

# A Multitude Of, Countless, Scarcely Any, Virtually No, An Abundance Of, A Considerable Amount Of, A Substantial Number Of

C1 English Worksheet – Lesson 2: Nuance and Register in Quantity

## Language Focus

At C1, quantifiers reach into literary and academic register, adding nuance and precision that goes beyond everyday formal English.

|                                 |                                                       |                                                                      |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>a multitude of</b>           | Countable, literary/formal, "a very large number of"  | <i>A multitude of employers dismissed the idea as impractical.</i>   |
| <b>countless</b>                | Countable, formal, "too many to count"                | <i>Countless pilot schemes have reported steady productivity.</i>    |
| <b>scarcely any</b>             | Countable/uncountable, formal negative, "almost none" | <i>Scarcely any companies reverted to the old structure.</i>         |
| <b>virtually no</b>             | Countable/uncountable, emphatic near-total negative   | <i>Virtually no evidence suggests shorter weeks damage output.</i>   |
| <b>an abundance of</b>          | Countable/uncountable, formal, "more than enough"     | <i>An abundance of surveys point to improved wellbeing.</i>          |
| <b>a considerable amount of</b> | Uncountable, formal, "a fairly large amount"          | <i>A considerable amount of reconsideration followed the trials.</i> |
| <b>a substantial number of</b>  | Countable, formal, "a fairly large number"            | <i>A substantial number of businesses found the shift demanding.</i> |

*Key contrast: "a multitude of / countless / an abundance of" all emphasise a very large quantity, while "scarcely any / virtually no" emphasise almost none at all - these are more literary and emphatic than "a lot of" or "hardly any".*

## Reading: Is the Four-Day Week Finally Here to Stay?

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Read the report below, then complete Exercise 1.

For decades, the idea of compressing a working week into four days rather than five was dismissed by a multitude of employers as impractical, even faintly utopian. That scepticism, however, appears to be fading. Countless pilot schemes across various industries have now reported not just steady productivity, but in many cases modest improvements, prompting a considerable amount of reconsideration in boardrooms once resistant to change.

Scarcely any of the companies involved in these trials have chosen to revert to a traditional five-day structure once the pilot period ended, a fact that has surprised even seasoned sceptics. Virtually no evidence has emerged to suggest that shorter weeks damage output; if anything, an abundance of surveys point to improved staff wellbeing and reduced absenteeism as the more measurable outcomes.

None of this is to say the transition has been without friction. A substantial number of smaller businesses report that reorganising shift patterns, particularly in customer-facing roles, has proved logistically demanding. Still, as more firms publish their results, the debate is shifting from whether a four-day week is feasible to how, precisely, it might be implemented at scale.

## 1. Odd One Out

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

### Set 1:

- a) A multitude of theories attempt to explain the phenomenon.
- b) Countless volunteers helped clear the debris after the storm.
- c) A multitude of objections were raised, yet the proposal passed without a single amendment.
- d) Countless drafts were written before the novel was finished.

### Set 2:

- a) Scarcely any tickets remained by the time we arrived.
- b) Virtually no rain fell throughout the entire summer.
- c) Scarcely any support existed for the merger, yet shareholders approved it overwhelmingly.
- d) Virtually none of the witnesses could recall the exact time of the incident.

### Set 3:

- a) The region has an abundance of natural springs.
- b) There is an abundance of choice on the new menu.
- c) There was an abundance of seating available, yet dozens of guests were left standing.
- d) An abundance of caution shaped the committee's final decision.

### Set 4:

- a) A considerable amount of patience is required to master the instrument.
- b) A substantial number of applicants withdrew before the interview stage.
- c) A considerable amount of funding was secured, yet the project collapsed for lack of money.
- d) A substantial number of residents signed the petition.

### Set 5:

- a) Countless emails arrived overnight, filling the inbox.
- b) Virtually no interest was shown in the outdated software.
- c) Countless mistakes were identified in the audit, yet the accounts were signed off as accurate.
- d) Virtually none of the passengers complained about the delay.

## 2. Multiple Choice

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### Context: a film critique

1. \_\_\_ critics have praised the director's bold visual style.  
*Countless / Scarcely any*
2. \_\_\_ complaints have been raised about the film's pacing, which many found sluggish.  
*A multitude of / Virtually no*
3. There is \_\_\_ dialogue in the first act, relying instead on visual storytelling.  
*scarcely any / an abundance of*
4. The soundtrack offers \_\_\_ variety, shifting between genres with surprising ease.  
*an abundance of / virtually no*
5. \_\_\_ time was spent developing the supporting characters.  
*A considerable amount of / A substantial number of*
6. \_\_\_ viewers have called for a sequel since the film's release.  
*A substantial number of / Scarcely any*

### 3. Matching

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**Context: an archaeology journal abstract**

Draw a line to match each sentence to its meaning.

- |                                                                                    |                                                                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. A multitude of artefacts were recovered from the excavation site.               | <i>An extremely large, hard-to-count number of explanations</i> |
| 2. Virtually no organic material survived the centuries underground.               | <i>A fairly large amount of work was needed</i>                 |
| 3. An abundance of pottery fragments suggests a thriving trade route.              | <i>A very large number of items were found</i>                  |
| 4. A considerable amount of analysis was required to date the remains accurately.  | <i>Almost nothing remained intact</i>                           |
| 5. Countless theories have emerged to explain the settlement's sudden abandonment. | <i>A large amount of evidence points to this conclusion</i>     |

## 4. Gap Fill

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**Context: an essay on social media and attention spans**

Complete this passage with the correct quantifier for each gap.

\_\_\_\_\_ studies have examined the relationship between social media use and declining attention spans. \_\_\_\_\_ researchers dispute the existence of any meaningful link at all, though the overwhelming consensus points otherwise. \_\_\_\_\_ evidence currently supports the claim that constant notifications fragment concentration, and \_\_\_\_\_ effort has gone into designing apps that limit screen time as a result. Nevertheless, \_\_\_\_\_ users report making any lasting changes to their habits, suggesting that awareness alone is not enough.

*Word bank: countless / scarcely any / virtually no / a considerable amount of / an abundance of / a multitude of / a substantial number of*

## 5. Error Identification

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### Context: a hotel review

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

1. The hotel had a multitude of noise coming from the street below.
2. There was countless dust on the furniture when we arrived.
3. A substantial number of luggage went missing during our stay.
4. Scarcely any guests complained about the broken air conditioning, yet the hotel received dozens of one-star reviews.
5. An abundance of clean towels awaited us, despite housekeeping clearly being understaffed and overwhelmed.

## 6. Sentence Reordering

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**Context: a panel discussion on space exploration**

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

\_\_\_\_\_ Even so, an abundance of new technology means we're arguably better placed than ever before.

\_\_\_\_\_ True, although scarcely any of the original Apollo-era infrastructure remains usable today.

\_\_\_\_\_ Would you say there's a considerable amount of enthusiasm for returning to the Moon?

\_\_\_\_\_ Definitely, and a multitude of private companies are now entering the race.

\_\_\_\_\_ That's remarkable, especially considering virtually no serious investment existed in this area a decade ago.

## 7. Complete the Conversation

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**Context: a podcast interview on entrepreneurship**

Complete with: a multitude of, countless, scarcely any, virtually no, an abundance of, a considerable amount of, a substantial number of.

**Host:** What's the biggest misconception people have about starting a business?

**Guest:** I think \_\_\_\_\_ people assume you need a perfect idea from day one, when really you just need to start.

**Host:** How common is it for a first business to fail?

**Guest:** Honestly, \_\_\_\_\_ first ventures actually succeed without at least one major pivot along the way.

**Host:** What about funding? Is it hard to find investors?

**Guest:** There's \_\_\_\_\_ capital available right now compared to ten years ago, if you know where to look.

**Host:** Do you think formal education matters for entrepreneurs?

**Guest:** Honestly, \_\_\_\_\_ correlation exists between having a business degree and building a successful company, at least in my experience.

**Host:** How much time should someone expect to invest before seeing results?

**Guest:** \_\_\_\_\_ patience is required - most people underestimate just how long it takes.

**Host:** And how many attempts does it typically take to get it right?

**Guest:** \_\_\_\_\_ founders I've spoken to needed at least two or three attempts before something stuck.

**Host:** Any final advice?

**Guest:** Just that \_\_\_\_\_ obstacles will come up along the way, but that's normal, not a sign you're failing.

# A Multitude Of, Countless, Scarcely Any, Virtually No, An Abundance Of, A Considerable Amount Of, A Substantial Number Of

C1 Teacher Answer Key – Lesson 2

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## 1. Odd One Out – Answers

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**Set 1:**        **c)**

*A multitude of objections is inconsistent with the proposal passing without any amendment.*

**Set 2:**        **c)**

*Scarcely any support is inconsistent with overwhelming shareholder approval.*

**Set 3:**        **c)**

*An abundance of seating is inconsistent with guests being left standing.*

**Set 4:**        **c)**

*Securing a considerable amount of funding is inconsistent with collapsing for lack of money.*

**Set 5:**        **c)**

*Countless mistakes is inconsistent with the accounts being signed off as accurate.*

## 2. Multiple Choice - Answers

---

1. \_\_\_ critics have praised the director's bold visual style. **Countless**
2. \_\_\_ complaints have been raised about the film's pacing. **A multitude of**
3. There is \_\_\_ dialogue in the first act. **scarcely any**
4. The soundtrack offers \_\_\_ variety. **an abundance of**
5. \_\_\_ time was spent developing the supporting characters. **A considerable amount of**
6. \_\_\_ viewers have called for a sequel. **A substantial number of**

## 3. Matching - Answers

---

1. A multitude of artefacts were recovered from the excavation site.  
**A very large number of items were found**
2. Virtually no organic material survived the centuries underground.  
**Almost nothing remained intact**
3. An abundance of pottery fragments suggests a thriving trade route.  
**A large amount of evidence points to this conclusion**
4. A considerable amount of analysis was required to date the remains accurately.  
**A fairly large amount of work was needed**
5. Countless theories have emerged to explain the settlement's sudden abandonment.  
**An extremely large, hard-to-count number of explanations**

## 4. Gap Fill - Answers (in order)

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- |            |                                 |
|------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Blank 1 | <b>Countless</b>                |
| 2. Blank 2 | <b>Scarcely any</b>             |
| 3. Blank 3 | <b>An abundance of</b>          |
| 4. Blank 4 | <b>A considerable amount of</b> |
| 5. Blank 5 | <b>virtually no</b>             |

## 5. Error Identification - Answers

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1. The hotel had a multitude of noise...  
**Fix: a multitude of → a considerable amount of - Countable phrase used with an uncountable noun ("noise")**
2. There was countless dust on the furniture...  
**Fix: countless → a considerable amount of - Countable phrase used with an uncountable noun ("dust")**
3. A substantial number of luggage went missing...  
**Fix: a substantial number of → a considerable amount of - Countable phrase used with an uncountable noun ("luggage")**
4. Scarcely any guests complained..., yet the hotel received dozens of reviews.  
**Fix: Scarcely any → Countless - Suggests a small amount, but dozens of reviews imply a large amount of complaints**
5. An abundance of clean towels awaited us..., despite housekeeping being overwhelmed.  
**Fix: An abundance of → Scarcely any - Suggests a large amount, but understaffed housekeeping implies few clean towels**

## 6. Sentence Reordering - Answers

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1. Would you say there's a considerable amount of enthusiasm for returning to the Moon?
2. Definitely, and a multitude of private companies are now entering the race.
3. That's remarkable, especially considering virtually no serious investment existed in this area a decade ago.
4. True, although scarcely any of the original Apollo-era infrastructure remains usable today.
5. Even so, an abundance of new technology means we're arguably better placed than ever before.

## 7. Complete the Conversation - Answers

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|               |                                                                |                                 |
|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Guest:</b> | Countless people assume you need a perfect idea from day one.  | <b>countless</b>                |
| <b>Guest:</b> | Scarcely any first ventures succeed without a pivot.           | <b>scarcely any</b>             |
| <b>Guest:</b> | There's an abundance of capital available right now.           | <b>an abundance of</b>          |
| <b>Guest:</b> | Virtually no correlation exists with having a business degree. | <b>virtually no</b>             |
| <b>Guest:</b> | A considerable amount of patience is required.                 | <b>A considerable amount of</b> |
| <b>Guest:</b> | A substantial number of founders needed several attempts.      | <b>A substantial number of</b>  |
| <b>Guest:</b> | A multitude of obstacles will come up along the way.           | <b>a multitude of</b>           |