

STUDY ENGLISH

IELTS PREPARATION

Let's now listen to Chris Brooks again. What other words or phrases help us with the meaning of phonics?

Well, as you've seen, Sonya, what we've done is we've worked with some letters that have a variety of sounds, so the letter 'c' had two sounds, the 'k' sound and the 'ss' sound, and you can see with our colour-coding, one's purple and one's black, and the same with the letter 's', it has a 'ss' sound and 'zz' sound, so they're their common sounds.

Chris uses the phrases:

'some letters that have a variety of sounds',

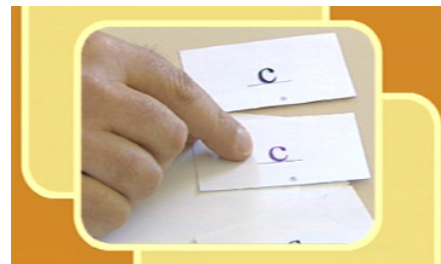
'the letter 'c' had two sounds',

'the 'k' sound and the 'ss' sound',

'colour-coding',

'the letter 's'',

'a 'ss' sound and 'zz' sound'.



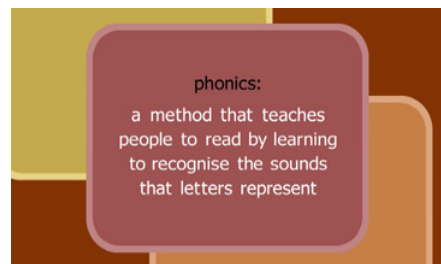
So we can guess that the method focuses on letters that have a variety of sounds, for example letter 'c', which has two sounds – 'k' and 's'.

We also know that colour coding is used to help recognise common sounds, and that the letter 's' has an 'ss' sound and 'zz' sound.

So, we have quite a bit of information about 'phonics' now. From the various contexts we've listened to, can you guess the meaning of the word 'phonics'? How would you define it?

Here's a possible guess:

"Phonics is a method that teaches people to read by learning to recognise the sounds that letters represent."



Remember, you don't always need a dictionary to find the meaning of a word. Using the strategy of 'guessing the meaning of a word from the context' helps with your ability to understand, partly because you stay focussed on what you're listening to.

It also helps build your vocabulary because you're more likely to remember the word. This skill is very helpful in the IELTS Listening test because you won't have a dictionary to assist you.

Here's a quick test to try out your skills.

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Can you guess the meaning of the highlighted words from the *context*?

“Statistics show that over one-eighth of the adult population in developing countries is illiterate. Governments have set up educational centres to teach this group to read and write.”

What does ‘illiterate’ mean?

We know that it’s an educational matter related to teaching people to read and write, and that it’s a large problem in developing countries.

‘Illiterate’ would mean ‘not able to read or write’.

Here’s another one.

“John loved singing, so he auditioned for all the musicals. The directors liked the way he sang.”

What does ‘auditioned’ mean?

We know that John loves to sing, and he sang for directors, the people directing the musicals.

So from this we can guess that ‘auditioned’ means ‘performed a song for directors to judge whether someone is good enough to be in their show’.

OK, now we’re going to have a look at the verb ‘to be’. ‘To be’ usually functions as an *auxiliary verb*.

But sometimes the verb ‘to be’ can function as the *main verb*. That’s when it links the ‘subject’ and an ‘expression that describes the subject’. For example, look at the sentence:

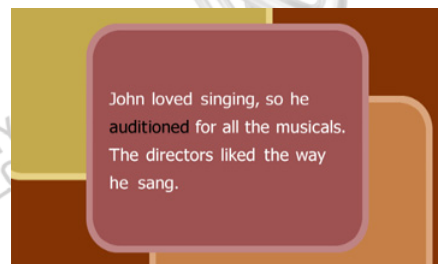
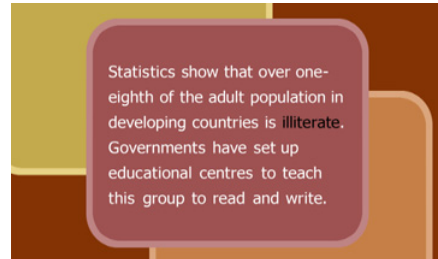
“Chris is a phonics teacher.”

‘Is’ here is the *main verb* because it links the expression ‘phonics teacher’ to the subject ‘Chris’.

OK. The reporter quotes children’s author Mem Fox on literacy. What does she say about Australia’s literacy rate?

Internationally acclaimed children's author Mem Fox says the crisis is a myth and Australia's literacy rate is second only to Finland.

Mem Fox says: “The crisis is a myth.”



When the verb 'to be' is used as the main verb in a sentence, what follows is called the *complement*. This *complement* defines the subject.

The structure of these linking verb clauses or sentences is:

"subject + to be + the complement".

So we have the *subject*, 'the crisis', the *linking verb*, 'is', and the *complement*, 'a myth'.

"The crisis is a myth."

Listen to the clip again.

Internationally acclaimed children's author Mem Fox says the crisis is a myth and Australia's literacy rate is second only to Finland.

"Australia's literacy rate is second only to Finland."

Let's look at the structure of the sentence.

The *subject* is 'Australia's literacy rate'.

We have a form of the verb 'to be' - 'is',
and then the *complement* - 'second only to Finland'.

'Second only to' is an interesting expression that means, in this sentence, "Australia has the second best literacy rate in the world. Finland is number one."

Let's look at another clip. Can you find another example where a complement is used?

She says we've achieved that by using a range of reading techniques, including phonics, but phonics alone isn't a magical cure for reading problems.

She says: "Phonics isn't a magical cure".

The *subject* is 'phonics'.

The *verb* 'to be' - 'isn't', short for 'is not',
and the *complement* - 'a magical cure'.

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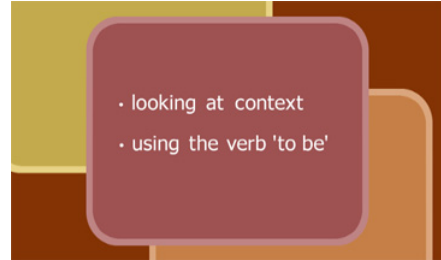
And that's all for today's study English.

Let's review what we've looked at.

We talked about looking at *context* to guess the meaning of words.

And then we looked at using the *verb* 'to be' to link *subjects* and their *complements*.

Don't forget to visit our Study English website to find out more – it's at abcasiapacific.com/studyenglish.



That's all for today. I'll see you next time for more IELTS preparation. Bye bye.

