

CAE MINI LESSON

LET'S LEARN ABOUT:
QUANTIFIERS



QUANTIFIERS

There are four types of determiners in English: articles, demonstratives, quantifiers and possessives. Here we focus on quantifiers. Quantifiers are determiners that indicate how much or how little of the noun is being discussed:

all/whole

We use *all* and *whole* to refer to a total number or complete set of things in a group.

All the team / The whole team had the flu.

We often use *all* and *the whole* with *of the*:

That child cries all / the whole of the time.

We use *the whole* or *the whole of* to refer to complete single things and events:

The whole (of the) match was a disappointment.

When you split up a thing into parts, we use *whole* or *all*:

You don't have to pay the whole (of the) / all the bill.

We use *the whole of* with periods of time to focus on duration:

We spent the whole (of the) summer at home.

When we use *whole* with plural nouns, it means 'complete' or 'entire'.

Whole families normally worked on the land in rural communities. (= entire families)

All families normally worked on the land in rural communities. (= each and every family)

each/every

We use the quantifiers *every* and *each* with singular nouns to mean *all*:

There was a party in every street.

Each child was given a prize.

We often use *every* instead of *each* to talk about times like days, weeks and years:

We visit our daughter every Christmas.

We use *each* when we are only talking about all of two options, meaning the same as *both*:

I have two guitars and each every cost me over £1000.

not a/not any/no/none of

Any doesn't have a negative meaning on its own. It must be used with a negative word to mean the same as *no*.

There aren't any cakes left. The children have eaten them all.

a few/few

A few means 'a small number of' whereas *few* means 'not many'.

I have a few ideas. (= I have some ideas.)

I have few ideas. (= I don't have many ideas.)

QUANTIFIERS

whatever/anything

We use *whatever* and *anything* to mean 'anything I choose'.
I'll eat whatever/anything I want to eat.

many/much/several

We use *much* with singular uncountable nouns and *many* or *several* with plural nouns:

I haven't got much loose change. I've only got a tenner.

Are there many campsites near the beach?

We usually use *much* and *many* with questions and negatives:

Is there much youth unemployment in your country?

How many people were at the wedding?

a lot of/lots of/a great deal of/plenty of

These suggest a large quantity or degree of something.

I'm feeling a great deal better, after the holiday.

Plenty of young people have recently become vegans.

a lot/a great deal

We can use *a lot* and *a great deal* as adverbs, meaning that they modify the verb not a noun:

He talks a lot but never really says anything important.

both/both of/either/neither

If we are talking about two people or things, we use the quantifiers *both*, *either* and *neither*:

Both (of) the supermarkets were closed.

Neither of the supermarkets was open.

ACTIVITIES

FILL IN THE GAPS WITH APPROPRIATE QUANTIFIERS:

1. SHE HAS _____ PATIENCE FOR INCOMPETENCE.
2. THERE IS _____ CHANCE THAT IT WILL RAIN TOMORROW.
3. HE EXPRESSED _____ INTEREST IN THE PROPOSAL.
4. I HAVE _____ MONEY LEFT AFTER BUYING THE NEW COMPUTER.
5. THE PROJECT REQUIRES _____ ATTENTION TO DETAIL.
6. WE'VE MADE _____ PROGRESS ON THE ASSIGNMENT.
7. HE SHOWED _____ ENTHUSIASM FOR THE NEW INITIATIVE.
8. THE MUSEUM HAS _____ COLLECTION OF RARE ARTIFACTS.
9. I HAVE _____ FEW FRIENDS WHO SHARE MY PASSION FOR HIKING.
10. THERE IS _____ DOUBT THAT SHE WILL SUCCEED IN HER NEW ROLE.

ANSWERS

1. SHE HAS LITTLE PATIENCE FOR INCOMPETENCE.
2. THERE IS NO CHANCE THAT IT WILL RAIN
TOMORROW.
3. HE EXPRESSED LITTLE INTEREST IN THE PROPOSAL.
4. I HAVE LITTLE MONEY LEFT AFTER BUYING THE
NEW COMPUTER.
5. THE PROJECT REQUIRES CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION
TO DETAIL.
6. WE'VE MADE LITTLE PROGRESS ON THE
ASSIGNMENT.
7. HE SHOWED GREAT ENTHUSIASM FOR THE NEW
INITIATIVE.
8. THE MUSEUM HAS A VAST COLLECTION OF RARE
ARTIFACTS.
9. I HAVE VERY FEW FRIENDS WHO SHARE MY
PASSION FOR HIKING.
10. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT SHE WILL SUCCEED IN
HER NEW ROLE.