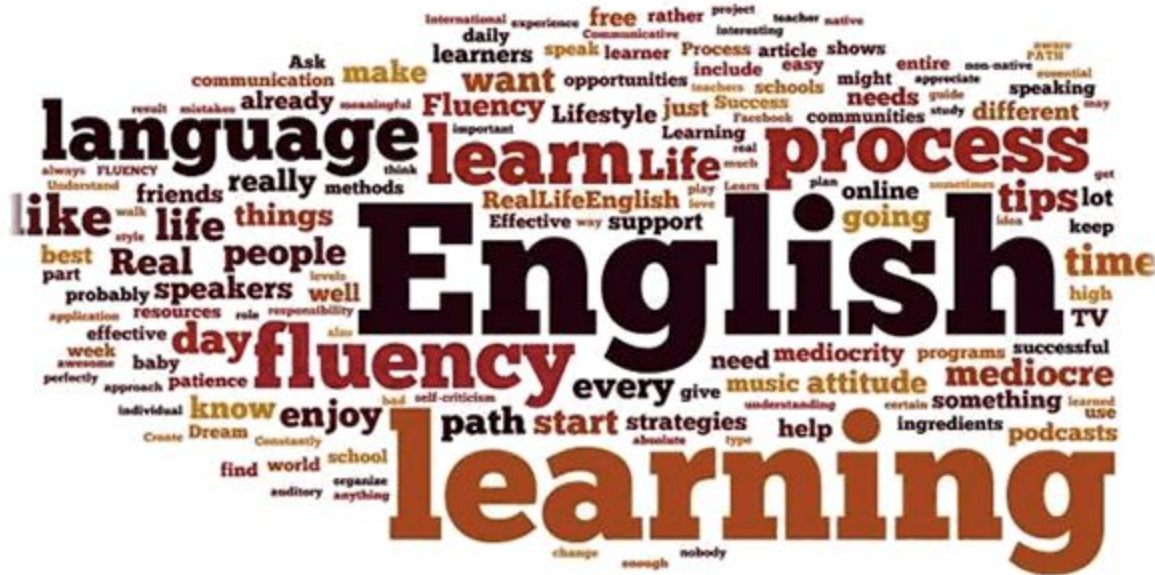


SPEAKING ENGLISH - FOR EVERYONE

# THRIFTY ENGLISH

## HELP! MY 'HOW TO' GUIDE FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

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- Why learning English is so important.
  - How experts evaluate and level your English level.
  - What are 'IELTS'?
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## **4 Reasons Why Learning English is so Important**

English is the language of science, of aviation, computers, diplomacy, and tourism. Knowing English increases your chances of getting a good job in a multinational company within your home country or for finding work abroad. It's also the language of international communication, the media and the internet, so learning English is important for socialising and entertainment as well as work!

Let's look at the top 4 reasons why studying English is so important:

### **1. English is the Language of International Communication**

English may not be the most spoken language in the world, but it is the official language of 53 countries and spoken by around 400 million people across the globe. Being able to speak English is not just about being able to communicate with native English speakers, it is the most common second language in the world. If you want to speak to someone from another country then the chances are that you will both be speaking English to do this.

### **2. English is the Language of Business**

English is the dominant business language and it has become almost a necessity for people to speak English if they are to enter a global workforce. Research from all over the world shows that cross-border business communication is most often conducted in English and many international companies expect employees to be fluent in English.

Global companies such as Airbus, Daimler-Chrysler, Fast Retailing, Nokia, Renault, Samsung, SAP, Technicolor, and Microsoft in Beijing, have mandated English as their official corporate language. In addition, in 2010 the company Rakuten, a Japanese cross between Amazon and eBay, made it mandatory for their 7,100 Japanese employees to be able to speak English.

The importance of learning English in the international marketplace cannot be understated - learning English really can change your life.

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### 3. Speaking English gives you Access to a World of Entertainment

Many of the world's top films, books and music are published and produced in English. Therefore, by learning English you will have access to a great wealth of entertainment and will be able to have a greater cultural understanding.

If you speak English, you won't need to rely on translations and subtitles anymore to enjoy your favourite books, songs, films and TV shows. Watching movies and television programmes in the English language is also a great and fun way to learn it!

### 4. Learning English gives you Access to more of the Internet

According to a report by Education First, English is the language of the internet. An estimated 565 million people use the internet every day, and an estimated 52 percent of the world's most visited websites are displayed in the English language.

Learning English is important as it gives you access to over half the content on the internet. Knowing how to read English will allow you access to billions of pages of information which may not be otherwise available!

## Your English Level

A popular method used by schools to measure a student reader's ability is Lexile level or a Lexile Measure. A Lexile measure is a valuable tool for teachers, parents, and students. It serves two unique functions: it is the measure of how difficult a text is OR a student's reading ability level. The Lexile Framework was developed by MetaMetrics®, an educational assessment and research team, funded originally by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

### What Does Lexile Score Mean?

A student receives his or her Lexile measure from one of two ways: taking a school-administered **SRI (Scholastic Reading Inventory)** test, which is specifically designed to measure Lexile or reading ability OR by taking a standardized reading test

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which converts the reader's results to a Lexile measure. If a student gets a 550L then he or she is a 550 level Lexile reader. 550L is the measure of his or her readability level. It is important to note it is never called a score! This encourages student achievement.

### **How Can I Know My Lexile Level?**

The Lexile level will always be shown as a number with an "L" after it — for example 770L = 770 Lexile. The higher the Lexile measure, the higher the student's reading level. The reader's Lexile Framework works in intervals of five with 5L being the lowest. The highest possible measure is 2000L. Anything below 5L is assessed as a BR or Beginning Reader.

### **How Do I Find the Lexile of a Book?**

A book's Lexile measure is analyzed by MetaMetrics®. After a text is assessed, it is given a measure like that of a student's readability level, 600L for example. In this measure, MetaMetrics® is assessing the text's difficulty level. A book or magazine at a 500L has a Lexile Level of 500. MetaMetrics® predicts and assesses how difficult a text will be for a reader to comprehend. The two main criteria it tests are word frequency and sentence strength. A text's Lexile Framework works in increments of 10 with 10L being the lowest. Measures below 10L are classified as BR or Beginning Reader.

### **Lexile Levels in Practice.**

The ideal for both reader and text is to match both their assessed Lexile measure. For example a book or magazine with a 770L and a reader assessed at a Lexile level of 770. The reading levels per classroom are wide-ranging and varied. There are many factors that go into matching a student to his or her ideal text. The Lexile Framework is a good place to start in picking the right book at the right Lexile level as it targets areas in need of intervention and encourages achievement across grade levels and curricula.

### **How to Find Books on Your Lexile Level.**

Lexile levels are scientifically and mathematically assigned based on the difficulty and readability of a book. Once you know your child's Lexile level, you can search for books that match this level to expand your home library and encourage daily reading practice in your own home. Use the Lexile database to search by Lexile level, title, or subject to find books

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your child will enjoy and be able to read without becoming discouraged at his or her reading achievement.

## **What are IELTS?**

The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is the world's most popular English language proficiency test for higher education in global migration.

### **What are IELTS so important?**

More than 10,000 organisations globally trust IELTS, so when you take a test you can be confident that it is recognised by educational institutions, employers, governments and professional bodies around the world.

As one of the four pioneers of four skills English language testing more than 30 years ago, IELTS continues to set the standard for English language testing today. Governments in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom use IELTS to process immigration applications.

### **Organisations that recognise IELTS**

IELTS is accepted by over 10,000 organisations in more than 140 countries. These include:

- Universities, schools, colleges and training courses.
- Government departments and immigration authorities.
- Professional and industry associations.
- Multinational companies and employers.

### **How does IELTS work?**

IELTS has been developed by some of the world's leading language assessment experts and will test the full range of English skills needed for success in your new job or study placement abroad. You will be assessed in the following elements:

- Listening.
- Reading.
- Writing.

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- Speaking.

## **What are CEFR Levels?**

The Common European Framework of Reference (usually abbreviated to the CEFR or CEF) describes what language learners can do at different stages of their learning.

### **What are the IELTS CEFR levels?**

The CEFR describes six broad levels of ability, with A1 being the lowest and C2 the highest. Learners are classified in three distinct groups: the Basic User (levels A1 and A2), the Independent User (B1 and B2) and the Proficient User (C1 and C2).

### **How am I evaluated?**

The CEFR describes what learners can do across five language skills: Spoken Interaction, Spoken Production, Listening, Reading and Writing.

### **Why are IELTS and CEFR levels important?**

UK, Australia, USA, Canada, Ireland and New Zealand University applicants require a CEFR level of B1 and above to meet Visa requirements.

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## Comparing CEFR and Lexile Levels

**TABLE 4.** COMPARISON OF STUDENT (LEARNER) AND TEXT RANGES

CEFR Level	Student Aggregate Range	Graded Reader Text Aggregate Range (IQR)
A1	Below 0L to 620L	230L to 340L
A2	180L to 910L	425L to 715L
B1	705L to 1210L	588L to 860L
B2	1000L to 1370L	598L to 993L
C1	1290L to 1400L	760L to 1200L
C2	1405L to 1595L	

This table shows the typical student ability range when comparing CEFR and Lexile levels.

The CEFR levels are first listed A1 - C2, then the most commonly found student range.

The third column shows the Lexile range of the most commonly used textbooks which prepare students for their IELTS.