

56

Talking about beliefs and opinions

A Speaking about beliefs and opinions

I **firmly believe** that young people should have the right to vote at 16.



I **share your opinion** on the issue of hunting. I'm **a great believer in** animals' rights.



Contrary to **popular belief**¹, it is not true that blondes are dumb.



We **have reason to believe** that you witnessed the accident.



¹ what many people think

We **are poles apart**² in our attitudes to life.



² are completely different

It's **a matter of opinion** whether men are better drivers than women.



I had a **difference of opinion**³ with my brother.



³ disagreement

I've got a **sneaking suspicion**⁴ you may be right.



⁴ I'm beginning to think

B More formal ways of discussing beliefs

Look at this extract from a student essay and notice the collocations referring to beliefs.

The writer seems to **make assumptions**¹ based on an **unshakeable belief** in the superiority of her own value system. She seems to be unaware of the extent to which her own **set of beliefs** has **coloured her judgement**². Her research **leads her to conclude** that military action was justified. However, her **evidence is based on** one single document and **attaches too much importance** to this. I do not **trust her judgement**. Moreover, other documents **cast doubt on**³ her conclusions. **Opinions** on the issue **are divided**⁴ and my own **considered opinion**⁵ is that the writer is not to be trusted. I **have serious misgivings about**⁶ her research and I **have doubts** about the accuracy of some of her facts.

¹ thinks or says things are true without enough evidence

² affected her judgement

³ suggest something may be wrong with

⁴ people have different opinions

⁵ opinion after much thought

⁶ I have serious doubts about

C Some error warnings

The expressions in this table are collocations that learners often have difficulty with.

collocation	comment
I hope you'll come to my party.	NOT wish
They've given up hope of any survivors.	NOT the hope
We need to think hard about this problem.	NOT consider hard – could be consider this problem carefully
I wish they would just leave me alone .	NOT let
Many people hold the view/opinion that ...	NOT meaning
He has strong opinions on many subjects.	NOT heavy or big

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Exercises

56.1 Look at A. Complete the collocations in these letters to a newspaper.

Sir/Madam,	Sir/Madam,	Sir/Madam,
I (1) the opinion of your correspondent that the EU has brought peace to Europe, but I cannot agree that a single currency for all of Europe is necessary. It is a (2) of opinion whether economic stability can be maintained with one currency, and there is (3) to believe that some European economies were more stable before they joined the euro.	According to popular (4), the war between Gronbia and Karzkut started with a (5) of opinion over how best to preserve the beautiful mountain environment on both sides of the border between them. The two countries were apparently (6) apart on how to approach the issue, and war resulted. If this is indeed true, how stupid can human beings become?	While I (7) believe in the right of everyone to own a car, I am also a great (8) in keeping fit and healthy. The government tells us we must take exercise, but I have a (9) suspicion that they are afraid of saying we should sell our cars because they would lose billions in road taxes.
Yours, L. Knight	Yours sincerely, B. Stephenson	Yours, S. Adams

56.2 Correct the seven collocation errors in this text.

I wish we can solve a big problem we have regarding our student committee. Opinions are separated about how to approach the issue and, naturally, some members have very heavy opinions. Some of their views are based on their unstirred belief that they are always right and that no one can challenge their group of beliefs. My own thoughtful opinion is that we should have new elections, but I know that others have quite a different meaning.

56.3 Match each verb in the box with its noun collocation in the table below. Then write one sentence for each collocation.

cast colour attach make have trust

	verb	noun
1		assumptions
2		somebody's judgement
3		
4		importance to
5		doubt on
6		serious misgivings
		doubts

56.4 Make seven collocations using the words in the box. Use each word once only.

apart belief believe cast think firmly hard opinions
sneaking strong suspicion doubt poles popular