

LESSON 119

646 “To be” + infinitive with “to”

firstly

secondly

head teacher

study

In formal English, there are two common uses of the structure “to be” + infinitive with “to”.

Firstly, we use it in order to communicate an arrangement. For example, the sentence “The President is to meet the Queen” means that this meeting has been arranged. This structure is often used in newspapers (instead of the structure “going to”).

Secondly, we can use this structure to communicate an obligation. For example, the sentence “You are to go to the head teacher’s study at once” means you have to go to the head teacher’s study at once. It is an obligation.

What are two common uses of the structure “to be” + infinitive with “to”?

Two common uses ... are to communicate an arrangement or an obligation

Give me some examples, please.

The two countries are to begin new discussions on trade. You are to wait until I get back.

What does this sentence mean: “The Prime Minister is to speak to the press at noon”?

That sentence means that there is an arrangement for the Prime Minister to speak to the press at noon

And what does this sentence mean: “The nurse said I was to wait for the doctor to come”?

That sentence means that the nurse told me that I had to wait for the doctor to come

647 **vote**

How old must you be before you can vote in elections in this country?

You must be ... before you can ...

nurse

nursery

What am I doing?

You're nursing your elbow

Have you ever had to nurse a sick person?

Yes, I've had to ...

~ No, I've never had to ...

What's a nursery, or nursery school?

A nursery, or nursery school, is a place for very small children to play while their parents go to work

unemployment

What is unemployment?

Unemployment is when there's not enough work for everyone

What happens to the unemployed in your country?

The unemployed in my country ...

take off

land

seat belt

What do passengers have to do when a plane takes off and lands?

Passengers have to put on their seat belts when a plane takes off and lands

648 **practice**

theory

practical

take into account

What's the opposite of "theory"?

The opposite ... "practice"

Is it always possible to put theory into practice?

No, it isn't ...

Why not?

Because what works in theory might not work in practice, because of something that has not been taken into account

What do we mean by a practical person?

By a practical person we mean someone who is good at doing things with their hands, or is good at organizing their ideas and making things happen in real life

set up

If you decided to set up a business in the place where you lived, what kind of business would you choose?

If I decided to set up ..., the kind of business I'd choose would be ...

Why?

"Could" as the past of "can"

We use "could" as the past of "can" to speak about general abilities. For example, we say "I could swim when I was five years old" or "When he lived in London, he could practise his English every day". On the other hand, if we talk about a particular occasion when somebody managed to do something, we don't use "could"; we use "was able", "managed" or "succeeded" instead. For example, we say "John studied a lot, and was able to pass the exam" or "The child fell into the swimming pool but managed to get out safely".

649 When do we use "could" as the past of "can"?

We use "could" as the past of "can" to speak about general abilities

Give me an example, please.

My grandfather could run very fast when he was a young man

When don't we use "could" as the past of "can"?

We don't ... if we talk about a particular occasion when somebody managed to do something

What do we use instead?

We use "was able", "managed" or "succeeded" instead

Give me an example, please.

The woman gave the children some money, and so they were able to buy some sweets

When a sentence is negative, however, we can use either "couldn't" or "wasn't able". We can say, for example, "He looked for his keys for a long time but he couldn't find them".

What happens when a sentence is negative?

When a sentence is negative, we can use either "couldn't" or "wasn't able"

Give me an example, please.

The woman did not
give the children any money,
and so they could not buy any sweets

nature

human nature

Is it in your nature to worry about things too much?

Yes, it's in ...
~ No, it isn't in ...

Do you think human nature can be changed?

Yes, I think ...
~ No, I don't think ...

650 **compete**

competition

Do you think it's a good thing to make children compete against each other at school?

Yes, I think it's ...
~ No, I don't think it's ...

Have you ever won a competition?

Yes, I've won ...
~ No, I've never won ...

energy

efficient

Are you full of energy at the moment?

Yes, I'm full of ...
~ No, I'm not full of ...

What do we mean if we say that a person or machine works efficiently?

If we say ..., we mean that the person or
machine works well, without wasting time or energy

Are the cars that people drive today more efficient than the cars of fifty years ago?

Yes, the cars that ...

suit

suitable

What colour clothes do you think suit you best?

I think ...
clothes suit me best

Would it suit you if you were asked to come to school on a public holiday?

Yes, it'd suit me if ...
~ No, it wouldn't suit me if ...

Why or why not?

Where would you say was the most suitable place to go for a holiday if you wanted a complete rest?
I'd say ...
was the most suitable ...

651 **effect**

perfect

to go up to

What are the effects of too little sleep (or overeating etc.)?
The effects of ... are ...

Do you think regular physical exercise can have any effect on how happy someone feels?
Yes, I think ... ~ No, I don't think ...

What effect do you suppose it'd have on a perfect stranger if you went up to him in the street and hit him with a rolled-up newspaper?
If I went up to ..., I suppose the effect it would have on him would be one of surprise

Idiom 20

drop a line = write a short letter

e.g. Don't forget to drop us a line while you're away.

What does the idiom "drop a line" mean?
The idiom ...
"write a short letter"

Give me an example, please.
Why didn't you drop us a line to tell us you were coming?

sunshine



Dictation 79

I'd like to live on an island/ right in the middle/ of the Pacific Ocean,/ but I realize/ that such an idea is only a dream./ It'd be very unwise/ to tell him the whole story/ during the interview;/ he might get the wrong idea./ We'll drive down to the coast/ early in the morning,/ so that we can get there by noon/ and spend a longer time/ enjoying the sunshine on the beach.