

This, That, These & Those

Distance, Time & Attitude — Student Worksheet

QUICK REFERENCE

Word	Number	Distance	Use for
<i>This</i>	Singular	Near	One thing close to you in space or time
<i>That</i>	Singular	Far	One thing far away — in space, time, or feeling
<i>These</i>	Plural	Near	Multiple things close to you right now
<i>Those</i>	Plural	Far	Multiple things far away — in space or time

PHYSICAL & TEMPORAL DISTANCE

You (speaker)		Far from you
<i>this / these</i>	→→→→→	<i>that / those</i>
Close · Present · Now		Far · Past · Detached

EXERCISE A — Circle the correct word

Circle **this**, **that**, **these**, or **those** to complete each sentence correctly.

- Can you hand me (this / that) pen next to you?
- Look at (that / those) mountains in the distance!
- (This / That) was the happiest year of my life. (speaking of the past)
- I love (these / those) shoes I am wearing right now.
- Remember (these / those) summers when we were young?
- (This / That) is a difficult problem we are currently facing.
- Who are (these / those) people way over there by the fence?
- Hello, (this / that) is Patryk speaking.

EXERCISE B — Fill in the blank

Write **this**, **that**, **these**, or **those** in the space provided.

1. _____ is my coffee — please do not touch it.

Hint: (it's in your hand right now)

2. Do you remember _____ argument we had last summer?

Hint: (past event, singular)

3. _____ past few months have been really challenging.

Hint: (a current period, plural)

4. Look at _____ stars above — there are so many tonight.

Hint: (far away, plural)

5. _____ book you are holding looks interesting.

Hint: (right there, singular)

6. _____ were three of the hardest years of my career.

Hint: (finished past period, plural)

7. I am done with _____ situation — it is over.

Hint: (psychological distance, dismissal)

8. _____ are the files you need.

Hint: (right here in front of you, plural)

EXERCISE C — Tick the correct answer (■)

1. You are talking about your childhood, which ended 20 years ago. You say:

■ A. "Those" + text

■ B. "These" + text

2. A colleague proposes an idea you think is problematic. You say (with distance):

■ A. "That" + text

■ B. "This" + text

3. You are eating a meal and it is delicious. You say:

■ A. "That" + text

■ B. "This" + text

4. You see two bikes parked far down the street. You say:

■ A. "those" + text

■ B. "these" + text

ANSWER KEY

This, That, These & Those — Worksheet

EXERCISE A — Answers

1. **this** — *The pen is next to you — singular, near.*
2. **those** — *Mountains in the distance — plural, far.*
3. **That** — *Past event, finished — singular, temporal distance.*
4. **these** — *Wearing them right now — plural, near.*
5. **those** — *Past summers, finished time — plural, temporal distance.*
6. **This** — *Currently facing it, present — singular, near.*
7. **those** — *Far away by the fence — plural, far.*
8. **this** — *On the phone, you are present — singular, near.*

EXERCISE B — Answers

1. **This** — *In your hand, right now — singular, near.*
2. **that** — *Past event — singular, temporal distance.*
3. **These** — *Current period you are in — plural, near in time.*
4. **those** — *Far away in the sky — plural, far.*
5. **That** — *Right there in their hand — singular, near... wait: if it's in THEIR hand and you can point to it, either "this" or "that" works depending on physical closeness. If nearby: "this". If across the room: "that". Both are acceptable depending on context.*
6. **Those** — *Finished years in the past — plural, temporal distance.*
7. **that** — *Psychological distance, dismissal — singular, attitude.*
8. **These** — *Right in front of you — plural, near.*

EXERCISE C — Answers

1. **A — Those** — *Past, finished years — temporal distance.*
2. **A — That** — *Psychological distance: distancing from the idea, implying it is not yours or you reject it.*

3. **B — This** — *Right now, present moment — singular, near.*

4. **A — those** — *Far down the street — plural, far.*

TEACHING NOTE

The most common student error is treating these as purely spatial words. Emphasise the temporal dimension early — "those were good times" vs "these are good times" is a high-frequency contrast students encounter constantly but rarely notice consciously. The attitude/psychological distance use of "that" (distancing from an idea, creating emotional separation) is advanced but worth introducing at B2 level. Real native speakers use it constantly in meetings, discussions, and arguments.