

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: GET

Christmas Flight

In our family, we have a tradition to **0** _____ together for a Christmas dinner. This often means flying **9** _____ the other end of the world for some of the family members. This year was my **10** _____ to have a longer journey, as I had to fly across the Atlantic from San Francisco all the way to London.

Because of the holiday season, the airport was **11** _____ of people. What made things **12** _____ was that, because of the traffic, I arrived at the airport too late and missed the plane. The next direct flight wasn't arriving until tomorrow. My **13** _____ option was to take a connecting flight through Brighton, as I was running late, and I definitely could not afford to **14** _____ our family celebration.

Luckily, I managed to go through check-in without much trouble. I was just **15** _____ time for boarding – they closed the gate right after I stepped into the aircraft cabin. I squeezed into the window seat, put the earphones in, and for the first time today, I was enjoying a moment of peace. I had a long flight **16** _____ of me.

Answers and explanations

9. **From/to.** The context gives us some freedom in choosing preposition; both of them work here. Some foreign language speakers might feel tempted to use 'on', which would be incorrect.
10. **Turn.** 'Time' should not be used, because we do not normally say 'it was my time to do something'. Instead, it can be 'it was time for me to do something'.
11. **Full.** The phrase 'holiday season' means that there are lots of people travelling. 'Busy' and 'packed' have the same meaning, but cannot be chosen as both adjectives need 'with' after them.
12. **Worse.** To make something worse is to make a difficult situation even more problematic. Reading the sentence to the end (and keeping the previous sentence in mind) helps us understand the general meaning of context and make a more informed decision.
13. **Only/best.** Another option where we have some leeway in terms of word choice. The speaker did not have much choice, so his only/best option was to board a connecting flight. A connecting flight (or simply 'connection') is one that goes to your destination through a different town, city, or even a different country.
14. **Miss.** Do not use 'skip', as skipping is something you do by choice, whereas 'missing' is usually because you have forgotten about it or for any other reason could not be present. Note that 'afford' is not only used with money and finance, but can mean anything that you absolutely need to do or have, e.g. 'I can't afford missing more classes because it might seriously affect my final grade'.
15. **In.** Grammatically, it can be either 'in time' or 'on time'. The first one means 'not too late', 'before it is too late or over'. The second one has the meaning 'right on time', 'on schedule'. The context suggests the first option as the airport staff closed the doors right after the speaker got in.
16. **Ahead.** If there is something ahead of you, it means that you will have it happen to you in the future. 'Of' is what dictates the usage of this particular adverb.