



Unit 41 – It & There (*It is important that you study.. There is a wallet on the table..*)

A) It is commonly used as both a subject pronoun and as an object pronoun:

- You should go and see that movie. **It** was absolutely amazing! (subject pronoun)
- Did you see my wallet around? I can't find **it** anywhere. (object pronoun)

-> **It** is also used in question tags:

- Did you enjoy the game? It was an exciting finish, **wasn't it?**

-> **It** is sometimes used as the subject or object to represent a phrase at the end of a sentence:

- **It's** possible that we'll go on vacation next month. We enjoyed **it** in Florida last year.

-> **It** is very often used when referring to time, dates, weather & distances:

- **It's** always cooler in November. **It's** 42.2 km to run a full-length marathon.
- **It** snowed last night. The roads are slippery.

B) It & There as Dummy Subjects – All English clauses have subjects (*except for imperatives*). Often, a dummy or 'empty' subject is used when a subject is not connected to the verb, or the real subject is elsewhere in the clause.

- **It's** always fun to visit the park. or: 'To visit the park is always fun.' -> *very formal/unnatural*
- **There are** six kids in the room. or: 'Six kids are in the room.'

It as a dummy subject – **It** is often used to describe adjectives and their complements:

- **It's important** to wear your seatbelt whenever you are driving.
- **It's useful** to carry an umbrella with you during rainy season, just in case.

There as a dummy subject – **There is / there are** show that something or someone exists in a place or situation:

- **There is an umbrella** behind the door. The real subject is the **umbrella**. It is behind the door.
- **There are lots of things** in Katie's bag. The real subject is '**lots of things**'. They are in Katie's bag.

C) Anticipatory **It** literally 'anticipates' the subject or object of a sentence, especially when the subject/object of a sentence is a clause. Oftentimes, the pattern is 'it + adjective + that + clause.' The real subject is the clause itself.

- **It's great that** we're finally having a family reunion this year.
- **It's unlikely that** Mark will be here early. We'll have to start without him today.

(subject + verb + it (is) + adjective + clause/phrase) – this pattern is often used to anticipate a clause or phrase:

- Jeff finds **it hard** to get up early every day. I believe **it'll be challenging** to hike the mountain!
- I think **it's funny** that Mike wore shorts today. Kelly considers **it rude** when people interrupt others.

In a less direct pattern, use 'it + looks/seems/appears, etc. + that/like..'

- **It appears that** Jeff finds it hard to get up early every day.
- **It looks like** the teacher is ready to give back our exams.

To create extra focus, we can add *today, in the afternoon, 3pm, etc.* to '**it is/was not until..**' / '**it was only when..**'

- **It wasn't until** the bell rang that we knew class was starting. -> '*Until the bell rang, we didn't know..*'
- **It was only when** I walked outside that I realized how much it had rained!

D) Cleft Sentences – When using **it** in cleft sentences, the subject or object of the main clause is highlighted:

- **It was your dad** who completed the marathon, wasn't it?
- **It was Steve Jobs** who first introduced the iPhone back in 2007.
- Was **it the air conditioner** that kept making all the noise last night?



E) **Passive Voice** – when using **it** in the passive, the sentence sounds more formal and objective:

-> **It was decided** by the government that all citizens had to wear a mask during the pandemic.

F) **It in paragraphs** – **It** (*also: this & that*) is commonly used to add further information to a topic:

*Example: Fasting has quickly become popular and is now being embraced by celebrities and many others nationwide. **It is** mainly beneficial for losing weight and ensuring that daily caloric intake remains low. **This is** mainly due to restricting eating to within a fixed period of time.*

-> Note that **it** simply adds additional information while **this** highlight important information to follow.

Unit 41 – Exercises:

41.1 – Change the following sentences to begin with the **anticipatory it**. (41-C)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| 1. To see you again is great! | 1. It's great to see you again! |
| 2. To drive a car without a license is illegal. | 2. _____. |
| 3. To eat healthy and exercise is very important. | 3. _____. |
| 4. That Sam missed the entire exam was strange. | 4. _____. |
| 5. You being on time for work is crucial. | 5. _____. |

41.2 – Match the following sentences with the (it + adjective + that clause) pattern. (41-C)

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. John thinks it's funny | that her friends don't use language like <i>please & thank you</i> . |
| 2. Mary finds it impolite | that his dog still chases his tail all the time. |
| 3. Jennifer finds it rude | that geese migrate between 2,000 and 3,000 miles every year. |
| 4. I think it's interesting | that people in Japan tend to live longer than people in other countries. |
| 5. Andy finds it amazing | that some people talk very loudly on public transportation. |

41.3 – Change the following into cleft sentences beginning with **it** and focusing on the underlined section. (41-D)

- We climbed to the top of a mountain during our excursion in Hawaii.
It was to the top of a mountain that we climbed during our excursion in Hawaii.
- Farmers require good weather this year in order to produce a better harvest.
_____.
- The professor advised the president to implement wind energy at the conference on climate change.
_____.
- What most people first notice about London when they travel there is the weather.
_____.
- The person who recommended that I become a Ph.D. was my father.
_____.

41.4 – Change the following active sentences into the passive beginning with **it**. (41-E)

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|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. They proved that ice hockey was first played here. | It was proven that ice hockey was first played here. |
| 2. They expect that the cost of living will increase. | It _____. |
| 3. Everybody knows that CO ² causes global warming. | It _____. |
| 4. They reported that a robbery occurred downtown. | It _____. |
| 5. Everyone understands that the Chinese invented paper. | It _____. |

41.5 – Fill in the blanks of the following paragraph using either **it** or **this**. (41-F)

Covid-19 and the ensuing pandemic have caused an increase in people working and studying from home. _____ is widely said that this major shift was triggered by the pandemic and the need to socially distance. _____ was mainly ordered by governments due to overwhelmed hospitals although _____ is amazing how quickly companies embraced this transition. _____ is now common for companies to have work-from-home policies.