

4.4

USE OF ENGLISH

Prepositional phrases

I can use various prepositional phrases with by, at, to and in.

- SPEAKING** Read the cartoon captions. Discuss which of them you find more amusing and why.
- Read the **LANGUAGE FOCUS** and look up the meaning of the prepositional phrases.

LANGUAGE FOCUS

Prepositional phrases

BY	accident all means chance means of virtue of	AT	a loss fault sea sb's disposal the end of the day
TO	a certain degree date my mind no avail some extent	IN	advance any case the long run the wrong vain

- Look at the phrases in the box and find their synonyms in the **LANGUAGE FOCUS**. In your notebook, write example sentences with three of the phrases and ask your partner to transform them using the synonymous phrase.

by accident in vain in the wrong
by means of at a loss to some extent

by accident = by chance

- In pairs, take turns to read out the dialogues choosing the appropriate prepositional phrases.

- A:** You've been trying ¹ *in vain* / *in the long run* / *by all means* to find a better job for ages.

B: Yes, I know. And it's all ² *at sea* / *to no avail* / *in any case*. I guess I'm here for life.
- A:** Oh no. I've broken the printer again. It was ³ *by accident* / *at fault* / *by all means* – I promise.

B: I'm ⁴ *in any case* / *in the wrong* / *at a loss* to explain how you do it. That's the third time this month.
- A:** I've managed to save some money ⁵ *by means of* / *by accident* / *to some extent* working overtime.

B: Well, ⁶ *in the long run* / *to some extent* / *to date* I'm jealous. I don't want the extra work, but I could save some money!
- A:** I love my new job. ⁷ *In the long run* / *At the end of the day* / *To date* I hope to be the boss one day.

B: I'd hate to be a boss. You have to be ⁸ *at fault* / *by virtue of* / *at everybody's disposal* the whole time.
- A:** I appreciate the money's not very good, but ⁹ *to my mind* / *by means of* / *to no avail* gaining experience is the most important thing.

B: I agree ¹⁰ *in advance* / *to my mind* / *to a certain degree* – but money's good to have!



I'm all at sea when it comes to working the new washing machine.



To my mind, you should change your hairstyle.

- In your notebook, write an appropriate prepositional phrase from the **LANGUAGE FOCUS** for each gap. Sometimes more than one answer is possible.

Well, I agree with my boss ¹ ? , but I can't say she's one hundred percent right. I mean, ² ? it's her decision and I have to do what she tells me to do – and I'm in no position to tell her that she's ³ ? . I will admit, however, that she's been very helpful ⁴ ? and she's always been ⁵ ? whenever I've needed some help. For example, when I was trying ⁶ ? to come up with an idea for the new marketing campaign and not getting anywhere. She could clearly see that I was ⁷ ? for inspiration and gave me a few ideas to work with. ⁸ ? , that's more important than agreeing with everything she says – after all, I am here to learn ⁹ ? gaining experience.

- SPEAKING** Discuss the questions.

- When was the last time you tried something in vain? What was it? How did it end?
- Do you have trouble admitting when you are in the wrong? Why?
- Can you name a few things you prefer to do in advance?
- When were you last at a loss for words?
- At the end of the day, what are your language learning objectives?