from her as soon as she heard the good news.*

Boot - a container in the back of a car that is used to store things such as suitcases, grocery bags and such.

Gig (n) - a live performance by a musician. *We were sort of late for the main part of the performance but made it just in time for the last gig by our friends and their band.*

Jabber (v) - to talk excitedly, quickly and in a way that can be difficult to understand. *She kept jabbering about how exciting her time abroad had been.*

Hazy (adj) - (about the weather) having poor visibility because of mist or moisture in the air.

Part 6

Decade (n) - a period of ten years.

Misinterpret (v) - to understand incorrectly, to misunderstand. *I'm afraid you've misinterpreted my words - I didn't mean to offend you at all!*

Persist (v) - to remain, to keep living or existing.

Pretence (n) - something that is not true but shown as being true. *They say that many rich families' happiness is a pretence, while in reality they are miserable.*

Conditioning (n) - (here) physical exercising to make your body more used to heavy and demanding activities (ballet dancing in this case).

Adolescence (n) - the period of your life from childhood to becoming an adult, usually from age ten to nineteen.

Routine (n) - certain series of actions that make up some activity. These actions rarely change. Note that in some language the word might have a negative meaning - this is not the case with this word in English.

Hardship (n) - difficulties, often as a result of not having enough money. *I had to go through a lot of hardship in my student years.*

Part 7

Catch up (phr) - if you catch up with somebody, it means you become as good as they are at something even though you weren't as good before. *Malcolm was the shortest guy in his class, but by the last year at school he really caught up with them.*

All-round (adj) - well-balanced, equally good in every way.

Reassure (v) - to say something to somebody to make them stop worrying about something. *My tutor reassured me that I won't have to retake this exam - I am qualified enough to pass it on my first attempt.*

Turn smb down (phr v) - to reject somebody, to say 'no' to somebody. *Nate asked Jannie out to the movies, but she turned him down as she felt she didn't know him that well.*

Humble (adj) - not proud of their achievements, not thinking that they are better than others despite how much they might have achieved in their lives.