

## Extra Practice 6

### Excerpt from *Jonathan Livingstone Seagull*, by Richard Bach

- 1 The wind was a monster roar at his head. Seventy miles per hour, ninety, a hundred and twenty and faster still. The wind strain now at a hundred and forty miles per hour wasn't nearly as hard as it had been before at seventy, and with the faintest twist of his wingtips he eased out of the dive and shot above the waves, a gray cannonball under the moon.
- 2 He closed his eyes to slits against the wind and rejoiced. A hundred forty miles per hour! And under control! If I dive from five thousand feet instead of two thousand, I wonder how fast...
- 3 His vows of a moment before were forgotten, swept away in that great swift wind. Yet he felt guiltless, breaking the promises he had made himself. Such promises are only for the gulls that accept the ordinary. One who has touched excellence in his learning has no need of that kind of promise.
- 4 By sunup, Jonathan Gull was practicing again. From five thousand feet the fishing boats were specks in the flat blue water, Breakfast Flock was a faint cloud of dust motes, circling.

#### Answer the following questions:

1. Explain the metaphor at the beginning of paragraph 1.
2. Study the structure *nearly as hard as* (par. 1). Was it harder or less hard than it was before? What other modifiers can you use with comparative structures?
3. Explain the morphology of the word *guiltless* (par 3). What word-class is typically derived with the suffix *-less*? Include more examples.
4. In paragraph 3 we have the collocations *break a promise* and *make a promise*. Include five more examples of collocations with *break* and *make*. How would you facilitate their learning on the part of your students?
5. Explain the word *sunup* (par 4). How has this word been coined?
6. Comment on the spelling of *practicing* (par. 4).

**SUGGESTED ANSWERS:**

**1. Explain the metaphor at the beginning of paragraph 1.**

Topic 46

The metaphor is “the wind was a monster roar at his head”. To begin with, metaphors are an instance of lexical creativity, which concerns the unpredictable, non-rule governed innovations of the language system. It is generally studied in opposition to language productivity (i.e. word-formation processes), which is a rule-governed feature of the language system.

This way, metaphors are related to the language user’s ability to extend the language system, thus being unexpected. In this case, the writer decides to identify “the wind” with “a monster roar at his head” to indicate its indomitable force. It is a case of metaphor because this comparison is drawn without attention being explicitly drawn by a connective, i.e. it asserts that one thing is another thing. Otherwise, we would be talking about a simile, in which a connective such as “like” or “as” is employed (e.g. the wind was like a monster roar at his head).

**2. Study the structure *not nearly as hard as* (par. 1). Was it harder or less hard than it was before? What other modifiers can you use with comparative structures?**

Topic 42

The complete sentence reads as follows “the wind strain now at a hundred and forty miles per hour wasn’t nearly as hard as it had been before at seventy”, The structure “not nearly” is often used before a comparative of the same degree (*as/so + ... + as*) to indicate that “something is not the case”. Therefore, the meaning of the sentence is that “the wind strain is less hard than it was before”. Other examples of the same structure would be the following:

- *My father’s flat in Paris wasn’t nearly as grand as this* (“this one is grander”)
- *Minerals in general are not nearly so well- absorbed as other nutrients* (“other nutrients are absorbed more easily”).

Comparatives structures to a lesser (*less + adjective/adverb/noun*) or higher degree (*adjective + -er*, or the periphrastic construction *more + adjective/adverb/noun*) may be emphasized by the use of modifying adverbs such as *much*, or the more colloquial *a lot*:

- *She is deemed to be much less close to her father than her other siblings are.*
- *He upgraded the existing tracks at much less cost.*
- *I managed to find my way through a lot more easily than people would have thought.*
- *He came into a lot more money than he had expected.*
- *She is much happier than she used to.*

**3. Explain the morphology of the word *guiltless* (par 3). What word-class is typically derived with the suffix *-less*? Include more examples.**

Topic 45

*Guiltless* is a complex word (as opposed to “simple”), given that a word-formation process has taken place. Indeed, it is the result of affixation, an especially active means of word formation in

English. In this case, the suffix *-less* has been added to the root noun *guilt* in order to form the adjective *guiltless*, meaning “free from guilt”.

*-less* is a suffix typically employed to form adjectives from nouns (“denominal” suffix), and its meaning is “lacking a particular feature”. Other examples include: *useless*, *spotless*, *childless*, *powerless*, *helpless*, *restless*, *reckless*.

**4. In paragraph 3 we have the collocations *break a promise* and *make a promise*. Include five more examples of collocations with *break* and *make*. How would you facilitate their learning on the part of your students?**

Collocations with *break* (you would have to include 5 only): *break a record*, *break a habit*, *break the ice*, *break someone’s heart*, *break the rules*, *break the law*, *break ground*.

Collocations with *make* (you would have to include 5 only): *make breakfast/lunch/dinner*, *make a reservation*, *make money*, *make a profit*, *make a fortune*, *make friends*, *make love*, *make a point*, *make a complaint*, *make a suggestion*, *make an excuse*, *make a prediction*.

Collocations typically pose difficulties for our students, since there is no rule governing them, i.e. they need to be memorized by heart. Some teaching strategies or tips to ease this task would be the following:

- Maximise students’ exposure to the language, in general, and to collocations, in particular.
- Ask students to record collocations separately from the rest of vocabulary, and organize it in the form of a mind map, with the main verb in the middle, and the different possible collocations stemming from it (particularly well-suited for visual learners)
- Gap-fill activities: we could use the cooperative structure of “pencils in the centre” to make it more attractive and, above all, communicative (you would have to explain the structure briefly). The app *Wooclap* may also be used to spice it up.
- Odd one out: in strips of paper or using *Mentimeter*/*Wooclap*, the students must decide which correlations are correct and which are wrong.
- Devise online flashcard sets (e.g. on *Quizlet*), which may be employed in a variety of way. They can be used in “study mode”, and there are also two interactive games which can be played either in the classroom or at home.
- A collocation casino: another great way to introducing or revising is via betting games.
- Post-it partners: write one half of the collocation on one post-it, and the other on another. Stick the post-its on your students’ backs and ask them to find their “collocation partner”.
- Post-it corners (very suitable as a warmer): Stick a post-it with only the verb in the different corners of the classroom (e.g. *break*, *make*, *do*, *catch*). Then give each student a post-it with a noun (or stick it on their backs; they need to ask their partners what it says) and ask them to race towards their corner. Once there, they need to come up with a sentence for each of the collocations their team has. You then have students arranged into teams for the next part of the class.
- Taboo (speaking) or Pictionary (drawing): divide students in teams and ask them to define or draw a particular collocation.

**5. Explain the word *sunup* (par 4). How has this word been coined?**

Topic 45

*Sunup* means “the time of day when then sun rises” (=sunrise) or, in other words, when the sun “comes up”. Morphologically speaking, it is a compound noun formed from the root noun *sun* and the preposition *up*.

In terms of spelling, it is a solid compound, as it is spelt as one word; semantically, it is clearly an endocentric compound, given that its meaning arises from its components. However, the grammatical head is not clear, i.e. the compound is not a hyponym of any element, so it would be an example of copulative or dvanda compound. Finally, the syntactic relationship between the two elements is that of Verb + Adverbial (“the sun goes up”), as happens with other examples such as *homework* (“work done at home”), or *handwriting* (“written by hand”).

**6. Comment on the spelling of *practicing* (par. 4).**

Topic 52

When encountering this word, the reader can immediately infer that the writer is using American English, since the word *practice* with a <c> is being employed as a verb.

In English there is basically a single spelling system with two minor subsystems (BrE and AmE), which present distinctive forms in only a small number of words. Hence that they are so readily identifiable.

As regards the pair *practice/practise*, they are used differently in BrE and AmE. In the former, *practice* is the noun, whereas *practise* is the verb. In AmE, however, both word classes are spelt *practice*, as this case evinces: “Jonathan Gull was practicing again”. The spelling *practise* would then not be employed in the American variety.