Gerunds and Infinitives

Let's read the following passage, then underline the verbs that end in (-ing) and those with (to-)

“THE TYPE OF WORK I’M BEST AT”

The job I liked best was writing cartoon strips for a children’s comic paper called The Beano, a job I did before I was 20. What I liked most was being creative all day, knowing that young people liked reading our stories. Using my language skills to make something new was very satisfying work. It let me reach an audience of more than 2 million readers. Of course, I didn’t have to solve any big problems or fix anything, I didn’t have to get dirty in our nice big office, and I didn’t have to make important decisions or be anyone’s boss. Inside our huge company, I liked working as part of a small team of artists and technicians and following the production systems to publish The Beano. After a while, I left that job to make more money, but I never forgot being a small part of the publishing industry in the UK. It made me appreciate having freedom and creativity at work.

Gerunds

- The form of the verb that ends in -ing is called a Gerund when used as a noun. Because their function is that of a noun, gerunds may be used as the subject of a sentence:
  
  Example:
  
  Running regularly will make you feel better.  Studying requires most of my time during the day.

- The -ing form can also be called a present participle; however, the function is that of a verb when used in the present or past progressive:
  
  Example:
  
  The teacher is speaking to her students.

- If a gerund is combined with a preposition, it is called a Gerund phrase:
  
  Example:
  
  Our daughter’s life ambition is studying to be a doctor.

- Possessive adjectives/pronouns precede a gerund:
  
  Example:
  
  Her working late is making her sick.  I don’t mind him being here.

- There are some verbs that must be followed by a gerund.
  
  Example:
  
  I enjoy studying.  Would you mind being quiet?

- The following verbs MUST be followed by a gerund:

  admit  discuss  finish  miss  quit
  give up  postpone  stop (=quit)  avoid  resist
  consider  dislike  keep on  practice  go + activities
  recommend  put off  enjoy  mind  think about
  suggest
Let’s practice (C1) : GERUND -Complete the following sentences using gerund.
Example: He likes _____________  He likes swimming.
          She prefers _____________  She prefers drinking tea.
1. He denied ____________________________
2. When the teacher came in, the students stopped__________________________
3. He can’t stand ____________________________
4. I suggested ____________________________
5. I prevented them from ____________________________
6. Imagine ____________________________
7. He gave up ____________________________
8. He is interested in ____________________________
9. She keeps ____________________________
10. You’d better avoid ____________________________
11. He is considering ____________________________
12. I dislike ____________________________

N.B. Verbs that show emotion and the fulfillment of unfulfillment of an activity may affect the meaning depending on the choice of an infinitive or a gerund. Gerunds are used to describe actions that are factual, whereas infinitives are used to describe actions that may take place in the time to come or that are possible.

Verbs of Emotion:
Factual: Did you like dancing last night?  Possible: Do you like to dance?

Verbs of fulfillment/unfulfillment:
Factual: I started doing my homework and question #1 is really hard.
Possible: Did you start to do your homework?

A Gerund will follow a preposition:
e.g. Thank you for helping me.

The negation NOT is always placed in front of the gerund or the infinitive.
e.g. I enjoy not having to do study today.

Gerunds are used after the following expressions:
-worth,  -rather than,  -instead of
-This situation is worth looking into
-Rather than studying Chemistry we decided to study Anatomy
-Instead of talking to her boss directly, she sent a message with her secretary.

Verbs of perception - feel, hear, notice, observe, see, smell, watch- may be followed by gerunds, however, never infinitives. (These may also be followed by the base form of the verb.)
e.g. -Have you ever seen an ice skater doing a high jump?
-Do you hear the phone ringing?

When there is only one object complement, some verbs are followed by a gerund complements.
Doctors advise reducing fats in one’s diet.
They urge giving up fried foods.

Let’s practice (C2) : Complete the sentences with the gerund form of the verbs in parentheses.

1. She is good at…………………… (dance)
2. He is crazy about …………………… (sing)
3. I don’t like …………………… (play) cards.
4. They are afraid of …………………… (swim) in the sea.
5. You should give up …………………… (smoke).

Infinitives
However, if there is a second object complement, an infinitive is used.
Example:
The doctor advised me to reduce my fat intake.  -He urged me to give up fried food.
-He encouraged me to steam and boil my food but forbade me to fry things in oil.
-This has required me to change a lot of old habits.
These are some verbs that follow the preceding pattern:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>advise</th>
<th>force</th>
<th>allow</th>
<th>tell</th>
<th>persuade</th>
<th>require</th>
<th>permit</th>
<th>remind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>urge</td>
<td>forbid</td>
<td>invite</td>
<td>warn</td>
<td>encourage</td>
<td>command</td>
<td>trust</td>
<td>teach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>convince</td>
<td>order</td>
<td>cause</td>
<td>hire</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:
- I trust my doctor to do the job right.
- They hired him to solve the problems here.

**Infinitives as subjects:**
- To be on time is important in this culture.

**Infinitives as objects:**
- They asked her to check the letter before it was sent.

**Infinitives used in passive construction:**
- I was told to go very quickly and quietly.

### The following verbs may be followed by either a gerund or an infinitive:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attempt</th>
<th>continue</th>
<th>intend</th>
<th>plan</th>
<th>begin</th>
<th>dread</th>
<th>like</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>prefer</td>
<td>hate</td>
<td>love</td>
<td>start</td>
<td>stop</td>
<td>try</td>
<td>cannot stand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Examples:**
- I started smoking when I was young.
- I started to smoke when I left the office.

### The following verbs are followed by infinitives:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>want</th>
<th>need</th>
<th>would like</th>
<th>hope</th>
<th>expect</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>seem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>appear</td>
<td>learn</td>
<td>mean</td>
<td>try</td>
<td>forget</td>
<td>offer</td>
<td>agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Examples:**
- Tom agreed to help me.
- His health appeared to be better.
- She asked to leave.

### Let’s practice (C3) : Fill in the blanks with the correct form of verbs given.

**Examples:**
- I was afraid of hurting his feelings. (hurt)
- Most of Hong Kong people don’t like freezing meat. (freeze)
- I think you should give up singing because you have a very poor voice. (sing)
- He isn’t strong enough being in the basketball team. (be)
- The amazing drama has won several awards. (amaze)
- _______ is good exercise. (walk)
- It is getting dark. We had better _______ now. (go)
- It is very cold. I would rather _______ at home. (stay)

### Let’s practice (C4) : Create sentences from the following verb combinations. Select any tense for the first verb, but use a gerund or infinitive for the second verb. Include a (PRO)NOUN OBJECT if necessary.

**EXAMPLES:**
- can’t afford + buy → I can’t afford to buy a new car for at least another year.
- dare + dive → My friends dared me to dive into the pool.

### Let’s practice (C5) : Restate the sentences by changing a sentence with a gerund as the subject to a sentence with it + an infinitive phrase, and vice-versa.

**Example 1:**
- Teasing animals is cruel. → It is cruel to tease animals.

**Example 2:**
- It wasn’t difficult to find their house. → Finding their house wasn’t difficult.

### Let’s practice (C6) : Choose the correct answer.

**1.** The groom anticipated the wedding ceremony.  
   A. enjoying  
   B. to enjoy  

**2.** The department store agreed back the damaged radio.  
   A. Taking  
   B. to take  

**3.** Would the doctor mind some time talking to me after the examination?  
   A. spending  
   B. to spend