

Cleft Sentences

Grammar Lesson, Examples & 30 Practice Questions

Cleft Sentences in English

In natural spoken and written English, we often want to draw attention to one particular piece of information in a sentence. One of the most powerful and elegant ways to do this is by using **cleft sentences**. A cleft sentence splits — or "cleaves" — a simple sentence into two clauses, allowing the speaker to place special emphasis on a specific element.

Compare these two sentences:

Sarah called the police.

It was Sarah who called the police.

Both sentences contain the same information, but the second — a cleft sentence — places strong emphasis on **Sarah** as the key piece of information. This is the essence of what cleft sentences do: they reorganise a sentence to highlight what matters most.

Cleft sentences are a hallmark of sophisticated, fluent English. At C1 level, you are expected to both recognise and use them naturally in writing and speech. This lesson covers the two main types: **it-cleft sentences** and **wh-cleft sentences (pseudo-clefts)**, as well as related advanced structures.

Why Use Cleft Sentences?

Cleft sentences serve several important communicative functions at C1 level:

- **Emphasis:** To highlight a specific part of a sentence (the subject, object, time, place, reason, or manner).
- **Contrast:** To correct a misunderstanding or contradict a previous statement.
- **Information focus:** To signal what is "new" or important information in a discourse.
- **Cohesion:** To link ideas smoothly in written and spoken texts.

Understanding **why** a cleft sentence is used is just as important as understanding **how** to form one.

Type 1: It-Cleft Sentences

The **it-cleft** is the most common type of cleft sentence in English. It uses a dummy subject *it* to introduce the sentence, followed by a form of *be*, the focused element, and a relative clause beginning with *who*, *that*, *which*, *where*, or *when*.

Structure of It-Cleft Sentences

It + be + [focused element] + relative clause

Let us begin with a simple sentence and see how it transforms into an it-cleft:

Original sentence: *James broke the window.*

Focused Element	Cleft Sentence	What is emphasised
Subject (person)	It was James who broke the window.	James — not someone else
Object (thing)	It was the window that James broke.	The window — not something else
Time	It was yesterday that James broke the window.	Yesterday — not another time
Place	It was in the kitchen that James broke the window.	In the kitchen — not elsewhere
Reason	It was because he was angry that James broke the window.	His reason — not another reason

Choosing the Correct Relative Pronoun in It-Clefts

The relative pronoun that follows the focused element depends on the nature of that element:

Focused Element	Relative Pronoun	Example
Person	<i>who</i> or <i>that</i>	It was Maria <i>who</i> organised the event.
Thing / object	<i>that</i> or <i>which</i>	It was the contract <i>that</i> caused the problem.
Time expression	<i>that</i> or <i>when</i>	It was in 1969 <i>that</i> the moon landing took place.
Place expression	<i>that</i> or <i>where</i>	It was in Paris <i>that</i> they first met.
Reason clause	<i>that</i>	It was because of the delay <i>that</i> we missed the flight.

Note: In modern English, *that* is by far the most flexible relative pronoun in it-cleft sentences and can be used in nearly all contexts. *Who*, *which*, *when*, and *where* are more formal or precise alternatives.

Tense in It-Cleft Sentences

The verb *be* in an it-cleft must agree with the tense and context of the sentence. It can appear in any tense:

- It **is** your dedication *that* makes you stand out. (*present*)
- It **was** the sudden noise *that* startled the audience. (*past*)
- It **will be** this decision *that* defines his career. (*future*)
- It **has been** her creativity *that* has driven the project. (*present perfect*)

Negating It-Cleft Sentences

It-cleft sentences can also be negated. This is particularly useful for correcting false information:

It was **not** Peter who stole the money — it was his brother.

It is **not** the price that concerns me; it is the quality.

It was **not** until midnight that the guests finally left.

The structure **It was not until + time/event + that + clause** is especially common in formal writing to indicate that something happened later than expected or after a significant delay.

It Was Not Until... That... (A Key C1 Structure)

This particular cleft construction deserves special attention at C1 level, as it appears frequently in academic and literary texts:

It was not until + [time/event] + that + [clause]

- *It was not until she arrived home **that** she realised her passport was missing.*
- *It was not until the 20th century **that** women gained the right to vote in many countries.*
- *It was not until he read the report **that** the manager understood the severity of the situation.*

This structure emphasises the **delay** before an event or realisation, and carries a strong sense of contrast or surprise.

Type 2: Wh-Cleft Sentences (Pseudo-Clefts)

The second major type of cleft sentence is the **wh-cleft**, sometimes called a **pseudo-cleft**. Instead of using *it*, this structure begins with a *wh-* clause (most commonly a *what*-clause), followed by *be* and the focused element.

Structure of Wh-Cleft Sentences

Wh-clause + be + [focused element]

The most common pattern uses *what*:

What + subject + verb + is/was + [focused element]

Again, let us start with a simple sentence:

Original: She needs more confidence.

*Wh-cleft: What she needs is **more confidence**.*

Here, the focus falls on **more confidence** — the new, most important information in the sentence.

More Examples of Wh-Cleft Sentences

Original Sentence	Wh-Cleft Sentence	Focused Element
He wants an apology.	What he wants is an apology .	An apology
They need to communicate better.	What they need to do is communicate better .	Communicate better

Original Sentence	Wh-Cleft Sentence	Focused Element
The company lacked clear leadership.	What the company lacked was clear leadership .	Clear leadership
I enjoy long walks in the mountains.	What I enjoy is long walks in the mountains .	Long walks in the mountains
The report failed to address the root cause.	What the report failed to address was the root cause .	The root cause

Wh-Clefts with Other Wh-Words

Although *what* is the most common, other *wh*- words can also introduce pseudo-cleft sentences, particularly in formal or literary contexts:

- **Where:** *Where he went wrong was in trusting his instincts too blindly.*
- **When:** *When I realised the gravity of the situation was the moment he handed me the letter.*
- **Why:** *Why she resigned remains a mystery. (less common as a cleft, more as a noun clause)*
- **How:** *How they managed to finish on time was remarkable.*
- **The way:** *The way she handled the crisis is what impressed everyone.*

The Reversed (Inverted) Wh-Cleft

The *wh*-cleft can also be reversed so that the focused element appears first and the *wh*-clause comes second. This is sometimes called a **reversed pseudo-cleft** or **it-inversion cleft**:

[Focused element] + be + what/wh-clause

- *More confidence is what she needs.*
- *An apology is what he wants.*
- *Clear communication is what the team lacked.*
- *A complete rethink of strategy is what this situation demands.*

This inverted form is common in spoken English and journalistic writing, where the most important information is placed at the very beginning of the sentence for immediate impact.

Comparing It-Clefts and Wh-Clefts

Both types of cleft sentences emphasise information, but they focus on different elements and carry slightly different stylistic weights. The table below compares them side by side:

Feature	It-Cleft	Wh-Cleft (Pseudo-Cleft)
Opening structure	<i>It + be + focused element</i>	<i>What/wh- + clause + be</i>
Focused element position	Middle of the sentence	End of the sentence

Feature	It-Cleft	Wh-Cleft (Pseudo-Cleft)
Best for emphasising	Subject, object, time, place, reason	Object, action, or process
Typical use	Spoken and written English	Spoken English and formal writing
Example	<i>It was the noise that woke me.</i>	<i>What woke me was the noise.</i>
Relative clause included?	Yes (<i>who/that/which/when/where</i>)	No relative clause — uses a nominal clause
Negation	Common: <i>It was not until...</i>	Less common
Register	Neutral to formal	Neutral to slightly informal (spoken)

All-Cleft Sentences and Other Advanced Cleft Structures

At C1 level, it is useful to be aware of a few additional cleft-like structures that work in similar ways:

The "All" Cleft

The **all-cleft** uses *all* in place of *what* to create a more restrictive or exclusive meaning. It implies that the focused element is the *only* thing relevant:

All + subject + verb + is/was + [focused element]

- *All I want is a little peace and quiet.*
- *All she did was smile politely.*
- *All we need now is a clear plan.*
- *All the investigation revealed was a trail of contradictions.*

The *all*-cleft carries a strong implication: "nothing more, nothing else." It is commonly used in spoken English to downplay or minimise something, or to highlight simplicity.

The "The Thing / The Reason / The Place / The Time" Cleft

These structures use a noun phrase as the subject of the cleft and are often followed by a relative clause:

- *The thing that surprised me most was her calmness.*
- *The reason (why) he failed was a lack of preparation.*
- *The place where I feel most at ease is my childhood home.*
- *The moment (when) everything changed was when she read the letter.*

These are sometimes called **nominal relative clefts** and are a natural extension of the pseudo-cleft pattern. They are particularly effective in academic and discursive writing.

Cleft Sentences: Focus and Information Structure

To use cleft sentences effectively at C1 level, you need to understand the concept of **information structure** — the way new and old information is organised in a sentence or discourse.

In English, sentences typically move from **given (old) information** to **new information**. The new information — what the listener or reader does not yet know — receives the **main stress or focus**. Cleft sentences manipulate this structure deliberately.

Example in Context

Consider a conversation:

Person A: "I heard that Tom designed the new logo."

Person B: "No — it was **Anna** who designed the logo."

Person B uses an it-cleft to correct Person A's false assumption. The old information (the logo being designed) is in the relative clause; the new, corrected information (Anna) is the focused element. This is cleft sentences doing their most important work: organising information in discourse.

Cleft Sentences in Academic and Formal Writing

Cleft sentences are extremely common in academic essays, formal reports, and journalistic writing. They help writers:

- Introduce key arguments with emphasis
- Contrast ideas clearly and precisely
- Guide the reader's attention to what is most significant
- Avoid repetitive or flat sentence structures

Here are examples typical of academic English:

- *It is the long-term environmental consequences **that** demand our immediate attention.*
- *What the research demonstrates is a clear correlation between diet and cognitive decline.*
- *It was not until the late 19th century **that** germ theory gained widespread acceptance.*
- *What remains unclear is the extent to which these findings can be generalised.*
- *It is this paradox **that** lies at the heart of the debate.*

Important Differences and Special Cases

Cleft Sentences vs. Relative Clauses

It-cleft sentences look similar to sentences with relative clauses, but they are not the same. In a relative clause, the clause modifies a noun. In an it-cleft, the relative clause is part of the cleft structure and the *it* is a dummy subject — it does not refer to anything.

Compare:

*The woman **who** called you is my aunt.* → Ordinary relative clause modifying "the woman"

*It was the woman **who** called you.* → It-cleft sentence; *it* has no referent

Singular or Plural After "It is/was"?

When the focused element is plural, the verb in the cleft technically remains singular (*it is / it was*), because *it* is the grammatical subject, not the focused element. However, some speakers use a plural verb with plural

focused elements in informal speech.

- **Formal/correct:** *It was **the students** who raised the concern.*
- **Informal/heard in speech:** *It were the students who raised the concern. (regional, non-standard)*

In formal writing, always use *it is* or *it was*, regardless of whether the focused element is singular or plural.

Can "That" Be Omitted?

In informal spoken English, the word *that* in an it-cleft is sometimes omitted, especially when the focused element is a person and *who* is not used:

- *It was Maria [that] organised everything.* → Omission of *that* is acceptable informally
- *It was the noise [that] kept me awake.* → Again, possible in speech

In formal writing, it is generally better to include *that* or the appropriate relative pronoun.

Wh-Clefts with "Do"

When the focused element in a *what*-cleft is a verb or action (not a noun phrase), the auxiliary *do* is often used to introduce it. This is a very natural spoken pattern:

What + subject + verb + is/was + [to-infinitive or bare infinitive]

- *What you need to do is **take a deep breath**.*
- *What she did was **call the emergency services immediately**.*
- *What they should do is **reconsider the entire strategy**.*

Note that after *What + subject + do + is*, the following verb is a **bare infinitive** (without *to*) — a very common point of confusion for learners.

Common Mistakes

✗ *It was John who he fixed the car.*

✓ **It was John who fixed the car.** — Do not repeat the subject pronoun in the relative clause.

✗ *What she needs it is more practice.*

✓ **What she needs is more practice.** — Do not add an extra subject pronoun (*it*) before *is*.

✗ *It is the students who was responsible for the project.*

✓ **It is the students who were responsible for the project.** — The verb in the relative clause must agree with the focused element (*students* = plural → *were*).

✗ *What he did was to shout at everyone. (with to)*

✓ **What he did was shout at everyone.** — After *What + subject + do + is/was*, use the bare infinitive, not the *to*-infinitive.

✗ *It was in 1990 when the treaty was signed.*

✓ **It was in 1990 that the treaty was signed.** — With time expressions used as adverbials in it-clefts, use *that*, not *when*. (*When* is possible only in less formal contexts.)

✗ *It was not until she left, she realised the truth.*

✓ **It was not until she left that she realised the truth.** — The *that* clause is obligatory in the *not until* cleft

construction.

✗ *What surprised me it was his silence.*

✓ **What surprised me was his silence.** — Do not insert *it* before the verb *was* in a wh-cleft.

✗ *It is your attitude what needs to change.*

✓ **It is your attitude that needs to change.** — In it-clefts, use *that* (or *who/which*), never *what*.

Cleft Sentences: Quick Summary

Cleft sentences are a sophisticated grammatical tool used to emphasise a particular piece of information by splitting one clause into two. There are two main types:

- **It-cleft:** *It + be + [focused element] + relative clause (who/that/which/when/where)*
→ Emphasises subject, object, time, place, or reason
→ Example: *It was the rain that ruined the event.*
- **Wh-cleft (Pseudo-cleft):** *Wh-clause + be + [focused element]*
→ Most commonly uses *what*
→ Example: *What the event needed was better planning.*

Additional structures to remember at C1 level:

- **Reversed wh-cleft:** *Better planning is what the event needed.*
- **All-cleft:** *All we need is a clear decision.*
- **Not until cleft:** *It was not until dawn that the storm finally passed.*
- **Nominal clefts:** *The reason the project failed was poor communication.*

Key rules to keep in mind:

- Never repeat the subject in the relative clause of an it-cleft.
- Use *that*, not *what*, in the relative clause of an it-cleft.
- After *What + subject + do + is/was*, use a bare infinitive.
- The verb *be* in the relative clause agrees with the focused element, not with *it*.
- In formal writing, include the relative pronoun (*that/who/which*) and avoid omission.

Mastering **cleft sentences** will significantly improve the precision, sophistication, and rhetorical impact of your English — both in writing and in speech. Now practise **cleft sentences** in the exercises below.

Cleft Sentences – Practice Test

C1 | 30 Questions: Multiple Choice, Fill-in-the-Gap & Fill-in-the-Blank

Part 1: Multiple Choice (Questions 1–10)

1 Which sentence is a correctly formed it-cleft?

- A** It was yesterday that she handed in the report.
- B** It is that she handed in the report yesterday.
- C** It was she handed in the report yesterday.
- D** It that she handed in the report was yesterday.

2 Identify the type of cleft sentence: 'What the committee needs is a clear policy statement.'

- A** It-cleft
- B** Wh-cleft (pseudo-cleft)
- C** Inverted pseudo-cleft
- D** There-cleft

3 Which sentence exemplifies an inverted pseudo-cleft?

- A** What annoyed her was the constant interruptions.
- B** The constant interruptions were what annoyed her.
- C** It was the constant interruptions that annoyed her.
- D** A clear policy is what the board approved.

4 Choose the sentence that correctly uses a cleft to emphasize the subject.

- A** It is the CEO who announced the merger.
- B** It is that the CEO announced the merger.
- C** It was announced the merger by the CEO.
- D** What announced the merger it was the CEO.

5 Which transformation correctly converts 'She discovered the flaw in the design' into a cleft emphasizing the object?

- A** It was the flaw in the design that she discovered.
- B** It was she that discovered the flaw in the design.
- C** What she was the flaw in the design discovered.
- D** It is that she discovered the flaw in the design.

6 In the sentence 'It was only after the trial that the truth emerged,' what grammatical element is being focused?

- A** The subject
- B** The direct object
- C** An adverbial phrase
- D** A predicate complement

7 Which sentence contains an error in cleft construction?

- A** It was the board that rejected the proposal.
- B** What matters most is your integrity.
- C** It is honesty what he values above all.
- D** It was in Paris that they first met.

8 Which option best explains the pragmatic function of cleft sentences in discourse?

- A** They are used to form questions indirectly.
- B** They foreground new or contrastive information while backgrounding known information.
- C** They are primarily used to express the speaker's emotional attitude.
- D** They replace the passive voice in formal academic writing.

9 Which sentence is a grammatically acceptable all-cleft (or 'all-focus' cleft)?

- A** All that she wanted was a sincere apology.
- B** All was that she wanted a sincere apology.
- C** It was all she wanting a sincere apology.
- D** What all she wanted is a sincere apology.

10 Which of the following best describes the presupposition triggered by the it-cleft 'It was Maria who solved the problem'?

- A** It is presupposed that someone solved the problem, but not necessarily Maria.
- B** It is asserted that nobody else could have solved the problem.
- C** It is presupposed that Maria attempted to solve the problem.
- D** It is asserted that the problem remains unsolved.

Part 2: Fill in the Gap (Questions 11–20)

11 It ____ the director who approved the final budget, not the committee.

- A** was
- B** were
- C** is being

12 ____ the lack of funding that ultimately caused the project to collapse.

- A** It was
- B** There was
- C** It has been

13 What she needed ____ a thorough review of the contract, not a quick summary.

- A** was
- B** were
- C** had been

14 It is ____ that the committee objected, not the proposal itself.

- A** the wording
- B** worded
- C** wording it

15 All ____ is a formal written agreement to resolve this dispute.

- A** that is needed
- B** what is needed
- C** it needs

16 It was not until the evidence was presented ____ the jury changed its verdict.

- A** that
- B** when
- C** which

17 What ____ everyone by surprise was the sudden resignation of the CEO.

- A** took
- B** had taken
- C** takes

18 It ____ in Paris that they first discussed the terms of the agreement.

- A** was
- B** is
- C** had been

19 What the government ____ to introduce is a series of far-reaching economic reforms.

- A** is planning
- B** plans
- C** planned

20 ____ in the final chapter that the author reveals the true identity of the narrator.

- A** It is only
- B** Only it is
- C** There is only

Part 3: Fill in the Blank (Questions 21–30)

21 It _____ the unexpected plot twist that made the novel so compelling to readers worldwide.

22 It is _____ until midnight that the full impact of the decision became clear to the committee.

23 _____ the government failed to address was the long-term economic impact of the policy reform.

24 It was the professor's groundbreaking research _____ ultimately changed the field of neuroscience.

25 What she had been hoping _____ was a straightforward answer from the board of directors.

26 It _____ honesty, not wealth, that defines a person's true character in the eyes of those who know them.

27 All _____ wanted was a moment of peace after months of relentless pressure from her superiors.

28 It was only _____ the meeting that the delegates realised the gravity of the situation.

29 What _____ to be seen is whether the new legislation will have any measurable effect on crime rates.

30 It was to her mentor _____ she owed her remarkable transformation as a scholar and critical thinker.

Answer Key & Explanations

Cleft Sentences | C1

Part 1: Multiple Choice

1. **A** Correct Answer: It was yesterday that she handed in the report. ✓ Explanation: A well-formed it-cleft follows the pattern It + be + focused element + that-clause. In It was yesterday that she handed in the report, the adverb yesterday is correctly fronted and the that-clause provides the background information.
2. **B** Correct Answer: Wh-cleft (pseudo-cleft) ✓ Explanation: A wh-cleft (also called a pseudo-cleft) begins with a wh-clause that functions as the subject, followed by be and the focused element. In What the committee needs is a clear policy statement, what the committee needs is the wh-clause and a clear policy statement is the focus.
3. **B** Correct Answer: The constant interruptions were what annoyed her. ✓ Explanation: An inverted pseudo-cleft places the focused element first, followed by be and the wh-clause. In The constant interruptions were what annoyed her, the focus the constant interruptions comes before the wh-clause, reversing the typical pseudo-cleft order.
4. **A** Correct Answer: It is the CEO who announced the merger. ✓ Explanation: To emphasize a person as subject in an it-cleft, use who instead of that in the relative clause. It is the CEO who announced the merger correctly fronts the agent and links it with who.
5. **A** Correct Answer: It was the flaw in the design that she discovered. ✓ Explanation: To cleft the object the flaw in the design, it is moved into the focused position after It was, and the remainder becomes a that-clause: It was the flaw in the design that she discovered.
6. **C** Correct Answer: An adverbial phrase ✓ Explanation: In It was only after the trial that the truth emerged, the prepositional phrase only after the trial functions as an adverbial indicating time. Clefting can focus not only subjects and objects but also adverbial elements.
7. **C** Correct Answer: It is honesty what he values above all. ✓ Explanation: The sentence is incorrectly formed. In an it-cleft, the subordinator after the focused element must be that, not what. The correct form is It is honesty that he values above all. Using what here confuses the it-cleft structure with a pseudo-cleft.
8. **B** Correct Answer: They foreground new or contrastive information while backgrounding known information. ✓ Explanation: The primary pragmatic function of cleft sentences is information management: the focused element presents new or contrastive information, while the that-clause or wh-clause carries presupposed, background information already known to the listener.

9. **A** Correct Answer: All that she wanted was a sincere apology. ✓ Explanation: An all-cleft uses all as the subject of the wh-clause, followed by a relative clause introduced by that and the copula be. All that she wanted was a sincere apology correctly follows the pattern All + that-clause + be + focused element.
10. **A** Correct Answer: It is presupposed that someone solved the problem, but not necessarily Maria. ✓ Explanation: It-clefts carry a presupposition encoded in the that-clause: the listener is assumed to already accept that the problem was solved. The new assertion is that it was specifically Maria who did so, contrasting her with other possible agents.

Part 2: Fill in the Gap

11. **A** Correct Answer: was ✓ Explanation: This is an it-cleft sentence used to emphasize a past event. The structure is It + was + focus element + relative clause. Since the context is past, was is correct. It was the director who approved the final budget.
12. **A** Correct Answer: It was ✓ Explanation: It was introduces a standard it-cleft structure to emphasize the cause. There was introduces an existential clause, and It has been changes the tense inappropriately for a completed past event. It was the lack of funding that caused the collapse.
13. **A** Correct Answer: was ✓ Explanation: This is a wh-cleft (pseudo-cleft) sentence. The what-clause acts as a singular noun phrase subject, so the verb must be singular: was. What she needed was a thorough review.
14. **A** Correct Answer: the wording ✓ Explanation: In an it-cleft, the focus element placed after it is must be a noun phrase. The wording is the correct noun phrase here, emphasizing what the committee objected to. It is the wording that the committee objected to.
15. **A** Correct Answer: that is needed ✓ Explanation: The structure All + that-clause + is forms a type of cleft sentence used to restrict meaning and emphasize sufficiency. All that is needed is a formal written agreement. Using what is needed is possible but here All that is the idiomatic cleft form.
16. **A** Correct Answer: that ✓ Explanation: The structure It was not until... that is a fixed cleft construction used to emphasize the timing of an event. The conjunction that is required here, not when or which. It was not until the evidence was presented that the jury changed its verdict.
17. **A** Correct Answer: took ✓ Explanation: In this wh-cleft sentence, the past simple took aligns with the past tense context of the sentence. The what-clause describes a completed past action, so had taken (past perfect) and takes (present) are inappropriate. What took everyone by surprise was the resignation.
18. **A** Correct Answer: was ✓ Explanation: This it-cleft emphasizes the location Paris. Because the discussion happened in the past and is presented as a completed fact, was is the correct past simple form. It was in Paris that they first discussed the terms.

19. **A** Correct Answer: is planning ✓ Explanation: In this wh-cleft, the present continuous is planning conveys an ongoing intention, which fits the forward-looking context of introducing future reforms. Plans is grammatically possible but less emphatic, and planned incorrectly implies the plan is already past. What the government is planning to introduce is a series of reforms.
20. **A** Correct Answer: It is only ✓ Explanation: The structure It is only + adverbial + that is a common it-cleft pattern used to restrict focus. Only it is is ungrammatical word order, and There is only introduces an existential structure that does not fit. It is only in the final chapter that the author reveals the narrator's identity.

Part 3: Fill in the Blank

21. **was** Correct Answer: was ✓ Explanation: In an it-cleft sentence, the structure is It + be + focused element + relative clause. The verb was agrees with the dummy subject It and places emphasis on the unexpected plot twist.
22. **not|not until** Correct Answer: not until ✓ Explanation: The structure It is not until + time expression + that is a common it-cleft pattern used to emphasise a time reference. Here it highlights midnight as the critical moment.
23. **What** Correct Answer: What ✓ Explanation: A wh-cleft (pseudo-cleft) sentence begins with What to form a nominal clause, followed by a form of be. The structure What + subject + verb + be + focus places emphasis on the long-term economic impact.
24. **that** Correct Answer: that ✓ Explanation: In an it-cleft sentence, the relative clause following the focused element is introduced by that. The word which is not typically used in this cleft structure.
25. **for** Correct Answer: for ✓ Explanation: In a wh-cleft sentence, the preposition attached to the verb must be retained. Hope for something is a phrasal verb, so for is required at the end of the nominal clause before the verb be.
26. **is** Correct Answer: is ✓ Explanation: The it-cleft structure uses a present tense form of be when stating a general truth. Is agrees with the dummy subject It and emphasises honesty as the focused element.
27. **she** Correct Answer: she ✓ Explanation: The structure All + subject + verb + be + focus is an all-cleft, a type of cleft sentence used to narrow focus to a single element. She is the correct subject pronoun here referring to the woman in context.
28. **after|after the meeting** Correct Answer: after ✓ Explanation: The adverbial it-cleft structure It was only + prepositional phrase + that is used to place strong emphasis on a time or condition. After introduces the temporal circumstance being highlighted.
29. **remains** Correct Answer: remains ✓ Explanation: In a wh-cleft sentence, the verb in the What-clause must agree in number and tense with its subject. What remains uses a third-person singular present form because the clause refers to a singular ongoing situation.

30. **that** Correct Answer: that  Explanation: When a prepositional phrase is the focused element in an it-cleft sentence, the clause following it is still introduced by that. This structure emphasises her mentor as the person she was indebted to.

Score Guide

27–30 Correct	Excellent! You have mastered this topic.
23–26 Correct	Very good! Review the rules you missed.
18–22 Correct	Good start. Re-read the lesson and examples.
0–17 Correct	Study the lesson again before retaking the test.