

# Unit 1. Rocket science

## Lesson 1.



# Contents:

- Reading text type: letter
- Writing: news report
- Grammar: prefixes, parts of speech



# A. Reading





# Ex-1. Read the letter.

## Unit 1: Rocket science

### A Reading

1 Read the letter below.

#### Passage A: New Year's Eve fireworks

Dear Mum and Dad

Happy New Year! Hope you had a good New Year's Eve. I had the most amazing time here in Dubai, watching the biggest firework display ever – an **extravaganza** lasting six minutes, which set a new world record for a single **coordinated** display. The 500,000 fireworks were set off from 400 firing locations, **synchronised** by 100 computers. It took the **technicians** ten months to plan!

There was a countdown to midnight in fireworks in both roman and arabic numerals. Organisers said they wanted to create a burst of light to imitate a sunrise and dazzle spectators with a United Arab Emirates flag that could also break records for being the largest ever made of fireworks. They certainly did that!

I was down with thousands of watchers standing by the fountains at Burj Khalifa, the world's tallest tower, which was used as a backdrop for the display. Everyone got there early and the anticipation beforehand was **electric**; it wasn't only the children who were excited! The Burj is shaped like a rocket itself, and was the launch pad for thousands of smaller rockets. It was turned into a whole series of famous monuments, like the Eiffel Tower, by patterns of light flashing on it. And that was just a small part of it...

... it was a helter-skelter, with showers of sparks sliding down it. It was an **incandescent** pine tree with thousands of starry branches. It was a castle unleashing arrows of fire. Down below there was an orchard of trees bursting into blossom; there were pulsing globes like dandelion heads sending out seeds; there were tiered birthday cakes with exploding candles. **Iridescent** rings climbed the tower. **Scintillating** fountains leapt up to meet the cascades of light. Bouquets of bright flowers of every hue filled the sky.

Everyone was holding up their phone to capture the images, holding their breath, **mesmerised**. It was too much to take in; there were too many places to look **simultaneously**. The soundtrack of sci-fi film-type music matched the display of dancing light and water, and made it a space-age experience. There was huge applause at the end, cheering and whistling that went on for ages. It was unforgettable, and I really wish you could have seen it too.

Maybe next year! I'm really enjoying the job and the lifestyle, so I'll still be here then!

Love,

Lee

# B. Language and style



# Grammar: Prefixes

English words often have prefixes.

Prefixes come from both Greek and Latin, which means there are often two prefixes with the same meaning, e.g. *con* and *syn* (together).

The table below shows common prefixes, what they mean and examples of words in which they appear.





Prefix	Meaning	Example
ante-	before	antenatal
anti-	against	antifreeze
con-	together	conjoined
de-	opposite	defrost
dis-	not, opposite of	disagree
en-, em-	cause to	encode, embrace
ex-	out	exit
fore-	before	forecast
hyper-	above	hyperactive
hypo-	below	Hypothermia
in-	in	Include
in-, im-, il-, ir-	not	injustice, impossible, illogical, irreparable
inter-	between	interact
intra-	within	intravenous
mid-	middle	midway
mis-	wrongly	Misfire
non-	not	nonsense
over-	over	overlook
post-	after	postgraduate
pre-	before	Prefix
pro-	towards, for	progress
re-	again	Return
semi-	half	semicircle
sub-	under, below	submarine
super-	above	superstar
syn-	together	synthesise
trans-	across	transport
un-	not	unfriendly
under	under	underground

## Ex- 2.

Give meanings for the following words , as they are used in Passage A. Look up any words you do not know, but first try to guess from the prefix or stem of the word. The first one has been done for you as an example.

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a. extravaganza- *spectacle*

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b. coordinated- ...

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c. synchronized- ...

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d. technicians- ...

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e. electric- ...

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f. incandescent- ...

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g. iridescent- ...

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h. scintillating- ...

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i. mesmerised- ...

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j . simultaneously- ...

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## Ex-3.



a. Next to each of the above words, write which part of speech it is, as used in the passage.



b. Study the words and then write out without looking /in a notebook/ those you did not know how to spell.

## Ex- 2,3.

Give meanings for the following words , as they are used in Passage A. Look up any words you do not know, but first try to guess from the prefix or stem of the word. The first one has been done for you as an example.

a. extravaganza- **spectacle** /n/

b. coordinated- combined /adj/

c. synchronized- made to happen at the same time /v/

d. technicians- specialists /n/

e. electric- excited /adj/

f. incandescent- fiery /adj/

g. iridescent- sparkling /adj/

h. scintillating- shimmering /adj/

i. mesmerised- entranced /adj/

j . simultaneously- at the same time /adv/

# Grammar: Parts of speech

- ‘Parts of speech’ is the term used to indicate the role a word plays in a sentence.
- The main ones are noun, verb, adjective and adverb.





- i **nouns** are objects (things that can be seen, touched, smelled etc.), e.g. roof, book, perfume or concepts (things that cannot be seen, touched, smelled, etc.), e.g. idea, plan, love. The test of a noun is whether it is possible to put '*the*', '*an*' or '*a*' in front of it: '*the roof is leaking*', '*she had an idea*', '*they had a plan*'.
- ii **Verbs** are actions or processes. They can be physical or mental, e.g. dig, collapse, think, anticipate. The test of a verb is whether it is possible to make it an infinitive (*where the word isn't in the past, present or future tense*) by putting '*to*' in front of it: '*to dig a hole*', '*to anticipate good news*'.
- iii **adjectives** describe nouns, e.g. blue, cosy, sharp, huge. Sometimes they are the present or past participle of the verb, e.g. *flowing* river, *broken* bottle. Sometimes they are the same as the noun form, e.g. *secret* message, *square* table. A test of an adjective is whether it can go immediately before a noun: '*the cosy chair*'.
- iv **adverbs** explain how a verb is performed, e.g. *slowly*, *terrifyingly*, *badly*, *cheerfully*. With rare exceptions (e.g. *hard*, *fast*) they are made by adding '*ly*' to an adjective. If the adjective ends in '*l*' the adverb will end in '*lly*', e.g. *faithful* – *faithfully*. Not all words ending in '*ly*' are adverbs though; many adjectives *also* end in '*ly*', e.g. *costly*, *deadly*, *chilly*. A test of an adverb is whether it can go immediately after a verb, e.g. '*the boys sat quietly*'.
- **Prepositions** are words which indicate the relative position or movement of two things, e.g. the cat is *under* the table; the pen fell *behind* the bookcase; the children are going *to* the cinema; the picture is *on* the wall. They can also be used in common phrases, e.g. to think about; out of the question; of course ; by accident.



# C. Comprehension and summary



# Ex- 4.

Reread the fourth paragraph of Passage A and comment on:

A. the sentence structure and its effect

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B. the vocabulary and its effect

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## Ex- 5.

Select relevant material from the passage and write a news report in six paragraphs, with a suitable headline , for the next day's local newspaper.

# Ex- 5.

Para. 1: time, place and nature of the event

Para. 2: records broken

Para. 3: features of the display: countdown; flag; use of the Burj Khalifa

Para. 4: planning and statistics for the display

Para. 5: reaction and behavior of the crowd

Para. 6: made- up quotation from an organizer and /or spectator





*Good luck!*