

Meaning beyond words



B2 ESL | Name: _____ Date: _____

Goal: Use stress, listening evidence and context to interpret meaning.

NOTICE THE DIFFERENCE

Stress highlights a word or syllable. These compound nouns normally stress the first part: GREENhouse. A descriptive phrase often stresses the noun: green HOUSE. Contrast can change the focus.

Intonation is pitch movement across speech. Context matters, not just grammar.

1 Stress changes meaning

Choose the option that best matches the meaning. CAPITALS mark the stressed word or part. Read both options aloud.

1. A glass building used to grow plants.

GREENhouse

green HOUSE

2. A house painted green.

GREENhouse

green HOUSE

3. A familiar bird species: a blackbird.

BLACKbird

black BIRD

4. Any bird described as black, regardless of species.

BLACKbird

black BIRD

5. A tower with a light that guides ships.

LIGHT house

light HOUSE

6. A house described as bright, rather than dark.

LIGHT house

light HOUSE

TRY IT

Say GREENhouse and green HOUSE. Explain how the meaning changes.

Listen for the argument



2 Light pollution: evidence, inference and detail

Listen to audio. First listen for the main argument. Listen again and choose one answer for 1-6. Complete 7-8.

LISTEN TO AUDIO

1. Why does Susan contrast daily exposure with limited awareness?

- A Familiar problems may still go unnoticed.
- B Most people experience pollution only at work.
- C Light pollution occurs only occasionally.

2. Why does she refer to how many stars were visible in the past?

- A To claim that stars have disappeared.
- B To illustrate a worsening environmental problem.
- C To compare two kinds of telescope.

3. Which statement best captures her view of security lighting?

- A All security lighting should be removed.
- B Brighter lighting always prevents crime.
- C Its design matters more than simply adding brightness.

4. Why is the example of the presenter's brother relevant?

- A It proves that household lights use too much energy.
- B It illustrates unwanted light entering nearby property.
- C It shows that parking lots need more lights.

5. What condition underlies the suggested reduction in oil imports?

- A Basic lighting regulations must be introduced and enforced.
- B Every household must install a new generator.
- C Businesses must close immediately after sunset.

6. What does Susan mainly want listeners to do at home?

- A Leave outdoor lights on throughout the night.
- B Avoid every type of outdoor lighting.
- C Control the direction and coverage of outdoor light.

7. The brother lives near a _____. (TWO words)

8. Avoid a powerful _____ on the lawn. (ONE word)

Choose your intention



3 Intonation in context

Choose the most suitable tone for each stated intention. R = rise; F = fall; FR = fall-rise. Say each answer aloud after checking.

TONE TOOLKIT

FALL often signals completion or certainty. RISE can invite confirmation or keep an exchange open. FALL-RISE can suggest a reservation or qualification. These are tendencies, not fixed rules.

1. "It was useful." You are certain and have finished your point.

R F FR

2. "It was useful..." You mean: useful, but missing key details.

R F FR

3. "You sent the report?" You are checking whether this happened.

R F FR

4. "Where is the nearest hospital?" You need neutral information.

R F FR