



APEX ENGLISH

Your voice. Global.

B2 · GENERAL ENGLISH

UNIT 10 · 10B

Free speech

Theme · Future Frontiers

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Free speech

Theme: Future Frontiers



Learning objectives

- Use the article system correctly: A / AN (new / one of many), THE (specific / already known / unique), and ZERO article (general plurals & uncountables, most proper nouns).
- Recognise and use fixed collocation word pairs (freedom of speech, law and order, salt and pepper, sooner or later...).
- Pause and stress the right words in longer sentences so listeners follow the meaning.
- Talk about free speech online, cancel culture, hate speech and press freedom without over-simplifying.
- Write a balanced short opinion piece with clear connectors.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Class Book

Warm-up · what would you defend, what would you ban?

Read each situation below. In pairs, choose ONE word: DEFEND, BAN, or DEPENDS. No 'I don't know'.

A comedian tells a joke that half the country finds deeply offensive.

A politician says on TV that a whole ethnic group is dangerous.

A student journalist prints the real name of a public official's private child.

A social-media user posts a video that turns out to be an AI-generated deepfake.

A newspaper publishes leaked documents that show a government minister lied.

A small church group protests peacefully outside a hospital every Saturday.

followUp: Compare in your pair: were you closer to DEFEND, BAN, or DEPENDS? Those are today's arguments — and today's articles: a comedian, a video, THE minister, THE hospital...

Lead-in: fix the newspaper headlines

Real newspaper headlines drop most of their articles to save space. In pairs, rewrite each headline as a normal sentence — put A / AN / THE / — (zero) in the right places.

1. Court rules law against protest is unconstitutional
2. President attacks journalist for asking difficult question
3. Prime Minister of India visits White House on Tuesday
4. New study says social media damages young people's mental health
5. Freedom of speech is under threat, says human-rights group
6. UN calls for immediate ceasefire in region

A / AN — first mention, one of many

THE — specific one / already mentioned / unique (President, White House)

— (zero) — general plurals / uncountables (freedom of speech, young people)

Proper nouns of countries usually take NO article, EXCEPT plurals & unions: THE United States, THE UK, THE Netherlands

1. THE court has ruled that A / THE law against protest is unconstitutional.
2. THE president attacked A journalist for asking A difficult question.
3. THE Prime Minister of India visited THE White House on Tuesday. (— India, — Tuesday)
4. A new study says THAT — social media damages — young people's mental health.
5. — Freedom of speech is under threat, says A human-rights group.
6. THE UN has called for AN immediate ceasefire in THE region.

followUp: Notice: THE UN, THE White House, THE President — unique. A journalist, A study — first mention. — freedom, — young people — general.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Reading: 'the four battles over free speech'

Almost every country in the world has, in its constitution, a promise that its citizens enjoy freedom of expression. Almost every country also has laws that limit it. The interesting question is where, exactly, the line falls — and who gets to draw it. In the 21st century, that argument is being fought on four different battlefields at once.

The first battlefield is the newsroom. Journalists in dozens of countries are jailed every year for publishing what governments would prefer to hide. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, more than 300 reporters were in prison at the start of 2024. Press freedom is under pressure not only from dictatorships, but from lawsuits, from social-media abuse, and from the simple collapse of the local newspaper.

The second battlefield is the platform. Facebook, YouTube, TikTok and X now take, every day, thousands of decisions about what a billion users can and cannot post. A joke, a protest video, a piece of medical advice: each one is either allowed, hidden, or deleted. These are, in effect, private companies acting as the world's biggest editors — but with almost no legal responsibility to anyone.

The third battlefield is the campus. Universities have always been places for uncomfortable ideas. Recently, some students and staff have argued that certain speakers should not be invited at all, because their views cause harm. Others reply that the answer to bad speech is better speech, not silence. Neither side is entirely wrong, and neither side is entirely right.

The fourth, and newest, battlefield is the algorithm. What you see online is not chosen by you; it is chosen by a piece of software that has learned exactly what will keep you scrolling. If it turns out that anger and outrage keep people scrolling best of all, then anger and outrage are what the algorithm will feed you — and neither the law nor free-speech theory has really caught up with this yet.

1. How many battlefields for free speech does the writer identify?
 - (A) Two
 - (B) Three
 - (C) Four
2. How many journalists were in prison at the start of 2024, according to the CPJ?
 - (A) About 100
 - (B) More than 300
 - (C) Over 1,000
3. The writer says social-media platforms are...
 - (A) fully controlled by governments
 - (B) the world's biggest editors, with little legal responsibility
 - (C) protected by press-freedom laws

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



4. What does the writer say about the campus debate?
- (A) Students who want to disinvite speakers are wrong.
 - (B) Speakers who cause harm should always be banned.
 - (C) Neither side is entirely right or entirely wrong.
5. What is 'the newest battlefield' about?
- (A) Book publishers
 - (B) Algorithms that decide what you see
 - (C) TV news channels

Free-speech vocabulary in context

Match each word/phrase from the text with its closest meaning.

constitution — the top set of laws that describes how a country is run

press freedom — the right of journalists to publish without government control

lawsuit — a case that one party brings against another in court

platform — an online service where users publish content

algorithm — a set of software rules that decides what appears on your screen

hate speech — language that attacks or dehumanises a group

Vocabulary: collocation — word pairs (fixed order)

intro: English is full of two-word phrases that always appear in a fixed order. Say them the wrong way round and you'll sound foreign forever. 'Salt and pepper', not 'pepper and salt'. Learn them as one unit.

1. **label:** Society & law

2. **label:** News & debate

3. **label:** Everyday fixed pairs

4. **label:** Idioms with 'and'

practice

Complete each sentence with ONE fixed pair from the box (correct order!).

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



1. The judge's job is to keep ____ in the courtroom, no matter how angry the crowd gets.

2. You can't have rights without ____ — every democracy teaches that.

3. The best way to learn a new language is really just ____.

4. Before we vote, let's list the ____ of the proposal.

5. I heard you ____ — you don't have to shout.

6. Freelance journalism is my ____; the podcast is a hobby.

7. The truth of this scandal will come out ____ — it always does.

8. The negotiators went ____ between the two governments for six days.

Practice 2 — collocations & rewrite

Rewrite each sentence replacing the underlined phrase with ONE word or fixed pair from this lesson's vocabulary. Keep the meaning identical.

1. The country's <u>top set of founding laws</u> guarantees freedom of expression.

2. Journalists everywhere depend on <u>the right to publish without government control</u>.

3. The newspaper is facing a <u>court case brought against it</u> over the article.

4. Disagreement is simply <u>an unavoidable part</u> of a healthy democracy.

5. The truth about the leak will come out <u>eventually, one way or another</u>.

Practice 3 — discursive writing

prompt: Discuss where you believe the line should be drawn between free speech and harmful speech online.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class

Use at least FOUR of the target words from this unit.

Vary sentence length and use one relative clause.

Aim for a reflective, cohesive C1 register.

sample: Most constitutions, which were written long before the internet existed, guarantee something close to press freedom without ever imagining a platform reaching a billion people overnight. That gap, I think, is part and parcel of why online speech feels so difficult to regulate today. A single post can trigger a lawsuit in one country and pass unnoticed in another, and sooner or later every government has to decide how much of that difference it can tolerate. I don't believe every uncomfortable opinion should be treated as harmful, but I do think the line has to move once speech starts inciting real violence rather than merely causing offence. Getting that balance right is, admittedly, easier to argue about than to actually achieve.



Grammar: articles — A / AN, THE, and ZERO article

1. A / AN — 'one of many' or 'first mention' — Use A / AN with a SINGULAR countable noun when the listener doesn't yet know which one. • I read AN interesting article yesterday. (which one? — you don't know yet) • She's A journalist. (one of many) Choose by SOUND, not spelling: AN hour, AN honest answer (silent H); A university, A European country (yoo-sound).

2. THE — 'specific / already known / unique / only one' — Use THE when the listener knows which one, or there is only one. • I read the article you sent me. (already known) • The Prime Minister gave a speech. (unique in the country) • The sun, the moon, the internet, the police, the government — all unique or 'THE only one'. • Second mention of the same thing: 'I saw A film last night. THE film was excellent.'

3. ZERO article — general plurals & uncountables — No article when you talk about something in general (plural countable or uncountable). • — Journalists have a hard job. (all journalists in general) • — Freedom of speech is a human right. • — Coffee keeps me awake. BUT: THE coffee in this café is amazing. (specific)

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



4. Proper nouns — the rule that always trips students — Most countries, cities, streets, single mountains, single lakes, meals: NO article. • — France, — Tokyo, — Oxford Street, — Mount Everest, — Lake Victoria, — breakfast. BUT: THE + plural / union / republic: THE United States, THE UK, THE Netherlands, THE Czech Republic. Rivers, seas, oceans, mountain ranges, groups of islands: THE Thames, THE Atlantic, THE Alps, THE Bahamas.

5. Institutions: 'go to school' vs 'go to the school' — Without THE = the purpose / activity: 'go to school' (to learn), 'go to hospital' (as a patient), 'go to bed' (to sleep), 'be in prison' (as a prisoner). With THE = the building: 'go to THE school' (to fix the roof), 'go to THE hospital' (to visit a friend), 'go to THE bed' (to sit on it).

6. Careful — the 'internet / press / media' family — Traditionally: THE internet, THE press, THE media, THE news, THE radio, THE cinema. (uniques by convention) BUT: — Facebook, — TikTok, — YouTube (proper nouns of platforms take zero article). BUT: on — TV (activity) vs. buy A new TV (a set) vs. turn on THE TV (the specific one in the room).

Exercise A — A / AN / THE / — (zero)

Choose the correct article.

1. I want to be ____ journalist when I finish university.
(A) a
(B) an
(C) the
(D) —
2. ____ press has a duty to hold power to account.
(A) A
(B) An
(C) The
(D) —
3. She's studying ____ law at university.
(A) a
(B) the
(C) —
4. Have you seen ____ new BBC documentary about free speech?
(A) a
(B) an
(C) the
(D) —

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



5. He waited for ____ hour before the interview.
- (A) a
(B) an
(C) the
6. ____ United States has a very strong tradition of free speech.
- (A) A
(B) An
(C) The
(D) —
7. I read ____ interesting book yesterday. ____ book was about censorship.
- (A) a / the
(B) an / the
(C) the / a
(D) the / the
8. ____ Facebook removed the post within an hour.
- (A) A
(B) An
(C) The
(D) —

Exercise B — spot & fix the mistake

Each sentence has ONE mistake with articles. Rewrite it correctly.

1. The freedom of speech is a human right.

2. She is journalist for the Guardian.

3. I go to the school by bike every day.

4. Prime Minister gave a speech yesterday.

5. The France is famous for its cuisine.

6. He waited for a hour outside the courtroom.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



7. The journalists in general have a hard job.

8. I read a article you sent me.

Exercise C — rewrite with the correct article system

Rewrite each sentence, adding A / AN / THE / — where needed.

1. President of United States has power to veto legislation.

2. Freedom of press is essential in democracy.

3. I saw very interesting documentary about censorship yesterday.

4. She is expert on media law and teaches at university.

5. Sun rises in east, even for dictators.

Exercise D — a news gap-fill

Complete the text with A, AN, THE, or — (zero) in each gap.

Word bank: A · AN · THE · — (zero)

(1) ___ British journalist has been released after five years in (2) ___ prison in (3) ___ Middle East. She was arrested in 2020 while investigating (4) ___ story about (5) ___ corruption in (6) ___ government of that country. (7) ___ story was never published.

(8) ___ British foreign secretary said, in (9) ___ short statement outside (10) ___ Downing Street, that (11) ___ freedom of (12) ___ press is 'one of (13) ___ most important pillars of any democracy'. (14) ___ journalist herself, who did not want to give (15) ___ interview, was seen entering (16) ___ small hotel in central London with (17) ___ family.

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Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



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Listening: 'the phone-in — should hate speech be a crime?'

A short late-night radio phone-in. Two callers with very different views argue about whether 'hate speech' should be a criminal offence. Two clearly different voices, no name-introductions in the audio.

Before you listen

Predict: which side do you expect the FIRST caller to take — pro-regulation, or pro-free-speech?

Predict: what ONE example do you expect either caller to use — comedians, TikTok, politicians, football fans?

First listen — gist

1. What is the topic of the phone-in?

2. Which caller wants MORE regulation of speech?

3. Which caller wants LESS regulation of speech?

Second listen — detail

1. What ONE real-world example does the first caller use to defend her position?

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



2. What THREE areas of speech does the first caller say SHOULD stay legal?

3. What is the second caller's main objection?

4. What example does the second caller give?

5. On WHICH single point do they agree at the end?

6. What does the host say is the underlying disagreement?

A: OK — I'm going to be direct. In this country, and in most countries, we already have laws against defamation, against fraud, against threats. Adding one more category — hate speech, meaning speech that dehumanises an entire group — is not the end of free speech. It's the small piece we've been missing.

B: Here's my problem with that. Every single time a government gets a new speech law, it uses it against its own critics. Every single time. Look at Turkey. Look at Russia. Look at Egypt. Journalists arrested under 'anti-extremism' laws for criticising the president. That's the pattern.

A: But that's an argument against bad governments, not against the law. Take Rwanda in 1994. For months before the genocide, a radio station called one ethnic group 'cockroaches'. Nine hundred thousand people were then killed with machetes. If that speech had been a crime — a real crime, prosecuted — a lot of those people would still be alive.

B: That's a serious example. I take that seriously. But the question is who gets to draw the line between 'this comedian went too far' and 'this radio station is calling for genocide'. Those aren't the same thing.

A: They're absolutely not the same thing, and nobody is saying they are. Political criticism of the government stays legal. Satire and comedy stay legal. Religious debate stays legal. What doesn't stay legal is telling millions of people that another group of humans are insects.

B: OK — so give me the mechanism. Who decides? A judge? An algorithm? A community-guidelines team in California?

A: A court. Same as with defamation. Same as with incitement. The bar is high, and the evidence is public.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



B: See, that's actually something I could support. Because the honest disagreement between us isn't 'should there be a line' — everyone agrees there's a line. It's WHO gets to draw it.

A: Well — we might be closer than we thought.

B: One thing I'll fully agree with, right now: direct incitement to violence — 'go and kill X people tonight' — that isn't free speech in any country. That should be, and is, illegal everywhere.

A: Agreed. And that's actually where every serious free-speech theorist draws the line too — from Mill to Popper.

B: Fine. Let's argue about the middle ground next week.

Speaking: 'the panel — should this be allowed?'

In groups of 3–4, you are a panel. The chair (rotate!) reads out one of the FIVE scenarios below. Each panellist argues either FOR or AGAINST allowing the speech. You MUST use: (a) at least TWO fixed word pairs (freedom of speech, rights and responsibilities, pros and cons...), (b) at least THREE correctly-placed articles (a / an / the / —), (c) one chunked & stressed sentence.

1. **label:** Case 1 · **hint:** A comedian jokes on TV about a plane crash the week it happened.

2. **label:** Case 2 · **hint:** A politician says a whole religion is 'incompatible with democracy'.

3. **label:** Case 3 · **hint:** A student publishes a professor's private emails proving plagiarism.

4. **label:** Case 4 · **hint:** A social-media user posts an AI deepfake of the president.

5. **label:** Case 5 · **hint:** A tabloid prints the address of a footballer accused (but not convicted) of a crime.

example: OK — case 2, the politician. I'm going to argue AGAINST allowing it. Yes, freedom of speech is a fundamental right, but rights and responsibilities always come together. A comedian is one thing; a politician with millions of followers is quite another. When THE prime minister of a country says a whole religion is incompatible with democracy, that isn't a debate — it's a signal. History teaches us that sooner or later, that kind of speech leads to real violence against real people. The pros and cons here aren't equal: the pro is a bit of political theatre; the con is a group of citizens becoming unsafe in their own country. So, on balance, no — I would not allow it.

challenge: ■ Extra ■ if you slip in 'sooner or later' AND correctly use 'the' + 'a' + '—' in the same sentence.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Writing mini-task — 'a balanced opinion piece' (150–180 words)

Choose *ONE* of the five speaking cases. Write a short balanced opinion piece: (1) one paragraph *FOR*, (2) one paragraph *AGAINST*, (3) a one-sentence personal conclusion. Use at least *THREE* fixed word pairs, correct articles throughout, and one 'either / neither / both' structure from Lesson 10A.

Wrap-up · three finish-the-sentence prompts

Pick *ONE* and finish it out loud. Class votes on the bravest sentence.

1. **label:** Prompt 1 — the confident opinion · **prompt:** The one thing that must always be legal to say is... because...

2. **label:** Prompt 2 — the hard case · **prompt:** The one kind of speech I do genuinely think should be a crime is... because...

3. **label:** Prompt 3 — the personal one · **prompt:** The last time I stayed silent when I should have spoken up was...

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Workbook — home practice



Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class

Free speech - Workbook

Extra practice for home study · with answer keys

1. Vocabulary - fixed word pairs

Choose the fixed pair that best completes each sentence.

1. The negotiators went ____ for six days before reaching a deal.
(A) here and there
(B) to and fro
(C) now and then
(D) sooner or later
2. Democracy demands ____, not just rights.
(A) law and order
(B) pros and cons
(C) rights and responsibilities
(D) bread and butter
3. Before we decide, let's weigh the ____.
(A) ins and outs
(B) pros and cons
(C) cause and effect
(D) give and take
4. My freelance journalism is my ____; the podcast is a hobby.
(A) salt and pepper
(B) bread and butter
(C) peace and quiet
(D) trial and error
5. The truth will come out ____ - it always does.
(A) safe and sound
(B) here and there
(C) sooner or later
(D) loud and clear
6. I heard you ____ - you don't need to shout.
(A) loud and clear
(B) to and fro
(C) law and order
(D) give and take

2. Vocabulary - free-speech gap-fill

Complete each sentence with ONE word from the box.

BOX: algorithm · constitution · lawsuit · platform · press · censorship

1. The ____ decides what you see on your feed - you don't.
2. The right to publish is written into most modern ____s.
3. The newspaper faces a ____ from the minister it accused of corruption.
4. TikTok is not just a video app; it's now a serious news ____.

5. In a democracy, the ___ acts as a check on political power.
6. Deleting a book because it offends someone is a form of ___.

2b. Vocabulary - discursive writing

Write 120-180 words: 'Freedom of expression is a fundamental right, yet it is often in conflict with other societal values. Discuss the limits of free speech in the digital age.'

Checklist:

- [] Use target lexis from the free-speech and fixed-pair sections
- [] Use varied C1-level grammar (e.g. correct articles and chunking)
- [] Ensure logical cohesion and smooth transitions
- [] Maintain a formal or semi-formal academic register

[illegible]

3. Grammar - A / AN / THE / - (zero)

Choose the correct article.

1. I want to be ____ journalist.
(A) a
(B) an
(C) the
(D) -
2. ____ press has a duty to hold power to account.
(A) A
(B) An
(C) The
(D) -
3. She is studying ____ law at university.
(A) a

- (B) the
(C) -
4. He waited for ____ hour outside the courtroom.
(A) a
(B) an
(C) the
5. ____ United States has a very strong tradition of free speech.
(A) A
(B) An
(C) The
(D) -
6. ____ Facebook removed the post within an hour.
(A) A
(B) An
(C) The
(D) -
7. I read ____ interesting article yesterday. ____ article was about censorship.
(A) a / the
(B) an / the
(C) the / a
(D) an / an
8. He's in ____ prison for tax fraud.
(A) a
(B) the
(C) -

4. Grammar - spot & fix the mistake

Each sentence has ONE mistake with articles. Rewrite it correctly.

1. The freedom of speech is a human right.
2. She is journalist for the Guardian.
3. I go to the school by bike every day.
4. Prime Minister gave a speech yesterday.
5. The France is famous for its cuisine.
6. He waited for a hour outside the courtroom.
7. The journalists in general have a hard job.
8. I read a article you sent me.

5. Grammar - article gap-fill

Complete with A, AN, THE, or - (zero).

BOX: a · an · the · -

1. ____ President of ____ United States gave ____ press conference.
2. ____ Freedom of ____ press is essential in ____ democracy.
3. She's ____ expert on ____ media law.

4. I saw ____ very interesting documentary about ____ censorship.
5. ____ sun rises in ____ east, even for ____ dictators.
6. He's in ____ hospital after ____ accident on ____ M25.

6. Reading - true / false / not given

Read the short text and mark each statement T, F or NG.

In many democracies, the law tries to balance two values that often pull in opposite directions: freedom of speech and protection from harm. In the United States, the First Amendment offers almost unlimited legal protection for what a person says, with only very narrow exceptions such as direct threats. In most of Europe, by contrast, there are additional laws against certain forms of hate speech, especially where a group's dignity or safety is directly attacked. Neither system is perfect. Critics of the American model argue that unchecked speech can spread real harm, particularly online. Critics of the European model argue that governments have too much power to decide what can and cannot be said. The debate is not, and probably never will be, a black-and-white one.

1. The First Amendment protects almost all speech in the United States. [T / F / NG]
2. Most European countries have identical laws to the United States. [T / F / NG]
3. Both systems have their critics. [T / F / NG]
4. European laws focus especially on cases where a group is directly attacked. [T / F / NG]
5. The writer thinks the American model is clearly superior. [T / F / NG]
6. The writer thinks the debate has a simple answer. [T / F / NG]

7. Writing - a balanced opinion piece (150-180 words)

Choose ONE of the phone-in questions below. Write a short balanced opinion piece: (1) one paragraph FOR, (2) one paragraph AGAINST, (3) a one-sentence personal conclusion. Use at least THREE fixed word pairs, correct articles throughout, and one 'either / neither / both' structure.

Checklist:

- ☐ 150-180 words
- ☐ 3+ fixed word pairs (freedom of speech, rights and responsibilities, pros and cons, law and order, sooner or later...)
- ☐ Correct article use throughout (A / AN / THE / -)
- ☐ One 'either / neither / both' structure
- ☐ Clear FOR / AGAINST / conclusion structure

8. Listening - 'the campus interview' (bonus round)

Read the transcript (audio coming soon - two clearly different voices, no name-introductions). Answer the questions.

Audio: Student union president (Voice A) and visiting professor (Voice B)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

9. ■ Challenge - headline rewrite

Rewrite each newspaper headline as a normal sentence with all the missing articles.

1. 1. Court blocks new law on protest
2. 2. President attacks journalist for asking difficult question
3. 3. Prime Minister of India visits White House on Tuesday
4. 4. Study says social media damages young people's mental health
5. 5. UN calls for immediate ceasefire in region
6. 6. Freedom of speech under threat in Europe

10. ■ Challenge - where would you pause and stress?

For each sentence, choose the version that best shows natural chunking. | = pause. CAPITALS = stressed word.

1. Freedom of speech is under pressure in almost every country.
(A) FREEDOM | of speech | is under pressure | in almost every | COUNTRY.
(B) Freedom of SPEECH | is under PRESSURE | in almost every COUNTRY.
(C) Freedom | of | speech | is | under | pressure | in | almost | every | country.
2. It's not the government that decides - it's the algorithm.
(A) It's not the GOVERNMENT that decides - | it's the ALGORITHM.
(B) IT'S not | the government | that decides | - it's | the algorithm.
(C) It's not the government THAT decides - it's the ALGORITHM.
3. Sooner or later, every lie gets found out.
(A) SOONER or LATER, | every LIE | gets found OUT.
(B) Sooner OR later, every lie GETS found out.
(C) Sooner or later EVERY | lie gets found | OUT.

11. Self-check

Tick what you can now do confidently.

- ☐ I choose A / AN by SOUND, not spelling (AN hour, A university).
- ☐ I use THE for unique things and second mention (THE Prime Minister, THE article you sent me).
- ☐ I use ZERO article for general plurals & uncountables (- Journalists, - Freedom of speech).
- ☐ I remember THE with THE USA / THE UK / THE Netherlands but zero for most single countries.
- ☐ I know 6+ fixed word pairs (law and order, pros and cons, sooner or later...).
- ☐ I can chunk a long sentence and stress ONE content word per chunk.

Free speech — Workbook

Extra practice for home study · with answer keys

1. Vocabulary — fixed word pairs

Choose the fixed pair that best completes each sentence.

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(D) bread and butter
3. Before we decide, let's weigh the ____.
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(B) pros and cons
(C) cause and effect
(D) give and take
4. My freelance journalism is my ____; the podcast is a hobby.
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(B) bread and butter
(C) peace and quiet
(D) trial and error
5. The truth will come out ____ — it always does.
(A) safe and sound
(B) here and there
(C) sooner or later
(D) loud and clear
6. I heard you ____ — you don't need to shout.
(A) loud and clear
(B) to and fro
(C) law and order
(D) give and take

2. Vocabulary — free-speech gap-fill

Complete each sentence with ONE word from the box.

BOX: algorithm · constitution · lawsuit · platform · press · censorship

1. The ____ decides what you see on your feed — you don't.
2. The right to publish is written into most modern ____s.
3. The newspaper faces a ____ from the minister it accused of corruption.
4. TikTok is not just a video app; it's now a serious news ____.

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2b. Vocabulary — discursive writing

Write 120–180 words: 'Freedom of expression is a fundamental right, yet it is often in conflict with other societal values. Discuss the limits of free speech in the digital age.'

Checklist:

- Use target lexis from the free-speech and fixed-pair sections
- Use varied C1-level grammar (e.g. correct articles and chunking)
- Ensure logical cohesion and smooth transitions
- Maintain a formal or semi-formal academic register

[illegible]

3. Grammar — A / AN / THE / — (zero)

Choose the correct article.

1. I want to be ____ journalist.
(A) a
(B) an
(C) the
(D) —
2. ____ press has a duty to hold power to account.
(A) A
(B) An
(C) The
(D) —
3. She is studying ____ law at university.
(A) a

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- (B) the
(C) —
4. He waited for ____ hour outside the courtroom.
(A) a
(B) an
(C) the
5. ____ United States has a very strong tradition of free speech.
(A) A
(B) An
(C) The
(D) —
6. ____ Facebook removed the post within an hour.
(A) A
(B) An
(C) The
(D) —
7. I read ____ interesting article yesterday. ____ article was about censorship.
(A) a / the
(B) an / the
(C) the / a
(D) an / an
8. He's in ____ prison for tax fraud.
(A) a
(B) the
(C) —

4. Grammar — spot & fix the mistake

Each sentence has ONE mistake with articles. Rewrite it correctly.

1. The freedom of speech is a human right.
2. She is journalist for the Guardian.
3. I go to the school by bike every day.
4. Prime Minister gave a speech yesterday.
5. The France is famous for its cuisine.
6. He waited for a hour outside the courtroom.
7. The journalists in general have a hard job.
8. I read a article you sent me.

5. Grammar — article gap-fill

Complete with A, AN, THE, or — (zero).

BOX: a · an · the · —

1. ____ President of ____ United States gave ____ press conference.
2. ____ Freedom of ____ press is essential in ____ democracy.
3. She's ____ expert on ____ media law.

4. I saw ____ very interesting documentary about ____ censorship.
5. ____ sun rises in ____ east, even for ____ dictators.
6. He's in ____ hospital after ____ accident on ____ M25.

6. Reading — true / false / not given

Read the short text and mark each statement T, F or NG.

In many democracies, the law tries to balance two values that often pull in opposite directions: freedom of speech and protection from harm. In the United States, the First Amendment offers almost unlimited legal protection for what a person says, with only very narrow exceptions such as direct threats. In most of Europe, by contrast, there are additional laws against certain forms of hate speech, especially where a group's dignity or safety is directly attacked. Neither system is perfect. Critics of the American model argue that unchecked speech can spread real harm, particularly online. Critics of the European model argue that governments have too much power to decide what can and cannot be said. The debate is not, and probably never will be, a black-and-white one.

1. The First Amendment protects almost all speech in the United States. [T / F / NG]
2. Most European countries have identical laws to the United States. [T / F / NG]
3. Both systems have their critics. [T / F / NG]
4. European laws focus especially on cases where a group is directly attacked. [T / F / NG]
5. The writer thinks the American model is clearly superior. [T / F / NG]
6. The writer thinks the debate has a simple answer. [T / F / NG]

7. Writing — a balanced opinion piece (150–180 words)

Choose ONE of the phone-in questions below. Write a short balanced opinion piece: (1) one paragraph FOR, (2) one paragraph AGAINST, (3) a one-sentence personal conclusion. Use at least THREE fixed word pairs, correct articles throughout, and one 'either / neither / both' structure.

Checklist:

- 150–180 words
- 3+ fixed word pairs (freedom of speech, rights and responsibilities, pros and cons, law and order, sooner or later...)
- Correct article use throughout (A / AN / THE / —)
- One 'either / neither / both' structure
- Clear FOR / AGAINST / conclusion structure

8. Listening — 'the campus interview' (bonus round)

Read the transcript (audio coming soon — two clearly different voices, no name-introductions). Answer the questions.

■ **Audio:** Student union president (Voice A) and visiting professor (Voice B)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

9. ■ Challenge — headline rewrite

Rewrite each newspaper headline as a normal sentence with all the missing articles.

1. 1. Court blocks new law on protest
2. 2. President attacks journalist for asking difficult question
3. 3. Prime Minister of India visits White House on Tuesday
4. 4. Study says social media damages young people's mental health
5. 5. UN calls for immediate ceasefire in region
6. 6. Freedom of speech under threat in Europe

10. ■ Challenge — where would you pause and stress?

For each sentence, choose the version that best shows natural chunking. | = pause. CAPITALS = stressed word.

1. Freedom of speech is under pressure in almost every country.
 - (A) FREEDOM | of speech | is under pressure | in almost every | COUNTRY.
 - (B) Freedom of SPEECH | is under PRESSURE | in almost every COUNTRY.
 - (C) Freedom | of | speech | is | under | pressure | in | almost | every | country.
2. It's not the government that decides — it's the algorithm.
 - (A) It's not the GOVERNMENT that decides — | it's the ALGORITHM.
 - (B) IT'S not | the government | that decides | — it's | the algorithm.
 - (C) It's not the government THAT decides — it's the ALGORITHM.
3. Sooner or later, every lie gets found out.
 - (A) SOONER or LATER, | every LIE | gets found OUT.
 - (B) Sooner OR later, every lie GETS found out.
 - (C) Sooner or later EVERY | lie gets found | OUT.

11. Self-check

Tick what you can now do confidently.

- I choose A / AN by SOUND, not spelling (AN hour, A university).
- I use THE for unique things and second mention (THE Prime Minister, THE article you sent me).
- I use ZERO article for general plurals & uncountables (— Journalists, — Freedom of speech).
- I remember THE with THE USA / THE UK / THE Netherlands but zero for most single countries.
- I know 6+ fixed word pairs (law and order, pros and cons, sooner or later...).
- I can chunk a long sentence and stress ONE content word per chunk.



Answer key — Class Book

Reading: 'the four battles over free speech'

1. (C) Four
2. (B) More than 300
3. (B) the world's biggest editors, with little legal responsibility
4. (C) Neither side is entirely right or entirely wrong.
5. (B) Algorithms that decide what you see

Vocabulary: collocation — word pairs (fixed order)

1. law and order
 2. rights and responsibilities
 3. trial and error
 4. pros and cons
 5. loud and clear
 6. bread and butter
 7. sooner or later
 8. to and fro
1. The country's constitution guarantees freedom of expression.
 2. Journalists everywhere depend on press freedom.
 3. The newspaper is facing a lawsuit over the article.
 4. Disagreement is simply part and parcel of a healthy democracy.
 5. The truth about the leak will come out sooner or later.

Grammar: articles — A / AN, THE, and ZERO article

1. (A) a
 2. (C) The
 3. (C) —
 4. (C) the
 5. (B) an
 6. (C) The
 7. (B) an / the
 8. (D) —
1. — Freedom of speech is a human right. (general uncountable → zero)
 2. She is A journalist for the Guardian. (first mention, one of many)
 3. I go to — school by bike every day. (school as a place of study → zero)
 4. THE Prime Minister gave a speech yesterday. (unique in the country → THE)
 5. — France is famous for its cuisine. (single country → zero)
 6. He waited for AN hour... (silent H → AN)
 7. — Journalists in general have a hard job. (general plural → zero)
 8. I read THE article you sent me. (already known → THE) — or 'AN article' if new.
1. THE President of THE United States has THE power to veto — legislation.
 2. — Freedom of THE press is essential in A democracy. (freedom is uncountable; the press is unique in a country; a democracy = one of many.)
 3. I saw A very interesting documentary about — censorship yesterday.
 4. She is AN expert on — media law and teaches at A university. (or 'at university' zero if she's studying there)
 5. THE sun rises in THE east, even for — dictators.

Listening: 'the phone-in — should hate speech be a crime?'

1. Whether hate speech should be a criminal offence.
 2. The first caller (Voice A) — she wants clear laws against speech that dehumanises groups.
 3. The second caller (Voice B) — he thinks the answer to bad speech is better speech, not the police.
1. The Rwandan genocide of 1994, where radio broadcasts calling one ethnic group 'cockroaches' preceded the killings.
 2. Political criticism of the government, satire and comedy, and religious debate.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



3. That governments always use hate-speech laws to silence their own critics, not to protect minorities.
4. Journalists arrested under 'anti-extremism' laws in Turkey, Russia and Egypt for criticising the government.
5. That direct incitement to violence ('go and kill X now') is not free speech and should stay illegal in every country.
6. Not whether to draw a line, but WHO gets to draw it — the courts, the platforms, or the users.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Answer key — Workbook

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class

Free speech - Workbook — Answer Key

1. Vocabulary - fixed word pairs

1. **(B)** *to and fro*
2. **(C)** *rights and responsibilities*
3. **(B)** *pros and cons*
4. **(B)** *bread and butter*
5. **(C)** *sooner or later*
6. **(A)** *loud and clear*

2. Vocabulary - free-speech gap-fill

1. **algorithm**
2. **constitution**
3. **lawsuit**
4. **platform**
5. **press**
6. **censorship**

2b. Vocabulary - discursive writing

Sample answer

The debate over free speech involves a constant to and fro between the rights of the individual and the responsibilities of the platform. While the constitution of many nations protects the press, the rise of the digital algorithm has introduced new forms of censorship. We must weigh the pros and cons of allowing unchecked speech online, especially when it can cause real-world harm. Sooner or later, every society must decide where to draw the line. Neither a total lack of regulation nor excessive government control is a perfect solution. Rights and responsibilities are the bread and butter of a healthy democracy, and they must be communicated loud and clear. If a lawsuit is the only remedy for defamation, then justice is only for those who can afford it. Ultimately, protecting the truth requires a balance that ensures a safe environment for all voices. As the landscape continues to change, our commitment to an open yet accountable discourse must remain firm.

3. Grammar - A / AN / THE / - (zero)

1. **(A)** *a*
2. **(C)** *The*
3. **(C)** *-*
4. **(B)** *an*
5. **(C)** *The*
6. **(D)** *-*
7. **(B)** *an / the*
8. **(C)** *-*

4. Grammar - spot & fix the mistake

1. - Freedom of speech is a human right. (general uncountable → zero)
2. She is A journalist for the Guardian.
3. I go to - school by bike every day. (school as an activity → zero)
4. THE Prime Minister gave a speech yesterday.
5. - France is famous for its cuisine.
6. He waited for AN hour outside the courtroom. (silent H → AN)
7. - Journalists in general have a hard job.
8. I read THE article you sent me. (already known → THE).

5. Grammar - article gap-fill

1. **The / the / a**
2. - / **the / a**
3. **an / -**
4. **a / -**
5. **The / the / -**
6. - / **an / the**

6. Reading - true / false / not given

1. **T**
2. **F**
3. **T**
4. **T**
5. **NG**
6. **F**

7. Writing - a balanced opinion piece (150-180 words)

Sample answer

Should hate speech be a criminal offence? **FOR:** Words are not neutral. History shows, again and again, that dehumanising a group in public - calling them 'insects' or 'invaders' - can precede terrible real violence. Rwanda in 1994 is only the most famous example. Freedom of speech is a fundamental right, but rights and responsibilities always come together. A clear, narrow law, applied by the courts rather than by an angry crowd, is a reasonable price for the safety of vulnerable minorities. **AGAINST:** The pros and cons are not equal in every country. Sooner or later, hate-speech laws are used by governments against their own critics - see Turkey, Russia, Egypt. Neither censorship nor law and order really solves the underlying prejudice; the answer to bad speech is more, better speech. And who, exactly, draws the line? A judge? An algorithm? On balance, I'd accept a very narrow law focused on direct incitement to violence, but not one word further.

8. Listening - 'the campus interview' (bonus round)

1. *Whether the debating society should have invited last night's controversial speaker.*
2. *That a university's whole point is to hear arguments you disagree with, in a safe room where you can respond.*
3. *That some students feel not just uncomfortable but genuinely unsafe, and that the speaker has a much bigger national platform than they do.*
4. *Invite the speaker AND two strong opposing speakers on the same panel - 'give and take, rights and responsibilities'.*
5. *At a speaker who denies a documented genocide - that's a lie against the historical record, not a debate.*
6. *Not whether to draw a line, but WHO gets to draw it, and by what process.*

9. ■ Challenge - headline rewrite

1. *The court has blocked the/a new law on - protest.*
2. *The president attacked a journalist for asking a difficult question.*
3. *The Prime Minister of - India visited the White House on - Tuesday.*
4. *A/The study says (that) - social media damages - young people's mental health.*
5. *The UN has called for an immediate ceasefire in the region.*
6. *- Freedom of speech is under threat in - Europe.*

10. ■ Challenge - where would you pause and stress?

1. **(B)** *Freedom of SPEECH | is under PRESSURE | in almost every COUNTRY.*
2. **(A)** *It's not the GOVERNMENT that decides - | it's the ALGORITHM.*
3. **(A)** *SOONER or LATER, | every LIE | gets found OUT.*

11. Self-check

Self-assessment — no fixed answers.

Free speech — Workbook — Answer Key

1. Vocabulary — fixed word pairs

1. **(B)** *to and fro*
2. **(C)** *rights and responsibilities*
3. **(B)** *pros and cons*
4. **(B)** *bread and butter*
5. **(C)** *sooner or later*
6. **(A)** *loud and clear*

2. Vocabulary — free-speech gap-fill

1. **algorithm**
2. **constitution**
3. **lawsuit**
4. **platform**
5. **press**
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3. Grammar — A / AN / THE / — (zero)

1. **(A)** *a*
2. **(C)** *The*
3. **(C)** *—*
4. **(B)** *an*
5. **(C)** *The*
6. **(D)** *—*
7. **(B)** *an / the*
8. **(C)** *—*

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1. — *Freedom of speech is a human right. (general uncountable → zero)*
2. *She is A journalist for the Guardian.*
3. *I go to — school by bike every day. (school as an activity → zero)*
4. *THE Prime Minister gave a speech yesterday.*
5. — *France is famous for its cuisine.*
6. *He waited for AN hour outside the courtroom. (silent H → AN)*
7. — *Journalists in general have a hard job.*
8. *I read THE article you sent me. (already known → THE).*

5. Grammar — article gap-fill

1. **The / the / a**
2. — / **the / a**
3. **an / —**
4. **a / —**
5. **The / the / —**
6. — / **an / the**

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2. **F**
3. **T**
4. **T**
5. **NG**
6. **F**

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