



APEX ENGLISH

Your voice. Global.

C1 · GENERAL ENGLISH

UNIT 5 · 5A

No time for anything

Theme · Time & Money



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No time for anything

Theme: Time & Money

Learning objectives

- Expand C1 vocabulary related to **expressions with time**.
- Use **distancing** accurately and idiomatically.
- Read a discursive text and discuss inferences beyond the literal.
- Speak fluently on the unit's theme with a partner or in a small group.

This booklet accompanies the digital lesson at

alunos.apexenglish.com.br/general-c1/5a. Interactive audio, video and drag-and-drop tasks live online; use this booklet in class and to review.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Class Book

Warm-up

In pairs, talk for about a minute on each prompt before feedback:

- 1 What comes to mind when you hear the theme **"Time & Money"**?
- 2 How comfortable are you using vocabulary about **expressions with time**? Give one recent example.
- 3 When did you last use — or misuse — **distancing**?

Reading

The tyranny of the calendar

If you asked a working adult in London today whether they had enough time, the honest answer would, apparently, be no. According to a study published last winter by the Office for National Statistics, just over half of full-time employees describe themselves as, quote, always or nearly always rushed. What is striking is not the figure itself, but how little of that pressure appears to come from genuine overwork.

Time-use researchers at the London School of Economics have spent the last decade trying to work out where the missing hours have gone. Their conclusion is unglamorous. Workers, it would seem, are not putting in longer days. They are being interrupted more frequently within them — on average, every eleven minutes, according to a widely cited figure. Each interruption is said to require twenty to twenty-three minutes of recovery time before deep attention returns. In other words, the day is not too short. It is too broken up.

There is, apparently, an economic term for this: time poverty. The Chicago-based economist Daniel Hamermesh has argued for two decades that time poverty is now the defining complaint of the middle class in developed economies — richer than at any previous point in history, and yet somehow more harried. Hamermesh's own prescription, in a recent lecture, was blunter than the academic literature typically allows: fewer meetings, fewer notifications, and — rather controversially — no serious conversations before eleven in the morning.

Not everyone accepts the framing. The historian Judy Wajcman has objected that "time poverty" simply repackages a much older complaint about industrial life, and that treating attention as a personal-management problem lets the actual culprits — always-on work culture, algorithmic scheduling, precarious contracts — off the hook. She may well have a point. What she does not dispute, however, is that the feeling itself is real. Almost everyone, at some point in the last decade, appears to have said the same sentence out loud: "I don't know where the time goes."

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



The quiet, slightly humbling suggestion running through the research is that we may have been chasing the wrong problem. We do not need more hours in the day. We need the ones we already have to be less thoroughly broken up.

Comprehension — choose the best answer.

1. The main thesis of the article is that:
 - (A) people are working longer hours than ever
 - (B) the day is not too short but too fragmented
 - (C) middle-class jobs have become too demanding
 - (D) attention is now a personal-management skill
2. The 'twenty to twenty-three minutes' figure refers to:
 - (A) average length of a modern meeting
 - (B) recovery time after each interruption
 - (C) the median tube commute in London
 - (D) productive attention span in a knowledge worker
3. 'Time poverty', according to Hamermesh, is:
 - (A) a niche academic curiosity
 - (B) the defining complaint of the modern middle class
 - (C) confined to gig-economy workers
 - (D) declining sharply in wealthier societies
4. Judy Wajcman objects to the 'time poverty' framing because:
 - (A) the numbers are exaggerated
 - (B) it blames individuals rather than structural conditions
 - (C) it ignores gender
 - (D) the concept is too new to be reliable
5. The tone of the article towards its own subject is best described as:
 - (A) alarmist
 - (B) hopeful and prescriptive
 - (C) cautiously ambivalent
 - (D) openly polemical
6. The closing paragraph implies that the real remedy is:
 - (A) longer holidays
 - (B) protecting unbroken stretches of attention
 - (C) leaving the city
 - (D) delegating more aggressively

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Vocabulary

Focus: **expressions with time**

Study these C1 items and their meanings.

for the time being — temporarily, until further notice

at short notice — with very little advance warning

in the nick of time — at the very last possible moment

on borrowed time — surviving longer than expected, past a natural end

kill time — occupy yourself while waiting

make up for lost time — compensate for time previously wasted

have time on your hands — have more free time than you know what to do with

against the clock — under intense time pressure

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Grammar

Focus: **distancing**

Study the online lesson notes, then complete the interactive tasks at **alunos.apexenglish.com.br/general-c1/5a**.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Speaking

- 1 Tell a partner about a personal experience connected to **time & money**. Aim for at least two minutes without pausing.
- 2 Compare cultures or generations on this topic. Use at least three items from the *expressions with time* list.
- 3 Discuss: *Is it possible to be objective about time & money?* Justify your view.

Writing

Write 220–260 words on: **“Time & Money — what has changed in the last twenty years?”** Use at least four items from the vocabulary list and one structure from the grammar focus (*distancing*).

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Workbook

Home practice

Complete on your own; check answers in class.

1. She _____ resigned last week, though the company hasn't confirmed it.
(A) is reported to have
(B) is reporting to have
(C) reports to have
(D) has been reported to
2. It _____ that the numbers were wrong all along — three analysts are now checking them.
(A) would seem
(B) would seemed
(C) seems it
(D) seeming
3. The company appears _____ heading for a very difficult second quarter.
(A) to be
(B) being
(C) to been
(D) to have being
4. He _____ in his prime, though he's just turned forty-nine.
(A) is supposedly
(B) supposedly is
(C) supposedly being
(D) is being supposedly
5. That _____ well account for why she never answered the email.
(A) could
(B) will
(C) must to
(D) would to

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class

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Workbook · 5A. No time for anything

Home practice · distancing devices & time-expressions · answer key included



Class Book

Full lesson · in-class material



Workbook

Home practice · with answer key

GRAMMAR

10 min

1 · Distancing — choose the best option

1. She _____ resigned last week, though the company hasn't confirmed it.

a. is reported to have ✓

b. is reporting to have

c. reports to have

d. has been reported to

2. It _____ that the numbers were wrong all along — three analysts are now checking them.

a. would seem ✓

b. would seemed

c. seems it

d. seeming

3. The company appears _____ heading for a very difficult second quarter.

a. to be ✓

b. being

c. to been

d. to have being

4. He _____ in his prime, though he's just turned forty-nine.

a. is supposedly ✓

b. supposedly is

c. supposedly being

d. is being supposedly

5. That _____ well account for why she never answered the email.

a. could ✓

b. will

c. must to

d. would to

Score: 5 / 5

Try again

VOCABULARY

2 · Complete with a time-expression from the box

10 min

WORD BANK — DRAG OR TAP, THEN TAP A GAP

against the clock

at short notice

in the nick of time

on borrowed time

make up for lost time

1. He arrived **in the nick of time** **in the nick of time**, seconds before the doors closed.

2. This washing machine is nine years old and rattles — it's **on borrowed time** **on borrowed time**.

3. Can you cover Friday's shift **at short notice** **at short notice** ? I know it's very last-minute.
4. We're working **against the clock** **against the clock** to submit the paper before midnight.
5. After a year without seeing them, we spent the weekend trying to **make up for lost time** **make up for lost time** .

Score: 5 / 5

🔄 Try again

GRAMMAR

10 min

3 · Rewrite using the structure in brackets

1. *People say that meditation makes you more productive. (passive with 'is said to')*

Hide answer

Meditation is said to make you more productive.

2. *It seems that he has left the company. (using 'appear + to have')*

Hide answer

He appears to have left the company.

3. *According to the rumours, she got the promotion. (using 'apparently')*

Hide answer

She apparently got the promotion. / Apparently, she got the promotion.

4. *I think that could be the reason for the delay. (using 'could well')*

Hide answer

That could well be the reason for the delay.

VOCABULARY +

8 min

4 · in / on / at / from / ahead of + time

DRAG THE MEANING ONTO THE WORD

Reset

earlier than expected

occasionally

at that specific past moment

punctual, at the arranged moment

with just enough time to spare before an event

in time (for)

with just enough time
to spare before an
event

Hide answer

with just enough time to spare
before an event

on time

punctual, at the
arranged moment

Hide answer

punctual, at the arranged
moment

at the time

at that specific past
moment

Hide answer

at that specific past moment

from time to time

occasionally

Hide answer

occasionally

ahead of time

earlier than expected

Hide answer

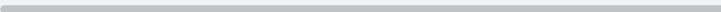
earlier than expected

LISTENING

5 · Podcast · An attention-management problem

10 min

Listen to a British man in his forties on a podcast, reflecting honestly on why his days keep disappearing.

▶ 0:00 / 0:00   

- What does he say his real problem is — and how does he distinguish it from a 'time-management problem'? Hide answer

He says it is an attention-management problem, not a time-management one — he was reactive, letting other people's urgency drive his mornings.

2. What small change did he make first, and what unexpected effect did it have? [Hide answer](#)

He stopped checking messages before 8 am. Within a week his mornings felt roughly twice as long.

3. What are the three rules he now follows? [Hide answer](#)

No meetings before 10, no notifications on his personal phone, and a single sheet with only three priorities each morning — not thirty.

4. What is his final distinction between 'less busy' and 'having your time back'? [Hide answer](#)

He is not less busy at all — but he has recovered his time, and he says that is not the same thing as having more of it.

WRITING

20 min

6 · A short reflection (180–220 words)

Write a short first-person reflection titled: "*The thing I keep telling myself I have no time for*". Use at least three distancing devices and two idiomatic *time*-expressions. End with an honest, unheroic decision — nothing motivational.

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