



FREE RESOURCE · COMMON ENGLISH WORDS

Common English words 271 to 280

The ten words in this set (able, support, whether, line, present, side, quite, although, sure, term) are linking, hedging and graph words that appear in Task 1 and Task 2. The usual mistakes are although with but, whether confused with the weather, and the false friend support for tolerate. Present changes stress as noun and verb.

The words

WORD	SOUND	MEANING	EXAMPLE
able adjective	/ˈeɪbl/	having the skill, power or chance to do something.	<i>Students who read widely are able to write more clearly.</i>
support verb, noun	/səˈpɔ:t/	to help, agree with or hold up; help and encouragement.	<i>Her parents strongly supported her decision to study abroad.</i>
whether conjunction	/ˈweðə/	used to talk about two possibilities, like if.	<i>The council must decide whether to build a new bridge.</i>
line noun	/laɪn/	a long thin mark; a row of people or things; a telephone connection.	<i>The line on the graph rises steeply after 2010.</i>
present adjective, noun, verb	/ 'preznt/	existing now; a gift; to give or show.	<i>At present, many offices offer flexible working hours.</i>
side noun	/saɪd/	a part or edge of something; one position in an argument.	<i>Both sides of the debate agree that traffic must be reduced.</i>
quite adverb	/kwaɪt/	to a fairly large degree; completely, in some phrases.	<i>The new library is quite busy in the evenings.</i>
although conjunction	/ɔ:l'ðəʊ/	used to introduce a fact that contrasts with the main idea.	<i>Although public transport is cheaper, many people still prefer cars.</i>
sure adjective	/ʃʊ:/	certain; having no doubt.	<i>Make sure you check your answers before you finish.</i>
term noun	/tɜ:m/	a word or phrase for something; a period of time; a condition.	<i>In terms of cost, trains are cheaper than planes for short journeys.</i>

Exercises

1. After her accident she was not _____ to walk for a month.
 - a. can
 - b. able
 - c. possible

2. Find the mistake and write the right form: (1) Although the test (2) was difficult, (3) but most (4) students passed.
3. Which word is pronounced the same as whether?
- a. wither
 - b. weather
 - c. water
4. In the verb to present (a report), which syllable is stressed?
- a. -sent
 - b. pre-
5. Correct this: *I can able to speak three languages.*
6. The film was _____ good, but not excellent.
- a. quiet
 - b. quite
 - c. quit
7. Her parents strongly _____ her decision when she moved abroad.
- a. supported
 - b. support
 - c. supporting
8. Although it was raining, _____ played football.
- a. so we
 - b. we
 - c. but we
9. Which word ends with a /d/ sound?
- a. sight
 - b. side
 - c. site
10. A _____ graph is the best way to show changes over time.
- a. line
 - b. lining
 - c. liner

Practise online, free: hear every example and check your answers at www.ielts-laboratory.co/free-resources/common-english-words-271-280/practice/

IELTS tip. In Writing Task 2, use although at the start of a sentence to show balance: Although cars are convenient, they cause pollution. In Writing Task 1, a line graph is the clearest reference, and in

terms of is a clean way to compare.

FOR TEACHERS · COMMON ENGLISH WORDS

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AIM	Learners recognise, pronounce and use ten high-frequency words (able, support, whether, line, present, side, quite, although, sure, term) accurately in IELTS-style sentences.
TIME	20 minutes
LEVEL	B1 to B2 (IELTS 5 to 6.5)
MATERIALS	This worksheet, one copy per learner; the free online practice for the audio

Warm-up

Ask learners to complete: Although I like city life, ... Then ask whether they can say it with but instead, without using both words.

Lesson steps

1. Show the ten words on the board. Learners sort them into three groups: I use it, I know it but do not use it, I am not sure. Compare answers in pairs.
2. Use the Hear audio. Drill each word chorally, then individually, marking the stressed syllable. Pay attention to: the /ʃ/ in sure, the stress shift in present, and the long /ɔ:/ in although and support.
3. Learners read the collocations and example sentences, then close the page and rebuild three collocations from memory. Check the watch-out notes together.
4. Learners complete the ten-item quiz alone, then explain to a partner why each wrong option is wrong.

Extension

Learners write four sentences contrasting two sides of an issue, using although, whether, in terms of and both sides.

Answer key

1. b) able. After was not we need be able to. Can and possible do not fit.
2. Part 3: *but most* → **most**. Although and but cannot be used together. Although already shows the contrast.
3. b) weather. Whether and weather are both /'weðə/. Wither has a short /ɪ/.
4. a) -sent. The verb is stressed on the second syllable, /prɪ'zent/. The noun gift is stressed on the first.
5. I am able to speak three languages. Use can or be able to, but not both together.
6. b) quite. Quite means fairly. Quiet means making little noise.
7. a) supported. The sentence is in the past, so we use supported.
8. b) we. After an although clause the main clause starts with the subject. But and so repeat the contrast.

9. b) side. Side ends with /d/. Site and sight both end with /t/ and sound the same.

10. a) line. A line graph is the usual name. The other forms do not fit.

Questions learners often ask

Can I use although and but together? No. Use one of them. Although it was late, I kept working, or It was late, but I kept working.

What is the difference between whether and weather? They sound the same. Whether introduces a choice (decide whether to go). Weather is rain, sun and wind.

Does support mean tolerate? No. Support means help or agree with. Spanish, Portuguese and Italian soportar, suportar and sopportare mean tolerate.

Sources

- Browne, C., Culligan, B. & Phillips, J. (2013). The New General Service List (NGSL) 1.2. newgeneralservicelist.com. CC BY-SA 4.0.
- Swan, M. (2016). Practical English Usage, 4th edition. Oxford University Press.

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