Everyday minor problems

VOCABULARY PRACTICE

INTERMEDIATE | B1-B2

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

1 Match each problem with its precise meaning.

1 mislay something	____	a bend the metal slightly
2 spill a drink	____	b lose access because the key is inside
3 leave a stain	____	c mark a surface permanently
4 dent a car	____	d put something somewhere and not find it
5 lock yourself out	____	e show a time earlier than the correct time
6 a flat battery	____	f battery with no useful charge
7 a slow clock	____	g accidentally cause liquid to leave a container
8 a blocked drain	____	h pipe where water cannot flow away

2 Complete the problem collocations.

ankle | **batteries** | **computer** | **handle** | **knee** | **machine** | **pipe** | **window**

1 a leaking _____

2 a smashed _____

3 dead _____

4 a loose door _____

5 a broken-down washing _____

6 a crashed _____

7 a twisted _____

8 a grazed _____

3 Correct one mistake in each sentence.

1 The torch batteries have **run away**. _____

2 There was a **power break** during the storm. _____

3 Our washing machine **broke off** yesterday. _____

4 The sink is **closed**, so the water will not drain. _____

5 I have **lost myself out** of the flat. _____

6 She **spilt** over a cable and fell. _____

7 He bumped his arm and got **a stain**. _____

8 My car battery is **slow**, so the engine will not start. _____

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4 Complete the incident report with words from the box.

bruise | came off | cracked | dented | flat | grazed | leaking | power cut | stain | tripped

During the **1** _____, the corridor was dark. A visitor **2** _____ over a box and **3** _____ her hand. She also developed a small **4** _____ on her elbow. When a member of staff opened the storeroom, the handle **5** _____. A pipe was **6** _____, and water had left a **7** _____ on the ceiling. Outside, a trolley rolled into a car and **8** _____ the door. One wheel on the trolley was **9** _____, and its plastic cover was **10** _____.

5 Read the text and answer the questions briefly.

Responding to a minor problem

A small problem is easier to solve when it is described accurately. Saying that a device 'doesn't work' gives less useful information than explaining when it stopped, what happened immediately before and whether any warning appeared. Safety comes first: water near electricity, broken glass or a serious injury should not be treated as an ordinary do-it-yourself task. For a minor issue, record the symptoms, try only safe basic checks and avoid changes that may cause more damage. Clear information helps the right person repair the fault more quickly.

1 Why is an accurate description useful? _____

2 What three details improve a fault description? _____

3 Name two examples where safety must come first. _____

4 What should you record for a minor issue? _____

5 What kind of checks are appropriate? _____

6 How does clear information help a repair? _____

6 Rewrite using the word in capitals.

1 I cannot find where I put my keys. **MISLAID** _____

2 The washing machine suddenly stopped working. **BROKE** _____

3 The cup has lost a small piece from its edge. **CHIPPED** _____

4 The clock shows a time five minutes earlier. **SLOW** _____

OVER TO YOU

Write a **100-120 word** account of a minor household or technology problem. Describe the symptoms, likely cause, safe first checks and final solution.

[ ] Use at least eight target expressions. [ ] Separate fact from guess. [ ] Put safety before repair.

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ANSWER KEY

1 Precise meanings

1 **d** 2 **g** 3 **c** 4 **a** 5 **b** 6 **f** 7 **e** 8 **h**

2 Problem collocations

1 **pipe** 2 **window** 3 **batteries** 4 **handle** 5 **machine** 6 **computer** 7 **ankle** 8 **knee**

3 Corrections

1 have **run out** / are **dead** 2 a **power cut** 3 **broke down** 4 is **blocked**
5 have **locked myself out** 6 **tripped** over 7 got a **bruise** 8 battery is **flat**

4 Incident report

1 **power cut** 2 **tripped** 3 **grazed** 4 **bruise** 5 **came off** 6 **leaking** 7 **stain** 8 **dented** 9 **flat** 10 **cracked**

5 Reading - suggested answers

1 It helps identify and solve the problem. 2 When it stopped, what happened before, and any warning.
3 Any two: water near electricity, broken glass, serious injury. 4 The symptoms. 5 Safe basic checks. 6 It helps the right person repair the fault more quickly.

6 Rewriting - possible answers

1 I have **mislaid my keys**. 2 The washing machine **broke down**. 3 The cup is **chipped**. 4 The clock is **five minutes slow**.

Over to you: Answers will vary. Check accurate symptoms, cautious inference and safe action.