

# What are Focus Structures?

## Worksheet

Focus structures emphasize specific elements by restructuring the sentence. Common types include cleft sentences ('It was John who called') and pseudo-cleft sentences ('What I want is a holiday'). These make certain parts more prominent in the listener's mind.

## Questions

1. Change to cleft: 'Mary won the award.' Emphasize Mary.  
A) It was Mary who won the award  
B) It was the award that Mary won  
C) Mary was it who won  
D) Was it Mary that won
2. Pseudo-cleft for 'I need help': emphasize 'help'.  
A) What I need is help  
B) Help is what I need  
C) I need what is help  
D) What is help that I need
3. What does 'It is because of you that I'm here' emphasize?  
A) me (speaker)  
B) you (cause)  
C) here (location)  
D) am (verb)
4. Which is a focus structure?  
A) I went to the store  
B) The store is where I went  
C) The store was where I go  
D) Went to the store I
5. Normal sentence: 'John passed the exam.' Create a cleft sentence to emphasize 'John'.
6. Normal: 'I like the beach most.' Rewrite as a pseudo-cleft to emphasize 'the beach'.
7. Sentence: 'She worked hard because she wanted success.' Emphasize why (the reason).
8. Define: What is a focus structure?
9. Define: What is a cleft sentence?
10. Define: What is a pseudo-cleft sentence?

## Answer Key

1. A) It was Mary who won the award — Cleft structure: 'It was Mary who won the award' emphasizes Mary.
2. A) What I need is help — Pseudo-cleft: 'What I need is help' emphasizes help.
3. B) you (cause) — This cleft emphasizes the reason/cause: you.
4. B) The store is where I went — 'The store is where I went' is a pseudo-cleft emphasizing the location.
5. Use the cleft structure 'It + to be + focused element + relative clause.' Answer: 'It was John who passed the exam.' This emphasizes John as the one who passed.
6. Use 'What + subject + verb + is + focused element.' Answer: 'What I like most is the beach.' This structure emphasizes the beach as the thing she likes.
7. Use a focus structure with 'It is ... that.' Answer: 'It is because she wanted success that she worked hard.' This puts the reason in focus.
8. A grammatical technique that emphasizes specific information by restructuring the sentence, often using cleft sentences.
9. A sentence structured as 'It + to be + focused element + relative clause.' Example: It was John who called.
10. A sentence structured as 'What/Who + clause + to be + emphasized element.' Example: What I like is this cake.

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