

Writing in a Precise Manner

Using Words

- Choose only words you are sure convey the right meaning.

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| QUESTION 1: | Which is the right word? The _____ was undertaken by a number of researchers. (enquiry or inquiry) The two answers were identical to _____. (each other or one another) |
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- Refrain from using a number of words when one word would be better. This is known as circumlocution.

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| For example: | ✗ In spite of the fact that ✗ At this precise moment in time | ✓ Although ✓ Now |
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- Try to avoid saying the same thing twice using different words. This is known as tautology and leads to sentences which lack clarity.

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| For example: | ✗ As an extra added bonus ✗ My own personal opinion ✗ The reason for this is because | ✓ As a bonus ✓ My opinion ✓ Because |
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- Use prepositions correctly to indicate temporal (of time), spatial (of space) or logical relationships of objects to the rest of the sentence.

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| For example: | The book is on the table. | She held the book over the table | She read the book during class. |
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Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg. This document is available in Welsh.

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| QUESTION 2: | Which preposition would you choose? Each section is independent ___ the other. (upon / of / to / with) Your recommendations should correspond ___ the report's findings. (upon / of / to / with) |
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Using Numbers

- Use numbers to help your reader get an exact picture of what it is you are trying to convey.

For example:

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| <p>✗ Politician: "Many people were injured and it is feared that a considerably larger number than first expected may be dead".</p> | <p>✓ To convey exactness: "Although at first it was thought the number of deaths was low, it is now feared that the number has risen to 58. Therefore, of the 300 people involved in this incident, 210 people were injured and unfortunately there are still 32 unaccounted for".</p> |
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- If you are able to use numbers or tables to help your reader, do so but remember the points below:

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| Do not leave a space between the number and the symbol: 45% , 28°C |
| Do not put a full stop after the symbol unless it comes at the end of a sentence. |
| When making a symbol plural do not add 's': ✓ cm = centimetre and centimetres, ✓ km = kilometre and kilometres ✓ l = litre and litres |
| Never use a number at the beginning of a sentence, use words: ✓ "Seventeen people were named..." or ✓ "Fifty-eight people were killed during..." |
| Numbers less than 100 should be written in words – except in scientific writing when all numbers are set out as numbers. Exception - Before a symbol or percentage: |
| ✓ 4m, ✓ 2%, or ✓ four metres ✓ two per cent |
| Avoid two numbers together ✗ 4 14-year-olds. ✓ four 14-year-olds |

- Proofreading involves scanning your work for errors. You can eliminate mistakes in grammar, punctuation and formatting if you do this continuously when writing. This should then lead to the completion of a more precise and competent piece of work.

ANSWER 1: An 'enquiry' is a question; an 'inquiry' is an investigation. So "The inquiry was undertaken..."
'Each other' is used when referring to two; 'one another' is used when referring to more than two: So "The two answers were identical to each other."

ANSWER 2: The correct preposition is: 'of' in the first question. You either 'correspond to' an object or 'correspond with' a person. So "... correspond to the report's findings."