



Learn English Through Stories

T Series

Upper - Intermediate

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Banta Learning Adjectives and Adverbs 4 by K S Sandhu

A Passion for Nature

Tom was twelve years old and increasingly enthusiastic about wildlife. Every evening, he sat on the sofa with his grandmother, watching nature programmes on TV. These shows were far more popular than cartoons or talent competitions in their house.

"Look at this!" Tom shouted one night. "The presenter is showing a coral reef. It's much more colourful than anything in our local park!"

His grandmother smiled. "That's Sir David Attenborough. His programmes are by far the most famous nature shows ever made. He has been presenting since the 1960s, and he's still a lot more energetic than many younger presenters today."

Tom nodded. "In the old days, was he as popular as Jacques Cousteau?"

"Oh yes," she replied. "Cousteau was by far the most famous underwater explorer back then. His films about sea life were astonishing. But Attenborough's style was very similar to Cousteau's – both seemed like friendly uncles who really loved nature."

Tom thought about the difference between old and new programmes.

"Cameras were not nearly as small or light in those days, were they? The pictures look a bit blurrier and less clear."

"Exactly," his grandmother said. "Technology is much more advanced now. Modern cameras are a little smaller than a mobile phone, and they use digital special effects to show things we could never see before. That's why today's programmes explain the complexity of nature much better than the old ones."

One evening, they watched a programme about deep-sea creatures. The octopus changed colour to hide – it was fascinating! "This is a lot more interesting than soap operas," Tom said. "The ocean is far more mysterious than city life."

His grandmother laughed. "You're right. But some people think nature shows are not quite as exciting as action films. I think they're wrong. Nature is increasingly threatened by pollution and climate change, so these programmes are more important than ever."

Tom felt proud. "Attenborough makes the natural world seem remarkable. He shows how intricate the balance of life is – one small change can affect everything."

The next day at school, Tom told his friends about the programme. "You should watch it," he said. "It's way more educational than video games, and a little more relaxing too!"

His best friend smiled. "Maybe. But is it as fun as football?"

Tom grinned. "Not quite as noisy, but much more wonderful!"

From that day on, Tom dreamed of becoming a presenter like Attenborough one day. Nature wasn't just on TV – it was more alive and more precious than he had ever imagined.

Questions:

Question 1: Why does Tom think nature programmes are more interesting than soap operas?

Question 2: In what way were old cameras different from modern ones according to the story?

Question 3: Who does Tom's grandmother say was by far the most famous underwater explorer in the 1960s?

Question 4: How does the story describe David Attenborough's presenting style compared to Jacques Cousteau's?

Question 5: What does Tom say about nature programmes when he talks to his best friend at school?

Answers:

Answer 1: Tom thinks nature programmes are a lot more interesting than soap operas because the ocean (and nature in general) is far more mysterious than city life.

Answer 2: Old cameras were not nearly as small or light as modern ones, and the pictures looked a bit blurrier and less clear.

Answer 3: Jacques Cousteau was by far the most famous underwater explorer in the 1960s / back then.

Answer 4: David Attenborough's presenting style was very similar to Jacques Cousteau's – both seemed like friendly uncles who really loved nature.

Answer 5: Tom says nature programmes are way more educational than video games and a little more relaxing too (though not quite as noisy as football, but much more wonderful).

22 Comparative structures

Pets for sale



Kittens €30



Guinea pigs €20



Rabbits €20



Tortoise €100

The rabbits **aren't as expensive as** the kittens. The tortoise is **much more expensive than** the other animals.

1 as + adjective + as

To say that two things have the same quality we use *as + adjective + as*:

The guinea pigs are €20. = The guinea pigs are **as expensive as** the rabbits.
The rabbits are €20. = The rabbits are **as expensive as** the guinea pigs.

To describe a difference in quality we can use *not as + adjective + as*:

The guinea pigs are €20. = The guinea pigs **aren't as expensive as** the kittens.
The kittens are €30. = The kittens **aren't as cheap as** the guinea pigs.

If there is a big difference, we can use *not nearly as + adjective + as*:

*I'm **not nearly as clever as** my brother.* (= He's much cleverer than me.)

If there is a small difference, we can use *almost as/not quite as + adjective + as*:

*My house is **almost as big as** yours.* = *My house isn't **quite as big as** yours.* (slightly smaller)

Pronunciation ► 1.07

2 the same (as) and different from

We use *the same (as)* when two things are equal:

*The price of the rabbits and the guinea pigs is **the same**. They both cost €20.
Mikal's motorbike is **the same as** mine. We both have Honda 250s.*

We use *similar (to)* when something is nearly the same:

*Indian elephants are **similar to** African elephants, but they're a bit smaller.*

The opposite of *the same as* is *different from*. We can also use *different to*, but it is less common: *Tigers are **different from** leopards. Tigers are much bigger.*

American English *different than* ► page 352

We use nouns and pronouns after *the same (as)*, *similar (to)* and *different (from)*, not adjectives:

*✗ They are ~~the same expensive~~. ✓ They are **the same price**.
✗ My brother and I are ~~different tall~~. ✓ My brother and I are **different heights**.*

3 Making comparisons stronger or weaker

We can make comparisons stronger with *much*, *a lot* and *far*:

*The tortoise is **much more expensive than** the other animals.
New York is **a lot bigger than** Paris.*

We can make comparisons weaker with *a bit*, *slightly* or *a little*:

*The rabbits are **slightly cheaper than** the kittens. My sister is **a bit younger than** me.*

We can make superlatives stronger with *by far*. It means there is a big difference:

*Fredrik is **by far the tallest** student in our class.* (= He's much taller than all the others.)

We can make superlatives weaker with *one of* or *among*:

*This is **one of the best** hospitals in the country.* (Only a few hospitals may be better.)
*Julie is **among the cleverest** of our students.*

Practice

1 Choose the best answer, A or B.

- 0 Your sunglasses are similar to mine.
A They are exactly the same. (B) They are almost the same.
- 1 Jackie isn't as friendly as Lucy.
A Lucy is friendlier than Jackie. B Jackie is friendlier than Lucy.
- 2 This bed is as comfortable as my old one.
A My old bed was more comfortable. B The beds are both comfortable.
- 3 Ana isn't nearly as rich as Susie.
A Susie is much richer than Ana. B Susie is a little richer than Ana.
- 4 Our TV is almost as big as Michael's.
A Michael's TV is a little bigger than ours. B Michael's TV is much bigger than ours.
- 5 I had one of the best exam results in the school.
A Nobody had a better result. B One or two people had a better result.

2 **GRAMMAR IN USE** The words in the box are missing from the text. Put them in the correct positions. (They are in the same order as in the text.) **2.43** Listen and check.

~~lot~~ of far to from not more

Television viewers are sometimes surprised to learn that natural history programmes are often a ^{lot} more popular than soap operas or films. One of the most famous presenters is David Attenborough. He has been making programmes about nature since the 1960s.

In those days Jacques Cousteau was by the most famous TV presenter of nature programmes. Although Cousteau only made programmes about life in the sea, his style of presenting was similar to Attenborough's – they both seem like friendly uncles who really love nature.

Of course, today's programmes are different from those of fifty years ago. In those days cameras were nearly as small and light as they are now. Today the technology is much advanced and there are digital special effects which can help us understand the complexity of the natural world.

3 Complete the second sentence so it means the same as the first, using the words in brackets. Use two to five words in your answer. **2.44** Listen and check.

- 0 Lions are stronger than tigers. (aren't)
Tigers *aren't as strong as* lions.
- 1 I'm not as old as my sister. (than)
My sister
- 2 Our cat is slightly smaller than Daniel's. (quite)
Our cat isn't Daniel's.
- 3 Look, Melanie's dress is really similar to your mother's. (same)
Look, Melanie's dress your mother's.
- 4 Nokia phones are not the same as Motorola ones. (from)
Nokia phones Motorola ones.
- 5 The Metropole is much more expensive than any other hotel in our town. (far)
The Metropole is hotel in our town.
- 6 Prices aren't quite as low as they used to be. (bit)
Prices are they used to be.

Answers

UNIT 22

1 1 A 2 B 3 A 4 A 5 B

2 Television viewers are sometimes surprised to learn that natural history programmes are often a ^{lot} more popular than soap operas or films. One of the most famous presenters is David Attenborough. He has been making programmes about nature since the 1960s.

In those days Jacques Cousteau was by far the most famous TV presenter of nature programmes. Although Cousteau only made programmes about life in the sea, his style of presenting was similar to Attenborough's – they both seem like friendly uncles who really love nature.

Of course, today's programmes are different from those of fifty years ago. In those days cameras were not nearly as small and light as they are now. Today the technology is much more advanced and there are digital special effects which can help us understand the complexity of the natural world.

3 1 is older than me. 2 quite as big as 3 is almost the same as 4 are different from 5 by far the most expensive 6 a bit higher than