

# Unit 1 Overcoming difficulties

## To the student

This unit is about how people overcome difficulties. You will read and talk about people who live with disabilities but still manage to lead productive lives.

### Listening and reading

Dialogue

Stories about people

### Speaking/Communication

Role play a dialogue

Talk about people with disabilities

Practise pronunciation

### Writing

Write a short story

Complete grammar and vocabulary exercises

### Grammar

Revise and practise joining sentences with words like **and**, **so**, **because** and **although**.

Identify contracted words, for example: **it's**, **weren't**.

Identify the meaning of pronouns in a reading passage

Learn how to use **for** and **during** correctly

Revise the simple past tense

### Vocabulary

Adjectives with opposite meanings

Using expressions with **do** and **make**



Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-10642-9 - Stay Tuned: Student's Book for 5eme, Third Edition

Michael D Nama, Dorothy Forbin and Christine Bongwa

Excerpt

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## Speaking

1. Look at this photograph of Agnes and her daughter. Agnes is blind, but she can still do many things. Talk about blindness and make sentences like this:

- Blind people can ...
- Blind people can't ...

can't → cannot



## Reading

### Living with blindness

1. Sammy and Agnes went to the same college. They have not met for a long time. Now Sammy is visiting Agnes. Read this dialogue.

**Sammy:** Hello, Agnes. It's Sammy. Do you recognise my voice?

**Agnes:** Hello, Sammy. Of course I recognise your voice. How are you?

**Sammy:** I am well, thank you. Agnes, you weren't blind at college, were you?

- Agnes:** No, I wasn't. I became blind later, when I was a nurse.
- Sammy:** What happened?
- Agnes:** I had problems with my eyes. I saw a doctor. He treated me. Then my sight improved. Later on, it gradually became worse again, until I lost my sight.
- Sammy:** How did you feel?
- Agnes:** At first, I was afraid and very sad. Then, I decided to be brave, and to try and lead a normal life. I was strong and enthusiastic. I changed my profession. I trained to become a physiotherapist.
- Sammy:** Do you like your new profession?
- Agnes:** Yes, I do. I help people.
- Sammy:** Do you lead a normal life?
- Agnes:** Yes, I do. I cook for myself, I do my daughter's hair and I do my gardening.
- Sammy:** What else do you do?
- Agnes:** Now I pray more and I know God loves me.
- Sammy:** You help other blind people, don't you?
- Agnes:** Yes, I do. I am the President of the National Committee for Blind Women.
- Sammy:** Finally, what is your advice to other blind people?
- Agnes:** It is simple. Be courageous and try to lead a normal life. Do not be sorry for yourself.

2. Read these sentences. Then say if they are true or false.
- Agnes did not see a doctor for her eyes.
  - Agnes was not happy when she became blind.
  - Agnes was a nurse when she became blind.
  - Patients do not accept Agnes.
  - Agnes' life has not changed.
  - Agnes has become a believer in God.
  - Agnes does not like to help other blind people.
  - Blind people should not live a normal life.

## Pronunciation

- Listen and repeat the sounds in bold print.  
/aɪ/ **e**yes **s**ight **b**lind **r**ecogn**is**e
- Listen and repeat. Stress the underlined syllables.  
doctor normal profession recognise college

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## Grammar

### Revision – simple past tense

- Read these sentences. Which sentences are in the past tense?
  - Agnes decided to become a physiotherapist.
  - Agnes is a physiotherapist.
  - She felt sorry for herself.
  - He gave me some good advice.
  - I recognised her voice.
- Write the past tenses of these verbs.

Present	Past
are	
am	
do	
cook	
help	
change	

#### The simple past tense

To form the simple past tense,  
add –ed to regular verbs.

For example: walk → walked, play → played.

Many common verbs are irregular.

You have to learn these verbs.

For example: to be → was/were,  
have → had, make → made,  
go → went.

#### The verb 'to be'

I <b>was</b>	We <b>were</b>
You <b>were</b>	You <b>were</b>
He, she, it <b>was</b>	They <b>were</b>

- Make sentences with the verbs in the box. You will have to put the verbs into the correct form. Use the passage to help you.

#### to decide, to plait, to lead, to get, to lose, to see, to go, to become

- Agnes \_\_\_\_\_ blind when she was a nurse.
- Agnes \_\_\_\_\_ to see a doctor for her eyes.
- Agnes is a brave woman. She \_\_\_\_\_ a normal life.
- Agnes \_\_\_\_\_ her daughter's hair.
- When Agnes \_\_\_\_\_ her sight, she was very sad.
- Agnes changed her profession and \_\_\_\_\_ a physiotherapist.

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## Vocabulary

1. Choose adjectives from the box that are the opposites of the bold words in the sentences.

**courageous, happy, intelligent, sad, special, normal, lucky**

- a) Agnes leads an **abnormal** life.  
 b) She is a **scared** woman.  
 c) She was very **unhappy** when she became blind.  
 d) Sometimes we don't know how **unlucky** we are.  
 e) Agnes is a **stupid** woman. She became a physiotherapist.  
 f) There are **ordinary** schools for blind people.

Verbs are  
doing words.

2. Use these words to give advice. Complete each sentence.

**should, should not**

- a) You \_\_\_\_\_ try to lead a normal life.  
 b) We \_\_\_\_\_ try to help other people.  
 c) You \_\_\_\_\_ feel sorry for yourself.  
 d) She \_\_\_\_\_ be brave.  
 e) We \_\_\_\_\_ laugh at blind people.

## Writing

1. Read the following story. Then use the words below it to write your own story.

Maimouna is a blind girl. She lives in our village. She is an intelligent girl. She loves school. She goes to a special school for blind people. She can read Braille. It is the writing of blind people. Last year, she wrote a beautiful poem. The teacher read it in class.

- Nouns are the names of people, places and things.
- Adjectives tell us more about nouns.

**Shalla, blind, woman, lives, city, very intelligent, loves music, trains hard, plays guitar, writes songs, sings songs**

## Reading

1. Read this story about Wycliffe Kepha, a man who made his fortune working hard. The paragraphs are all mixed up. Put them in the right order.

### Wycliffe Kepha

- A** Kepha did not like school. He was miserable at school. He thought his teachers were insensitive to his needs. Some of **them** used to beat him.
- B** In 1973, Kepha went to Sweden for more training. He came back to Kenya and started a company. He called **it** Kepha and Co. In 1989, Kepha and Co produced the first modern wheelchair in Kenya. It was a successful invention.
- C** Wycliffe Kepha Anyanwa Matekwa was born a normal child. **He** became disabled when he was a child, because of a careless doctor in a Nairobi hospital. He cannot walk upright and needs help to move from place to place.
- D** Kepha said that from when he was a child, he always wanted to find a way to move from place to place. However, his parents were very poor, and **they** could not buy a wheelchair for him. So he grew up with one burning ambition – to make a simple and cheap chair for the disabled.
- E** After primary school, he went to a Vocational and Rehabilitation Centre. He was there for six years. He enjoyed learning at the Centre. He enjoyed learning to make things that could help people like **him**. After that, the Association of Disabled Persons employed Kepha.
2. Answer these questions. Write the answers in your exercise book.
    - a) When did Kepha become disabled?
    - b) What did Kepha's teachers do to him?
    - c) What did Kepha enjoy doing?
    - d) What did Kepha always want to have?
    - e) What was 'a very successful invention'?
    - f) Give three adjectives to describe Kepha.
  3. Look at the words in bold in the paragraphs above. They are pronouns. Pronouns take the place of nouns. Which noun does each of these pronouns replace? You will have to read the passage carefully again to find the answers.
    - a) them
    - b) it
    - c) he
    - d) they
    - e) him

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## Vocabulary

1. Read these expressions. Discuss the meaning of the expressions. Do you know expressions like this in French or any other language that you speak?
  - a) to feel sorry for yourself
  - b) to lead a normal life
  - c) to make a fortune
  - d) to have a burning ambition

## Grammar

### Using 'for' and 'during'

1. Look at these sentences.
  - He became disabled **during his childhood**.
  - He was there **for six weeks**.

The words in bold tell you more about when something happened. Make eight correct sentences in your exercise book. Use this table to help you.

During the rainy season	we put on our raincoats. my sister puts on her sunglasses. we are very hot. we play football.
During the dry season	our teacher wears his raincoat. it is very hot and I am always thirsty. it is very cold and we go to bed early. my friends put on their T-shirts.

2. Make five sentences using the table below. The first one has been done for you: He was in primary school for six years.

Kepha lived in Sweden	for	an hour.
He was in primary school		three years?
The President visited us		a year.
Did you study English		six years.

3. Read the diary of two travellers. Then make five sentences each about what Peter and Aisha did.

**Example** Peter was in London for 24 days.



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[More information](#)**Peter**

London 6 June to 30 June

Paris 1990 to 1995

Bonn 1995 to 1999

Lisbon 13th to 23rd May 2000

New York Monday to Friday 2001

**Aisha**

Gabon 10 o'clock to 6:00 pm

Cameroon July to September

Congo Monday to Thursday

Rwanda May to December 2000

Kenya 4 July to 8 July

**Grammar****Conjunctions**

Conjunctions are small words that join sentences together. Look at this example.

**Example**

His parents were poor. They could not buy him a wheelchair.

His parents were poor, **so** they could not buy him a wheelchair.

1. Join these sentences with the conjunctions in the box.

**and, so, because**

- She can cook. She can do her daughter's hair.
- He went to Sweden. He became famous.
- He wanted to make wheelchairs. Other disabled people could use them.
- Wycliff's doctor was careless. He became disabled.
- The wheelchair is cheap. The wheelchair is simple.

**Vocabulary**

1. The words in the box are all adjectives. Complete the sentences by filling in the correct adjective.

**disabled, poor, cruel, miserable, hard-working, normal, clever**

- He was not happy at school. He was \_\_\_\_\_.
- He cannot walk upright and needs help to move from place to place.  
He is \_\_\_\_\_.
- The teachers sometimes beat him. They were \_\_\_\_\_.
- He invented a new wheelchair. He is \_\_\_\_\_.
- He worked hard at school. He is \_\_\_\_\_.



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## Reading

1. Read about how these people overcame great difficulties to get where they are today. Then answer the questions.

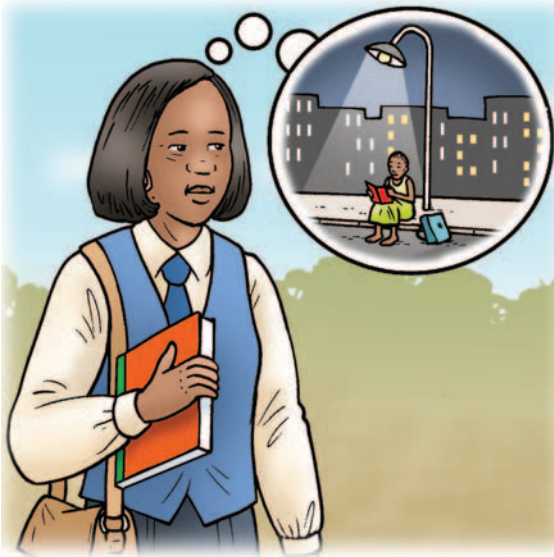
### Acha's story

My father died when I was only a few months old. My mother sacrificed a lot to bring up my four brothers and me. She got up every morning at 4 a.m. She fried bean cakes to sell. During the day, she cooked food for plantation workers. She saved all the money she made to buy what we needed for school. I helped my mother when I got home from school and then I did my homework. Today, my mother is old and very proud of me. I am a medical doctor and I take care of her.



### Badjeck's story

My parents died in a car crash. My grandmother did her best for my sister and me, but we were extremely poor. We often went to bed hungry. I did my homework under a streetlight in the city. I helped my grandmother to sell corn and bananas. I was good at school, so my teachers gave me money from time to time. I gave the money to my grandmother. She paid my fees. I passed my exams, and I went to university. Today I am a university professor.



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### Yudom's story

I grew up in a broken home. My parents had some very serious problems. My mother left my father. My father brought me up. He did not have much money. We got up very early every morning to cook our food and clean our home. During the holidays, I sold groundnuts along the streets. I saved the money I made and my father used it to pay our fees. Today, I am a pilot. My father is proud of me.



- How old was Acha when his father died?
- How did his mother bring him up?
- Give two words to describe Acha's mother.
- Why is Acha's mother proud of him?
- What happened to Badjeck's parents?
- Give two words to describe Badjeck.
- Who brought her up?
- Why did the teachers help Badjeck?
- What has she become today?
- How do we know that Yudom's parents had serious problems?
- What did Yudom and his father do every morning?
- Why is his father proud of him today?