1.4 Have you thought of the verb 'have'...

How many times do you use the verb 'have' in your conversation or writing? Try to keep a count of it for an hour or so. What do you find?

Perhaps you have always thought of this versatile verb as an auxiliary verb or a helping verb as we call it. The helping verb 'have' is used to form what we call perfect tenses (They have come! I had clean forgotten all about it!) and to make negative sentences (They haven't come. I hadn't forgotten it). But as a main verb, it is used to mean much more than you think!

Here are a few examples we use very frequently:

- In the following sentences, 'have' indicates possession or ownership of something:
- 1. My friend has a pet cat. (possession)
- 2. I have a new pen.
- 3. Do you have a cycle?
- 4. Our school has six computers. (ownership)
- 5. The Municipality has six vans and two cars.
- We also use have to refer to events, activities and experiences:
- 1. I am going to have a bath in the river.
- 2. Let us have a party for your birthday.
- 3. The class has a short break at 11AM.
- 4. Did you have a good time at the wedding?
- 5. I have a meeting this evening.

- In some cases, 'have' is used to indicate relationships:
- 1. I have two sisters.
- 2. The couple do not have children.
- 3. I don't have a brother.
- We also use have to refer to eating or drinking:
- 1. We have breakfast at 8 am.
- 2. Have a slice of cake.
- 3. What would you like to have tea or coffee?
- 4. Can I have a glass of water, please?
- Have is also used to refer to a medical/physical condition:
- 1. I have a headache.
- 2. He has a cold.
- 3. Grandfather had a heart attack.

In sentences where 'have' is used as a main verb, it is always used in the simple present or past. The present continuous form is not used in such cases. We do not say –

- I am having a bicycle.
- He is having a cold.
- I am having a lot of homework. X

Similarly, it is not used in the negative form as a main verb.

- He hasn't a car. X
- I haven't a cold. X

To indicate the negative, we use the auxiliary 'do' along with the main verb 'have'.

- He doesn't have a car.
- I don't have a cold.

Have fun exploring the uses of 'have'!

■■■ ENGLISH WORKSHOP ■■■■■

- 1. Add your own sentences to those given in the passage to illustrate the uses of 'have'.
 - (a) To show possession

- (d) To show ownership
- (b) To indicate relationship
- (e) To refer to events, activities and experiences
- (c) To refer to eating/drinking
- (f) To refer to a physical condition
- 2. Look up the following verbs in a good dictionary. List at least 20 different uses of each. You may include their use with different prepositions, adverbs, and in idioms.

