

Book: Passages 2

Level: 11th

Unit: 7

Objective: Practicing the use of *as, like, as if*.



We generally use LIKE and AS to make comparisons.

LIKE

The structure of the sentence is usually: VERB + LIKE + NOUN / PRONOUN.

- ✦ He speaks like a native speaker.
- ✦ She looks like a supermodel.

AS

The structure of the sentence is usually: AS + SUBJECT + VERB.

- ✦ Nobody sings as she does.
- ✦ They went to the party as they were.

It is very common in American English to use LIKE instead of AS. However, it is generally considered informal to use it in this way.

- ✦ We play football like champions do.

Another use of AS is to say what the role/function of a person/thing is.

- ✦ He started work as a carpenter.
- ✦ She used the tapestry as a decoration in her living room.

LIKE vs. AS

Be careful, in similar sentences that use LIKE and AS, the meanings of each sentence are very different. For example:

- ✦ As your boss, I must warn you to be careful. (I am your boss.)
- ✦ Like your boss, I must warn you to be careful. (I am not your boss, but he/she and I have similar attitudes.)

AS IF / AS THOUGH

In English we also use as if to make comparisons. However it has a few distinct characteristics to its use:

- The verb after AS IF is always in the past subjunctive, no matter what tense the sentence is.
- If the verb BE directly follows AS IF, we use *were* for all personal pronouns.

✚ He looks as if he *knew* the answer.

(The verb LOOKS indicates this sentence is in the present - but the verb after AS IF - *knew* - is in the past subjunctive).

✚ She walks as if she *were* a supermodel.

(The verb after AS IF - be - has been changed to *were* and not *was*).

- ✚ He boarded the airplane as if he *were* a seasoned traveler.
- ✚ He spends money as if he *owned* a bank.

