Get it right! (Part 2)

This is the second series of exercises giving students practice in using the ‘Get it right’ boxes in the new edition of MED. These boxes are found at the end of entries for words which frequently give rise to errors. The boxes help students to anticipate mistakes and show how to correct them. The mistakes fall into different categories, such as spelling, register (formal or informal), word patterns (infinitive or –ing) and prepositions. In Get it right! Part 1 the exercises focused on errors relating to prepositions, word patterns and spelling. In this worksheet, Get it right! Part 2, students use the ‘Get it right’ boxes to help them deal with issues relating to register, countability and uncountability, and frequently-confused words.

Get it right: advice

Advice is an uncountable noun, so:
• it is never used in the plural
• it never comes after an or a number
✓ Naomi Wolf gave me a good advice in her book.
✓ Naomi Wolf gave me some good advice in her book.
✓ They were always there to give practical advices.
✓ They were always there to give practical advice.

Q: How can I refer to a single item of advice, rather than to advice in general?
A: Advice is mostly used on its own or with some.

If you’re worried about it, contact your doctor for advice.
I think you should get some advice from a professional.

You can also say a word of advice, a piece of advice, or (informally) a bit of advice. But none of these expressions is common:

Don’t confuse advice (a noun) and advise (a verb):
✓ I would advise you to choose this company.
✓ I would advise you to choose this company.

Level  intermediate – upper-intermediate

Time and materials
Allow five minutes for each activity.

Procedure
If you didn’t do so with Get it right! Part 1, you could brainstorm different types of vocabulary mistakes that students make, before handing out the worksheet. These mistakes might include spelling, pronunciation, using the wrong preposition, using the wrong verb pattern, register (formal /informal), making a word countable instead of uncountable and vice versa, confusing words with other similar words or false friends. Prompt students by giving examples of each kind of error.

► Activity 1

1 Explain to students that the sentences are incorrect and the mistakes are related to the underlined words. Their task is to identify the types of mistakes and match a – d with 1 – 4.

2 Check answers and then ask students to correct the sentences. Encourage them to use the ‘Get it right’ boxes which are located at the end of the entries for the underlined words.

Answers
1 a 4  b 3  c 2  d 1
2 a people  b breathe  c information  d - (simply omit well)