

# **TAMING ENGLISH**

**SÉANCE PRÉLIMINAIRE DE REMISE À NIVEAU**



# DEAR ENGLISH...

# « DEAR ENGLISH... »

- **Write a letter to the English language... in English :**
  - What would you tell English if it were an actual person?
  - How do you feel about it? Do you absolutely *hate* it? Would you profess your *love* to it?
  - around **10 lines**



# GRAMMAR

# THE PILLARS YOU NEED TO MASTER

- **SYNTAX:** how to build a sentence or a question.
- **TENSES:** when should you use the present perfect? How so? You should know how to build each tense and their value.
- **MODALS:** how to use them, when to use them, USE THEM.
- **UNCOUNTABLE WORDS:** should you put that -S to fruit...? Are you sure?

# SYNTAX: HOW TO BUILD A QUESTION

- Elements you should know and use:
- **MI = Mot interrogatif**
  - **WHAT** → Quoi, que, quel
  - **WHY** → Pourquoi
  - **WHEN** → Quand
  - **WHERE** → Où
  - **WHO** → Qui
  - **WHOSE** → À qui
  - **WHICH** → Laquelle, lequel, lesquelles, lesquels
  - **HOW** → Comment
  - **HOW LONG** → Combien de temps
  - **HOW MUCH/MANY** → Combien
- **Aux. = Auxiliaire** (to BE, to HAVE, to DO)
- **Mod. : Modaux** (can, must, should etc...)
- **BV = Base Verbale** (le verbe).
- **Sujet** (I, you, he/she/it, we, you, they)

# SYNTAX: HOW TO BUILD A QUESTION

- Now, learn this by heart:

**MI** + **Aux.** + **Sujet** + **BV** + **le reste**

- Examples:
  - **Why** **does** *he always cook turkey?*
  - **Where** **do** *they go at night?*

For simple questions, just invert the subject and the verb/aux.: *You are happy* = *Are you happy?*

# TENSES: THE PRESENT

Mode	Construction	Valeurs
SIMPLE	<p>Sujet + Verbe conjugué</p> <p><i>I have two brothers</i> <i>He likes music</i></p>	<p>Actions habituelles, répétitives : <i>Every day, I wake up at 6:00 am.</i></p> <p>Vérités générales : <i>Water boils at 100°C.</i></p>
CONTINUOUS/PROGRESSIVE	<p>Sujet + Verbe BE conjugué + Verbe en -ing</p> <p><i>I am doing the washing-up.</i></p>	<p>Actions ayant lieu au moment où l'on parle</p> <p><i>What are you doing ? I'm playing video games.</i></p>
PERFECT	<p>Sujet + Have conjugué + participe passé du verbe</p> <p><i>I have worked too much</i> <i>He has done so bad things</i></p>	<p>Indique une relation entre un fait passé et le présent, c'est-à-dire un fait dans le passé mais ayant un résultat présent.</p> <p><i>I have lost my keys : j'ai perdu mes clés.</i></p>
PERFECT CONTINUOUS	<p>Sujet + Have conjugué + been + verbe en -ing</p> <p><i>I have been running throughout the town.</i></p>	<p>Il a la même utilisation que le présent perfect simple. Il sert à <u>insister sur une durée.</u></p> <p><i>I have been working for 7 hours.</i></p>



# TENSES: THE PAST

MODE	CONSTRUCTION	VALEURS
SIMPLE	<p>Sujet+ Verbe conjugué au prétérit</p> <p><i>I went to the cinema</i></p>	<p>Actions passées et terminées et datées sans rapport avec le Présent (<i>I found a banknote on the ground last week</i>) + Habitudes dans le passé (<i>On Wednesdays, I played the piano with my grandmother</i>).</p>
CONTINUOUS	<p>Sujet + « be » conjugué au prétérit + Verbe en -ing</p> <p><i>They were playing cards</i></p>	<p>Utilisé lorsqu'on parle d'une action en cours de déroulement dans le passé. Il traduit le « j'étais en train de » en français (<i>I was doing my homework</i>)</p> <p>Parler d'une action antérieure à une autre (<i>I was helping my mother when you arrived</i>)</p>
PERFECT / PLUPERFECT	<p>Sujet + have au prétérit + participe passé</p> <p><i>I had done so much work.</i></p>	<p>Utilisé lorsqu'on parle au passé d'une action encore antérieure (« passé dans le passé »).</p>
PERFECT CONTINUOUS	<p>Sujet + had + participe passé + verbe en -ing</p> <p><i>I had been doing so much work.</i></p>	<p>L'action est terminée mais a toujours des conséquences sur le présent.</p>

# TENSES: THE FUTURE

MODE	CONSTRUCTION	VALEURS
SIMPLE	<p>Sujet + will + BV</p> <p><i>I will go to New York someday.</i></p>	Prédiction.
GOING TO	<p>Sujet + be au présent + going to + BV</p> <p><i>You are going to love it.</i> <i>He is going to play football.</i></p>	<p>Projet. On pourrait le prendre pour un présent à cause du verbe to be, mais il décrit bien une action future. Ainsi, dire « <i>I am going to NY</i> » signifie « Je vais (aller) à NY. »</p>
CONTINUOUS	<p>Sujet + will + be + BV -ing</p> <p><i>He will be playing football.</i></p>	Décrit une action future ET habituelle.
PERFECT	<p>Sujet + will + have + participe passé</p> <p><i>He will have played football.</i></p>	Action accomplie. D'ici demain, ou quelques jours, il aura joué au foot.

# MODALS

- Modals allow you to express an opinion or a feeling.
- How to use them: they are NOT verbs. **They are invariable.** The only modals you can conjugate are those composed of HAVE and BE.
- Use modals as much as you can: they will make your speech more authentic.

# MODALS

Modal	Nature	Example
TO BE ABLE TO	Possibilité	« I was able to stop him just in time. »
CAN	Possibilité + permission + capacité	« Birds can fly » ; « Can I smoke? »
COULD	Possibilité (passé) + permission	« Could this be a typo?»
HAD BETTER	Conseil	« You'd better listen to me! »
HAVE TO	Obligation (externe)	« I have to pay the rent. »
MUST	Obligation (interne) + probabilité forte	« I must write this paper. »
MAY	Permission + probabilité (moyenne)	« It may rain tomorrow. » (the weatherman said so)
MIGHT	Permission + probabilité (faible)	« It might rain tomorrow. » (intuition)
OUGHT TO	Obligation + déduction logique	« You ought to do your homework. »
SHOULD	Conseil + déduction logique	« You should come to my place! »

# UNCOUNTABLE WORDS (INDÉNOMBRABLES)

- Contrary to **countable words** (dénombrables), you cannot « count » them.
- These words represent **concepts**, things you cannot count: *tea, sugar, water, knowledge, beauty, love, money, research, evidence...*
- You have to use **quantifiers** to refer to them: *some, a lot of, much, a piece of, a blade of, a slice of, a cup of etc...*
- Be careful, the following words are uncountable: *accommodation, advice, baggage, behavior, bread, furniture, information, luggage, news, traffic, travel, trouble, weather, work...*



# PRONUNCIATION

INTRODUCTION À LA PHONÉTIQUE

# IPA: INTERNATIONAL PHONETIC ALPHABET

ɪ READ	ɪ SIT	ʊ BOOK	uː TOO	ɪə HERE	eɪ DAY		
e MEN	ə AMERICA	ɜː WORD	ɔː SORT	ʊə TOUR	ɔɪ BOY	əʊ GO	
æ CAT	ʌ BUT	ɑː PART	ɒ NOT	eə WEAR	aɪ MY	aʊ HOW	
p FIG	b BED	t TIME	d DO	tʃ CHURCH	dʒ JUDGE	k KILO	g GO
f FIVE	v VERY	θ THINK	ð THE	s SIX	z ZOO	ʃ SHORT	ʒ CASUAL
m MILK	n NO	ŋ SING	h HELLO	l LIVE	r READ	w WINDOW	j YES

# WHAT ABOUT ACCENTS?

- Ideally, you should lean towards one single accent, preferably **British** (RP, Received Pronunciation) or **American** (GA, General American).
- Please bear in mind that **there are a LOT of sub-accents** in the British Isles and in the United States.
- If you want to learn more about accents, [click here](#).
- Relax: you're not expected to speak with a PERFECT accent!



# HOW CAN I IMPROVE MY ORAL ENGLISH?

- **Speak** as much as you can (even to yourself, I assure you it works even though it may feel weird the first couple of times)
- Find a « **language buddy** »
- **Read aloud**
- **Observe your face** when you pronounce difficult sounds
- **Listen** to a lot of English, whether it be on Youtube or Tik Tok.
- If you enjoy it, **SING!** Songs are an amazing tool to improve your pronunciation and your vocabulary.

**THE POEM THAT WILL DRIVE YOU CRAZY:  
READING « THE CHAOS »  
(BY GERALD NOST TRENITE, 1922)**

Dearest *creature* in *creation*  
Studying English *pronunciation*,  
I will teach you in my *verse*  
Sounds like *corpse*, *corps*, *horse* and *worse*.

Dearest *creature* in *creation*  
Studying English pronunciation,

I will teach you in my verse

Sounds like *corpse*, *corps*, *horse*  
and *worse*.

/kri:tʃə/ - /kri:'eɪʃən/

/kɔ:ps/ - /kɔə/ - /hɔ:s/ - /wɜ:s/

I will keep you, *Susy, busy,*  
Make your *head with heat* grow dizzy;  
*Tear* in eye, your dress you'll *tear;*  
*Queer, fair seer, hear my prayer.*

*Pray, console your loving poet,  
Make my coat look new, dear, sew it!  
Just compare heart, hear and heard,  
Dies and diet, lord and word.*

*Sword and sward, retain and Britain*  
(Mind the latter how it's *written*).  
*Made* has not the sound of *bade*,  
*Say-said, pay-paid, laid* but *plaid*.

Now I surely will not *plague* you  
With such words as *vague* and *ague*,  
But be careful how you speak,  
Say: *gush*, *bush*, *steak*, *streak*, *break*, *bleak*,

*Previous, p̄recious, fuchsia, via  
Recipe, p̄ipe, studding-sail, choir;  
Woven, oven, how and low,  
Script, receipt, shoe, p̄oem, toe.*