

Hedging/ generalising phrases brainstorm into the gaps

Brainstorm at least three different words or expressions which could go into the gaps below to make general statements about people, places, times, things etc. The same words or expressions can sometimes go in more than one gap below.

Section 1

1. _____ 2,000,000 people live in East Sussex
2. _____ people
3. _____ likely
4. a/ an _____ amount/ number
5. almost _____
6. very _____
7. in _____ places

Section 2

8. It happens _____ often
9. _____ all
10. _____ many
11. a/ an _____ minority
12. a _____ proportion
13. according to _____, ...
14. fairly _____
15. virtually _____
16. there is _____ chance
17. _____ always
18. could _____
19. It is usually true that... but _____

Mixed up answers

Section 1

- a couple of/ a few/ few/ several/ many/ very many
- absolutely huge/ massive/ huge/ vast/ very large/ large/ good/ considerable/ sizeable/ substantial/ reasonably large/ reasonable/ fair/ fairly limited/ limited/ fairly small/ small/ very limited/ tiny/ absolutely tiny
- all too/ very/ really quite/ quite/ fairly/ not very/ un/ quite un/ fairly un/ very un/ really quite un
- all/ always/ certainly/ every/ never/ no
- around/ approximately/ in the area of/ under/ just under/ nearly/ almost/ fewer than/ more than/ over/ just over
- common/ few/ likely/ little/ many/ occasionally/ often/ probably/ rarely/ seldom/ typical/ typically/ widespread
- one or two/ a couple of/ a few/ several/ many/ a large number of/ very many/ a very large number of/ a huge number of/ the majority of/ the vast majority of/ almost all/ all

Section 2

- absolutely/ almost/ by no means
- absolutely/ virtually/ practically/ basically/ almost/ by no means/ nowhere near
- all/ every/ everyone/ everywhere/ all the time/ every day
- certain/ sure/ large/ small/ common/ often
- every/ a great/ a very good/ a good/ little/ very little/ next to no/ no/ absolutely no
- fairly/ so/ very/ not so
- fairly/ very/ extremely
- it depends on.../ it can also be said that.../ there are exceptions, such as.../ it is occasionally the case that.../ there are also other possibilities, such as...
- large/ substantial/ considerable/ small but significant/ insignificant/ small/ tiny
- many people/ the majority of experts/ the (leading) authority on this topic/ most researchers in the field/ a large number of academics/ a significant number of researchers
- possibly/ potentially/ conceivably
- tiny/ small/ considerable/ substantial/ large/ very large/ huge

Suggested answers

Section 1

1. _____ around/ approximately/ in the area of/ under/ just under/ nearly/ almost/ fewer than/ more than/ over/ just over _____ 2,000,000 people live in East Sussex
2. _ one or two/ a couple of/ a few/ several/ many/ a large number of/ very many/ a very large number of/ a huge number of/ the majority of/ the vast majority of/ almost all/ all _____ people... every hour of every day.
3. _____ all too/ very/ really quite/ quite/ fairly/ not very/ un/ quite un/ fairly un/ very un/ really quite un _____ likely
4. a/ an _____ absolutely huge/ massive/ huge/ vast/ very large/ large/ good/ considerable/ sizeable/ substantial/ reasonably large/ reasonable/ fair/ fairly limited/ limited/ fairly small/ small/ very limited/ tiny/ absolutely tiny _____ amount/ number
5. almost _____ all/ always/ certainly/ every/ never/ no _____
6. very _____ common/ few/ likely/ little/ many/ occasionally/ often/ probably/ rarely/ seldom/ typical/ typically/ widespread _____
7. in _____ a couple of/ a few/ few/ several/ many/ very many _____ places

Section 2

8. It happens _____ fairly/ very/ extremely _____ often
9. _____ absolutely/ virtually/ practically/ basically/ almost/ by no means/ nowhere near _____ all
10. _____ fairly/ so/ very/ not so _____ many
11. a/ an _____ large/ substantial/ considerable/ small but significant/ insignificant/ small/ tiny _____ minority
12. a _____ tiny/ small/ considerable/ substantial/ large/ very large/ huge _____ proportion
13. according to _____ many people/ the majority of experts/ the (leading) authority on this topic/ most researchers in the field/ a large number of academics/ a significant number of researchers _____,...
14. fairly _____ certain/ sure/ large/ small/ common/ often _____
15. virtually _____ all/ every/ everyone/ everywhere/ all the time/ every day _____
16. there is _____ every/ a great/ a very good/ a good/ little/ very little/ next to no/ no/ absolutely no _____ chance
17. _____ absolutely/ almost/ by no means _____ always
18. could _____ possibly/ potentially/ conceivably _____
19. It is usually true that... but _____ it depends on.../ it can also be said that.../ there are exceptions, such as.../ it is occasionally the case that.../ there are also other possibilities, such as... _____