

The Blue Bees.

The Spring season brings all sorts of life and activity to this valley. You see people out on the streets, walking their dogs, in the parks with friends, and the school fields are full of sporting activities. For the first time, my daughter is in soccer. There was a big build up to this(1) as we had to register a long time ago, and she has been waiting, counting the days(2), for the sport to begin. It's also her first time playing a team sport. Previously, she has done swimming, gymnastics, and tennis. But her excitement for soccer is much greater than anything else. Being the youngest(3) in the family, she has watched her brothers play team sports for years, and has cheered for them. But now, finally, it's her turn. She made her debut(4) yesterday with her team, The Blue Bees. And gosh, are they cute! You can imagine a team of little eight year old girls, in a blue uniform, with their hair in ponytails(5), running around and trying to score goals. They played against a green team, and they won. It was a wonderful first experience for Domini; she even scored two out of(6) the winning four goals. I jumped up and down, and cheered and clapped so much that my husband moved about ten metres away from me. But I didn't care; it was so much fun to watch. One thing that I realized, is that all the girls were polite, and would kick the ball, then allow others to have a chance. Unfortunately, that gave the opposing team lots of chances to take the ball. The girls haven't learned to be aggressive yet, but they will. Judging by(7) the older girls who were playing soccer close by, they will learn to be aggressive quite soon.

1. 'A build up' is like saying 'anticipation', 'excitement', 'expectancy' when you are waiting for something to happen.

a. There is always such a build up towards Christmas; you can feel it in the air.

b. There was an orchestral build up to the main speaker.

2. 'Counting the days' also adds to the idea of a 'build up' of emotions. When you are impatient for something to happen, you count the days that are left before the event. We also use the expression 'to be on the count down.' A count down is said before a rocket takes off into space 5-4-3-2-1 blast off!

a. It's his birthday in three weeks, and he's counting the days/ he's on the count down.

b. They'll marry in May, so they're counting the days/ they're on the count down.

3. 'Being the youngest,' Using a gerund at the beginning of a sentence allows you to make a 2 part sentence and avoid an 'and'. Listen to the two sentences:

She's the youngest, and for years has watched her brothers play sports.

Being the youngest, for years she has watched her brothers play sports.

Both are perfect sentences, but it's worth noting the use of the gerund to create variety in your sentences.

a. Being an honest man, he gave the lady the money that she had dropped.

b. Seeing the bus in the distance, he ran fast to the bus stop.

4. 'Debut' is used in English, as are many other French words. It means 'the beginning' or 'the first show'.

a. The magician made his debut performance last night in Las Vegas.

b. The singer's debut album will come out in July.

5. 'Ponytail' is a hair style. All the hair is pulled up towards the back of the head, and held by an elastic band at the scalp, the hair hanging down freely. It looks like the tail of a pony or horse.

Another common hair style is a braid or platt. The hair is divided into 3 parts which are woven together

to make one rope-like patten.

A 'bun' is also a common hair style. All the hair is placed near the top of the head in a secured, round shape, like a bread bun.

6. 'She scored two (out) of the winning four goals.'

a. He ate seven (out) of the ten cookies that I had made.

b. We saw three (out) of the six houses that were for sale.

7. 'Judging by' economises your sentences. It enables you to make one sentence out of two:

I saw that the older girls were aggressive. I think the younger girls will learn to be aggressive soon.

Judging by the older girls, the younger ones will learn to be aggressive soon.

This second sentence sounds more fluid and natural.

a. Judging by the restaurants popularity, the food or prices must be good.

b. Judging by his behavior yesterday, we won't invite him to dinner.

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