

Language Focus

At B2, quantifiers move into more formal and academic territory, often used in reports, presentations, and written analysis.

a large number of	Countable, formal, emphasises quantity	<i>A large number of residents took part in the survey.</i>
a great deal of	Uncountable, formal, emphasises quantity	<i>A great deal of enthusiasm was expressed for the plan.</i>
the majority of	The greater part or most of a group	<i>The majority of respondents supported the proposal.</i>
a bit of	Uncountable, a small amount (fairly informal)	<i>There's still a bit of uncertainty about the funding.</i>
a handful of	Countable, a small, often notable number	<i>Only a handful of respondents opposed the scheme.</i>
numerous	Countable, a formal way of saying "many"	<i>Numerous comments highlighted safety as a concern.</i>
the minority of	The smaller part of a group	<i>The minority of businesses felt cycle lanes would hurt trade.</i>

Key contrast: "a great deal of / a large number of" emphasise a big quantity, while "a bit of / a handful of" emphasise a small one – and all of these are more formal than "a lot of" or "a few".

Reading: City Cycling Survey - Summary of Findings

Read the report below, then complete Exercise 1.

The results of this year's city cycling survey have now been analysed, and the following report outlines the key findings.

A large number of residents took part in the survey, with over three thousand responses recorded across all districts. The majority of respondents indicated that they would cycle more often if additional cycle lanes were built, and numerous comments highlighted safety as the primary concern preventing greater uptake.

A great deal of enthusiasm was expressed for the proposed riverside cycle path, although a bit of scepticism remains regarding the funding timeline. Only a handful of respondents opposed the scheme outright, citing concerns about reduced parking. The minority of businesses surveyed felt that cycle lanes would negatively affect trade, while most reported no expected impact.

These findings will be presented to the council committee next month, and a further consultation period will follow before any final decisions are made.

1. Odd One Out

In each set, three sentences use the quantifier logically. One doesn't make sense – circle it.

Set 1:

- a) A large number of tourists visit the museum every summer.
- b) A handful of staff members remained after the budget cuts.
- c) A large number of guests attended the wedding, but the venue felt completely empty.
- d) A large number of applications were submitted before the deadline.

Set 2:

- a) A great deal of research has gone into this new treatment.
- b) There's a bit of confusion about the new timetable.
- c) A great deal of money was spent on repairs, yet the building looked exactly the same as before.
- d) A bit of rain is expected later today.

Set 3:

- a) Numerous studies have confirmed the benefits of regular exercise.
- b) The minority of shareholders voted against the merger.
- c) Numerous witnesses came forward, yet the police said they had no leads at all.
- d) Numerous complaints were filed after the incident.

Set 4:

- a) The majority of staff support the new working hours.
- b) The minority of customers preferred the old packaging.
- c) The majority of voters rejected the proposal, so it was passed into law.
- d) The majority of the budget was spent on marketing.

Set 5:

- a) A great deal of patience is required when working with young children.
- b) A large number of vehicles were affected by the recall.
- c) A great deal of evidence supported the theory, so scientists dismissed it immediately.
- d) A large number of trees were planted as part of the initiative.

2. Multiple Choice

Context: a company restructuring announcement

1. ___ employees expressed concerns about the proposed restructuring at the meeting.
A large number of / A handful of
2. Only ___ senior managers were informed before the announcement was made public.
a handful of / a large number of
3. ___ effort has gone into ensuring a smooth transition for affected staff.
A great deal of / A bit of
4. There is still ___ uncertainty about the exact timeline, though most details have been confirmed.
a bit of / a great deal of
5. ___ studies have shown that clear communication reduces anxiety during organisational change.
Numerous / The minority of
6. ___ of the workforce will move to the new office, while a small number will remain behind.
The majority / The minority

3. Matching

Context: an environmental impact report

Draw a line to match each sentence to its meaning.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. A large number of species were recorded in the survey area. | <i>Many separate studies confirm this</i> |
| 2. A great deal of uncertainty remains about long-term effects. | <i>More than half are in favour</i> |
| 3. The majority of local residents support the conservation plan. | <i>A high count of different species - notable diversity</i> |
| 4. Only a handful of rare plants were found on site. | <i>A very small number - notable because they're rare</i> |
| 5. Numerous studies have linked the decline to habitat loss. | <i>Much is still unknown - significant doubt</i> |

4. Gap Fill

Context: a university enrolment report

Complete this passage with the correct quantifier for each gap.

This year's enrolment figures show some interesting trends. _____ international students applied to the university, reflecting its growing global reputation. However, _____ of these applicants ultimately chose to study elsewhere, citing cost as the main factor. _____ effort has been invested in improving the scholarship programme as a result, though _____ hesitation remains among the finance committee about the long-term costs. Encouragingly, _____ students from underrepresented backgrounds enrolled this year compared to previous intakes.

Word bank: numerous / the majority / a great deal of / a bit of / a handful of / a large number of / the minority of

5. Error Identification

Context: a product recall notice

Each sentence has one wrong quantifier. Underline it and explain why it's wrong.

1. A large number of feedback was received after the announcement.
2. A great deal of complaints have been filed with the regulator.
3. Only a handful of information was available at the time of the recall.
4. There was only a bit of complaints raised about the packaging.
5. A great deal of customers contacted the helpline after the recall.

6. Sentence Reordering

Context: a team debrief after a product launch

These lines of a conversation are in the wrong order. Number them 1-5 to rebuild it correctly.

_____ True, but numerous influencers shared the product online, which clearly made a difference.

_____ That's surprising, since only a handful of people attended the launch event itself.

_____ Have you got a bit of time to go through the launch feedback?

_____ Sure, I've got a great deal of interest in hearing how it went.

_____ Well, a large number of customers left positive reviews within the first week.

7. Complete the Conversation

Context: a city council budget meeting

Complete with: a large number of, a great deal of, the majority, a bit of, a handful of, numerous, the minority.

Councillor A: How did the public consultation go?

Councillor B: _____ residents responded, actually - over two thousand submissions in total.

Councillor A: That's impressive. Did most support the new proposal?

Councillor B: Yes, _____ of respondents were in favour, though a small group raised concerns about cost.

Councillor A: Good. Is there _____ opposition we should be worried about?

Councillor B: Not really, just _____ comments from a small group of local business owners.

Councillor A: _____ studies have shown that similar schemes elsewhere have been successful, which should help reassure them.

Councillor B: Agreed. I think _____ preparation has gone into this proposal, so we should be confident moving forward.

Councillor A: Let's just make sure _____ of the funding is allocated carefully before we proceed.

1. Odd One Out – Answers

Set 1: **c)**

“A large number of guests” contradicts the venue feeling “completely empty”.

Set 2: **c)**

Spending “a great deal of money” on repairs is inconsistent with no visible change.

Set 3: **c)**

“Numerous witnesses” is inconsistent with police having “no leads at all”.

Set 4: **c)**

If the majority rejected the proposal, it should not have been passed.

Set 5: **c)**

Strong supporting evidence is inconsistent with scientists dismissing the theory.

2. Multiple Choice - Answers

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. ___ employees expressed concerns about the restructuring. | A large number of |
| 2. Only ___ senior managers were informed beforehand. | a handful of |
| 3. ___ effort has gone into ensuring a smooth transition. | A great deal of |
| 4. There is still ___ uncertainty about the exact timeline. | a bit of |
| 5. ___ studies have shown clear communication reduces anxiety. | Numerous |
| 6. ___ of the workforce will move to the new office. | The majority |

3. Matching - Answers

1. A large number of species were recorded in the survey area.
A high count of different species - notable diversity
2. A great deal of uncertainty remains about long-term effects.
Much is still unknown - significant doubt
3. The majority of local residents support the conservation plan.
More than half are in favour
4. Only a handful of rare plants were found on site.
A very small number - notable because they're rare
5. Numerous studies have linked the decline to habitat loss.
Many separate studies confirm this

4. Gap Fill - Answers (in order)

- | | |
|------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Blank 1 | Numerous |
| 2. Blank 2 | the majority |
| 3. Blank 3 | A great deal of |
| 4. Blank 4 | a bit of |
| 5. Blank 5 | a large number of |

5. Error Identification - Answers

1. A large number of feedback was received...
Fix: a large number of → a great deal of - Countable phrase used with an uncountable noun ("feedback")
2. A great deal of complaints have been filed...
Fix: a great deal of → a large number of - Uncountable phrase used with a countable noun ("complaints")
3. Only a handful of information was available...
Fix: a handful of → a bit of - Countable phrase used with an uncountable noun ("information")
4. There was only a bit of complaints raised...
Fix: a bit of → a handful of - Uncountable phrase used with a countable noun ("complaints")
5. A great deal of customers contacted the helpline...
Fix: a great deal of → a large number of - Uncountable phrase used with a countable noun ("customers")

6. Sentence Reordering - Answers

1. Have you got a bit of time to go through the launch feedback?
2. Sure, I've got a great deal of interest in hearing how it went.
3. Well, a large number of customers left positive reviews within the first week.
4. That's surprising, since only a handful of people attended the launch event itself.
5. True, but numerous influencers shared the product online, which clearly made a difference.

7. Complete the Conversation - Answers

Councillor B:	A large number of residents responded - over two thousand submissions.	A large number of
Councillor B:	The majority of respondents were in favour.	the majority
Councillor A:	Is there a bit of opposition we should worry about?	a bit of
Councillor B:	Just a handful of comments from local business owners.	a handful of
Councillor A:	Numerous studies show similar schemes have succeeded.	Numerous
Councillor B:	A great deal of preparation has gone into this.	a great deal of
Councillor A:	Make sure the majority of funding is allocated carefully.	the majority