Advanced Cleft Sentences Worksheet: Information Focus

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NAME

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Remember

Form	Example
Reversed wh-cleft: this / that + is + wh-clause	That's exactly what I was afraid of.
it-cleft for contrast: it isn't X that..., it's Y	It isn't the price that bothers me, it's the quality.
what + do: focusing on an action	What she did was call the police.
What happened was (that)... · all-clefts	What happened was that we got lost. All I did was ask.

Typical mistakes

× Learners often say	✓ Say instead
What she did was to called the police.	What she did was (to) call the police.
That's the thing what annoys me.	That's the thing that annoys me. / That's what annoys me.
It is not the money, is the principle.	It isn't the money, it's the principle.

1. Rewrite

Rewrite each sentence with the cleft structure given.

1. The noise worries me. (That's what...) → _____
2. He resigned. (What he did...) → _____
3. The price doesn't bother me; the quality does. (It isn't... it's...) → _____
4. We missed the train and had to walk. (What happened...) → _____
5. I only asked a question. (All...) → _____
6. I need some peace and quiet. (What...) → _____
7. The ending of the film surprised me. (What...) → _____
8. She left because of the manager, not the salary. (It was...) → _____

2. Choose

Circle the correct option.

1. What he did (was / did) apologise.
2. (That's / It's) exactly what I meant.
3. It wasn't until I moved (that / when) I understood.
4. What happened (was / is) that the power failed.
5. All she wanted (was / were) a quiet life.
6. (What / Which) I can't stand is rudeness.
7. It's you (who / which) should apologise.
8. The reason (why / because) I called is simple.

3. Correct the mistakes

Each sentence has one mistake. Write it correctly.

1. What I did was to calling her.
2. That's which I wanted to say.
3. Is not the weather that worries me.
4. What happened it was that we got lost.
5. All what I need is time.
6. It was in Rome where we met. (cleft)

Writing

Retell a misunderstanding or an incident at work (6–7 sentences). Use at least four different cleft structures to guide the listener's attention.

Speaking

- What really annoys you about modern life? Start with 'What really annoys me is...'
- Tell me about an incident, starting with 'What happened was...'
- Correct a false statement about your life: 'It wasn't... that..., it was...'
- Name one thing you need right now: 'All I need is...'

Answer key

1. Rewrite: 1 That's what worries me: the noise. / The noise is what worries me. · 2 What he did was resign. · 3 It isn't the price that bothers me, it's the quality. · 4 What happened was that we missed the train and had to walk. · 5 All I did was ask a question. · 6 What I need is some peace and quiet. · 7 What surprised me was the ending of the film. · 8 It was the manager, not the salary, that made her leave.

2. Choose: 1 was · 2 That's · 3 that · 4 was · 5 was · 6 What · 7 who · 8 why

3. Correct the mistakes: 1 What I did was (to) call her. · 2 That's what I wanted to say. · 3 It isn't the weather that worries me. · 4 What happened was that we got lost. · 5 All (that) I need is time. · 6 It was in Rome that we met.

Writing, model answer: What happened was that our biggest client received the wrong invoice. It wasn't the amount that upset them, it was the fact that it had someone else's name on it. What my manager did was call them immediately. All I had done was copy an old template. That's what nobody had noticed. What I learned is that every document needs a second pair of eyes. It was a small mistake that taught me a big lesson.