

Collocations, Idioms and Phrasal Verbs IN CONTEXT

Collocations

A collocation (also collocates) is a word or phrase which is frequently used with another word or phrase, in a way that sounds correct to speakers of the language. For example, *heavy rain*

Idioms

An expression whose meaning is different from the meaning of the individual words. For example, *to have your feet on the ground* is an idiom meaning *to be sensible*.

Phrasal verbs

A combination of words that is used like a verb and consists of a verb and an adverb or preposition, for example *give in* or *come up with*

Any long English text, spoken or written, will contain many examples of the three. Often, intermediate students who cannot go beyond intermediate level struggle to deal with how dense a language can become once we have learned the simple grammatical structures and have mastered a large set of vocabulary.

Text

It was the entry of McDonald's into Rome in 1986 that sparked off the "slow food movement" – a tongue-in-cheek reaction against fast food by a journalist who felt the need to celebrate meals prepared with love and consumed at leisure. Fifteen years on, the organisation spans 50 countries and has more than 70,000 members.

Now the idea is moving on to what is being called the "slow cities" movement, and towns in many countries are being invited to join more than 30 Italian communities who have taken up the challenge of resisting the frenetic, ever-quicken pace of living and trying to improve the quality of life.

Text: *The Guardian Weekly*

Phrasal verbs

1. **sparked off the "slow food movement"** There are 5 main types of phrasal verb. This type has a transitive verb whose object can come in two positions.
 - i. *McDonald's sparked off **the slow food movement**.*
 - ii. *McDonald's sparked **the slow food movement** off.*
 - iii. *McDonald's sparked **it** off.*
 - iv. (We cannot say) *McDonald's sparked off **it**.*

2. **moving on to what is being called the “slow cities” movement** This type has a transitive verb whose object must follow the particle. There is a similar phrasal verb *To move on* which is intransitive (does not require an object)

i. *We are moving on to the bar on the corner*

3. **have taken up the challenge of resisting the frenetic, ever-quickening pace of living.** This example is transitive and the object can come between the verb and particle or follow the particle. Note that ‘take up’ + ‘challenge’ is also a very strong collocation.

i. *I have taken up the challenge*

ii. *I have taken it up already*

Collocations

1. **feel** the need to (do something)

- feel like: When I came back to England, I felt like a stranger.
- feel as if/as though: I felt as though someone had just punched me in the stomach.
- feel sadness/happiness/anger/relief etc: She felt some sadness when the time came to leave.
- feel guilt/remorse: Richard felt no guilt at all for what he had done.
- feel the need to do something: Cara felt the need to talk to someone.
- feel (a) pain: He felt a sudden pain in his chest.
- feel the cold/heat: Children don't seem to feel the cold as much as adults do

2. **take up** the challenge

- Schools are taking up the offer of cut-price computers.
- One of our greatest athletes has taken up a new challenge.
- She fell silent, and her brother took up the story. (the phrasal verb here has a new meaning!)
- Mrs Pankhurst took up the cause of women's rights.

Practice

1) Phrasal verbs with Spark, Move and Take. Use a dictionary to choose the appropriate particles.

- a) I don't like flying. I get really scared when the plane is taking off / over / up
- b) They stay for only a few days before moving on / up / over
- c) Your article sparked up / off / in happy memories for me.
- d) We've bought a new house and we're moving in / up / on next week.
- e) I'll try not to take off / over / up too much of your time.

2) Complete the sentences with the correct particles. Use your dictionary.

- a) I am thinking of taking _____ judo after New Year.
- b) There is a really nice family moving _____ the apartment next door.
- c) Thanks. I think I'll take you up _____ your offer of a lift to the party.
- d) He is bored with his job. I think it is time for him to move _____.

3) Rearrange the words to make correct sentences.

- a) of you in this heat really takes Playing tennis it out.
- b) you taking fasten your while the plane is off must seat-belt.
- c) violence game sparked The a at the riot off in the city football

Practice - Collocation

Your teacher will give you role-cards. Do not show the cards to the others in your group. Mime the sentence with 'feel' so that the others in your group can guess the sentence.

Personalisation.

Read the sentences below. You are going to speak about the feelings describe. Prepare some notes so that you are ready to finish the sentences and give reasons. Add to the list if have time.

- I feel sad when
- I feel guilty when
- makes me feel angry.
- was when I felt the happiest.
- After work / school I feel like