

If you are thinking of coming to SISU Bilingual School, or if you have been offered a place to join G10 in the coming academic year, the following sections will help you prepare to make a successful start to your time with us.

Vocabulary

Building an extensive and sophisticated vocabulary is one of your major goals during your time at SISU Bilingual School.

Part 1: Functional Vocabulary



What you must know!

Each subject that you study at our school uses a set of functional vocabulary; i.e., the words that students and teachers use in order learn about the subject. We can contrast this functional vocabulary with those words that are part of the content of the subject.

Here is some of the important functional vocabulary that you will need to know before you join the school.

<u>Literature</u>	<u>Physics</u>	<u>History</u>	<u>English</u>
Novel	Data	Explain	Article
Poem	Density	List	Title
Prose	Force	Paraphrase	Interview
Compare	Acceleration	Identify	Express
Contrast	Unit	Define	Example
Character	Area	Debate	Reason
Infer	Coefficient	Discuss	Support
Imply	Constant	Interpret	Identify
Summarize	Body	Perspective	Explain
Analyze	Energy	Primary source	Prepare
Respond	Elastic	Secondary	Underline
Evidence	Gravity	Criteria	Edit
Opinion	Inertia	Framework	Error

<u>Economics</u>	<u>Psychology</u>	<u>Calculus</u>	<u>Music</u>
Diagram	Case study	Add	Key
Model	Survey	Subtract	Major
Notes	Observation	Divide	Minor
Supply	Random	Multiply	Mode
Demand	Sample	Difference	Articulation

Productivity	Experiments	Product	Slur
Money	Norms	Dividend	Staccato
Income	Validity	Quotient	Crescendo
Market	Reliability	Numerator	Phrasing
Government	Resistance	Denominator	Tempo
Cost	Personality	Plus	Accent
Benefit	Synapse	Minus	Duration
Price	Medulla	Times	Rhythm

Part 2: Learning Vocabulary in Context



What you must know!

At SISU Bilingual School you will be encouraged to learn vocabulary in context. What does this mean? To learn vocabulary in context means recognizing that the same word can have different meanings depending on the sentence within which it is used. Context also affects a word's part-of-speech.



Test your knowledge!

Complete this simple exercise: Identify the part of speech of the word 'walking' in each of the following sentences.

1. I am walking.
2. He likes walking.
3. She has a walking stick.



What you must know!

OK, back to vocabulary. Read these two sentences:

I made a dinner reservation for 6:30 p.m. this evening.

I have reservations about giving Philip the job.

The first sentence tells me that I will eat dinner in a restaurant; the second tells me that it is possible that Philip will not be getting the job. How can I know these very different meanings? By paying close attention to the context and developing the habit of learning new words in context.

Here is a method for expanding and deepening your vocabulary in context. You should be using this method before you come to SISU Bilingual School. For every new word you find

1. Identify its part of speech.

2. Using a dictionary, write a brief definition.
3. Use the word in a sentence (choose a similar context to the one in which you originally found the word).
4. Identify a synonym.
5. Identify an antonym (where one exists).
6. Find sentences that use these words correctly (the internet is great for this—often when you type a complete sentence into a search engine, you will be directed to an article from a newspaper or magazine; and very soon you will get to know (and like) a set of English-language magazines that you can use to help build your vocabulary).

You can use a template like this:

	(Definition)
(Word)	(Sentence)
(Part of speech)	(Synonym) (Antonym)

And here is an example of the completed template:

	Something that is extraordinarily large.
Enormous	Marshal Pilsudski, Chief of State of Poland, has inherited an enormous fortune.
Adjective	Colossal Minute

Learning vocabulary in this form will help build a context for the acquisition of new words. Starting with the word enormous, the definition, sentence, synonym and antonym generates a total of 5 words:

Enormous	- adj. (adjective)
Extraordinarily	- adv. (adverb)
Colossal	- adj. (adjective)
Minute	- adj. (adjective)
Inherited	- v. (verb)

Finally, the internet is extremely useful for testing whether you have used a new word in a correct context. If you type a complete sentence into a search engine, you will usually be directed to an article from a newspaper or magazine. If you do find

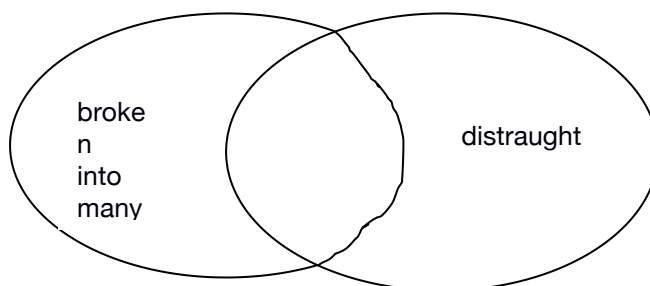
any results for the sentence you have searched, it is likely that you have used the word in an incorrect context.

Part 3: Expanding Vocabulary with Diagrams



Test your knowledge!

What word goes in the middle of the Venn diagram?



broken into tiny pieces

.....

distraught

When the girl kicked the football carelessly, it struck the window of a nearby house, and the glass was shattered (broken into many tiny pieces).

When the boy discovered that his pet dog had died, he was shattered (distraught).



What you must know!

Shattered and distraught are synonyms.

Shattered and 'broken into tiny pieces' are synonyms.

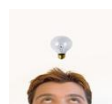
Distraught and 'broken into tiny pieces' are **not** synonyms!

Conclusion: learn vocabulary in context!

Grammar and Usage

Learning to speak and write English at an advanced level is a challenging goal, but this is our expectation for you as you study at SISU Bilingual School. The formal study of grammar and usage will be an important part of your studies at the school, for such knowledge is crucial if you are to speak and write English as a native speaker does; in addition, a good knowledge of grammar and usage is essential for success on the TOEFL, IELTS, ACT and SAT tests.

At SISU Bilingual School, we concentrate on thirteen different issues in grammar and usage, and the more you know before you begin your studies, the quicker you will reach your goal of excellent oral and written English.



What you must know!

1. **Subject-verb agreement.** Subjects and conjugated verbs must agree in number; e.g:

I go to school everyday. **Correct**
He go to school everyday. **Incorrect**
He goes to school everyday. **Correct**

2. **Pronouns.** You must be able to distinguish between subject (I, you, he, she, we, you and they), object (me, you, him, her, us, you and them) and possessive (mine, yours, his, hers, ours, yours and theirs). In addition, you must know that possessive determiners (my, your, his, her, our, your and their) are used like adjectives; i.e., they are always followed by a noun.

3. **Verbs.** You must be able to form and use correctly the 12 tenses. Don't worry if that sounds a lot! You probably know and use most of them already, but in your English classes part of your studies will involve formalizing the knowledge that you already have.

- 1: Simple Present Tense
- 2: Present Perfect Tense
- 3: Present Progressive Tense
- 4: Present Perfect Progressive Tense
- 5: Simple Past Tense
- 6: Past Perfect Tense
- 7: Past Progressive Tense
- 8: Past Perfect Progressive Tense

- 9: Simple Future Tense
- 10: Future Perfect Tense
- 11: Future Progressive Tense
- 12: Future Perfect Progressive Tense

A second important focus will be on building your knowledge of infinitives, present participles and past participles.

4. **Conjunctions.** You must know that coordinating conjunctions (and, but, so, or, nor, yet and for) are used to join independent clauses, while subordinating conjunctions (because, although, when, since and if) are used with dependent clauses in complex sentences.

5. **Parts of speech.** There are eight parts of speech (we don't usually count articles (a, an and the) because there are only three). In addition, you must be able to recognize the part of speech of each word in a text.

- 1: Nouns
- 2. Adjectives
- 3. Verbs
- 4. Adverbs
- 5. Conjunctions
- 6. Prepositions
- 7. Pronouns
- 8. Interjections

However, this gets a little trickier because parts of speech can change depending on context. In the following three sentences the word "walking" is a different part of speech in each.

I like walking.	Noun
She is walking.	Verb
He has a walking stick.	Adjective

6. **Prepositions.** These are words that are used before nouns and pronouns to form phrases functioning as modifiers of verbs, nouns or adjectives, and that typically express a spatial, temporal or other relationship. We give special attention to prepositions because they can be very difficult for non-native speakers to master. For example, what information do these correct examples communicate?

The footballer is on the playing field.

The student is in the playground.

The playground is considered to be an enclosed area while the playing pitch is not.

7. **Diction.** Diction refers to the choice of words that a speaker or writer chooses; therefore, you can see that diction is closely related to the depth and range of one's vocabulary. In the context of grammar and usage, however, we focus on correcting common errors in diction; e.g., using effect instead of affect.

The speech had a very great affect on all who heard it.

Affect is a verb, so the correct word in this context is effect (n.).

8. **Parallelism.** When we speak of the parallel quality of a sentence, we refer to the balance of the components, or the shared characteristics of its elements. This is an advanced concept in writing studies, best illustrated through an example. Can you spot the error in parallel construction in the following sentence?

My face is washed, my hair is combed and my teeth have been brushed.

The first two clauses are in the present simple tense, but the third clause is in the present perfect tense. This sentence becomes parallel by putting the third clause into the same tense as the first two clauses.

My face is washed, my hair is combed and my teeth are brushed.

9. **Misplaced or dangling modifiers.** You have a certain amount of freedom in deciding where to place your modifiers in a sentence:

We rowed the boat vigorously.

We vigorously rowed the boat.

Vigorously, we rowed the boat.

However, there are times when we must be very careful where we place the modification lest our meaning is completely lost. Look at these examples of sentences where the modification has been misplaced—these dangling modifiers are in bold type.

I heard that my roommate intended to throw a surprise party for me **while I was outside her bedroom window**.

She served sandwiches to the children **on paper plates**.

She saw a puppy and a kitten **on the way to the store**.

10. **Illogical comparison.** This issue combines incorrect pronoun usage with non-parallel construction of a sentence. In the following example what two things are being compared?

He was as late as me.

His lateness (a characteristic or habit) is being compared to me (a person). The correct comparison should read:

He was as late as I (was).

The corrected sentence also includes an interesting example of ellipsis.

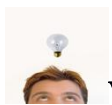
11. Concision and effectiveness. This is another advanced topic in writing studies. At SISU Bilingual School, you will be taught how to write clearly and express complex ideas in the most efficient and effective way. Specifically, you will be taught how it is sometimes better to replace a clause with a modifying phrase; and how replacing a participle phrase with an infinitive can make your writing more concise.

12. Passive voice. It is important that you can recognize the use of the passive voice in texts that you are reading and studying. In the passive voice, the object of the verb is in the subject position. In addition, it is important that you use the passive voice with care in your own writing. The use of the passive voice in persuasive writing, the style of writing that is required in IELTS, TOEFL and SAT exams, has the effect of weakening or undermining the argument that you are seeking to present.

13. Non-idiomatic expression or awkward phrasing. This is the most difficult error to correct in both speaking and writing. When you no longer use non-idiomatic expression or awkward phrasing, it means that you are now speaking and writing as a native speaker does. To speak and write idiomatic English is your ultimate goal as a student at SISU Bilingual School. It is a difficult task, but with hard work and the support and dedication of your teachers at the school you will achieve it.

Correct Writing

When you join SISU Bilingual School, you will have to complete written assignments in a variety of subjects. Here is a short guide to the school's basic requirements for all students.



What you must know!

Part 1: Sentences

A simple sentence has only one subject and one verb. An independent clause is the same as a simple sentence.

Ex: Good students work hard.

A compound sentence consists of two or more independent clauses.

Ex: Students work hard, and they succeed. (The only coordinating conjunctions are: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so.)

Ex: Students work hard; they succeed. (The coordinating conjunction has been replaced by a semicolon (;).)

Ex: Students work hard; therefore, they succeed. (The two independent clauses have been connected using a conjunctive adverb.)

A complex sentence consists of one or more independent clauses joined to one or more dependent clauses.

Ex: When students work hard, they succeed. (The dependent clause is first; hence, the sentence requires a comma (,).)

Ex: Students succeed when they work hard. (The independent clause is first, so the sentence does not need a comma.)

Ex: If she is motivated, a student will work hard, and she will succeed. (This sentence contains a dependent clause followed by two independent clauses.)



Test your knowledge!

Complete this short quiz to see how well you can recognize different sentence structures.

1. When Mother turned to tell the boys her answer, they were asleep.
2. Her smile was bright, and it brought an answering smile from Andrew.
3. When I lost my passport, I ordered a new one, but I did not worry about it.
4. It beat against the windshield with a light, prickling sound.
5. The driving snow that had whirled furiously now turned into tiny flakes.
6. Theodore Roosevelt was not just a great reformer; he was also a great president.
7. The student criticized the administration for failing either to renovate the old dormitories or to replace them with new buildings.
8. Wa Nu assured the worried members of her group that they would finish the project on time.

9. The math team, which included Tom and me, was stuck at the airport overnight because of inclement weather.
10. After completing her examination of the elderly patient, the young doctor spoke with the patient's anxious family.

Part 2: Paragraphs



What you must know!

A paragraph is a group of sentences about a single topic. Together, the sentences of the paragraph explain the writer's main idea (most important idea) about the topic. A paragraph is usually between five and ten sentences long.

A paragraph has **three basic parts**:

- **The topic sentence.** This is the main idea of the paragraph. It is usually (but not always) the first sentence of the paragraph, and it is the most general sentence of the paragraph.
- **The supporting sentences.** These are sentences that talk about or explain the topic sentence. They are more detailed ideas that follow the topic sentence.
- **The concluding sentence.** This may be found as the last sentence of a paragraph. It can finish a paragraph by repeating the main idea or just giving a final comment about the topic.



Test your knowledge!

Read the following paragraph and identify its three basic parts.

Beavers are interesting animals because they change the habitat in which they live. They do this by blocking up streams to create ponds. First, they cut down trees with their large, powerful teeth. Then, they gnaw them into smaller pieces and drag them into the water. To keep the limbs from floating away, rocks are rolled and pushed onto the limbs. Next, the beavers move the limbs into the center of the stream to create the dam. Finally, mud is used by the beavers to fill in the spaces in the dam. When the dam is completed, a pond will form behind it. The beavers then build their homes or lodges in the gentle water of the pond. Beavers really are the builders of the pond.



Test your knowledge!

Now for two more challenging paragraphs: where has this writer, John Gray, located the topic sentence in each paragraph?

History may not repeat itself, but, as Mark Twain observed, it can sometimes rhyme. The crises and conflicts of the past recur, recognizably similar even when altered by new conditions. At present, a race for the world's resources is underway that resembles the Great Game that was played in the decades leading up to the First World War. Now, as then, the most coveted prize is oil and the risk is that as the contest heats up it will not always be peaceful. But this is no simple rerun of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Today, there are powerful new players and it is not only oil that is at stake.

It was Rudyard Kipling who brought the idea of the Great Game into the public mind in *Kim*, his cloak-and-dagger novel of espionage and imperial geopolitics in the time of the Raj. Then, the main players were Britain and Russia and the object of the game was control of central Asia's oil. Now, Britain hardly matters and India and China, which were subjugated countries during the last round of the game, have emerged as key players. The struggle is no longer focused mainly on central Asian oil. It stretches from the Persian Gulf to Africa, Latin America, even the polar caps, and it is also a struggle for water and depleting supplies of vital minerals. Above all, global warming is increasing the scarcity of natural resources. The Great Game that is afoot today is more intractable and more dangerous than the last.

Part 3: Essays



What you must know!

An essay is a group of paragraphs written about a single topic and a central main idea. It must have at least three paragraphs, but a five-paragraph essay is a common assignment for academic writing.

An essay has **three main parts**:

- **The introduction.** This is the first paragraph of an essay. It explains the topic with general ideas. It also has a thesis statement. This is a sentence that gives the main idea. The thesis statement usually comes at or near the end of the paragraph.
- **The body.** These are the paragraphs that explain and support the thesis statement and come between the introduction and the conclusion. There must be one or more body paragraphs in an essay.
- **The conclusion.** This is the last paragraph of an essay. It may summarize or restate the thesis and supporting ideas of the essays; however, a good essay writer will try to include a corollary in her concluding paragraph.



Read the following essay and identify the thesis statement; the topic sentences in the two body paragraphs; and the corollary.

Next Time, Try Chinese Medicine

The last time I had a cold, a friend suggested that instead of taking the usual cold medicines, I visit the traditional Chinese doctor in our city. Although I knew nothing about Chinese medicine, I decided to try it. When I walked in to the Chinese doctor's office, I was amazed. It was not at all like my usual doctor's. There were shelves up to the ceiling full of glass containers filled with hundreds of different dried plants and other things I could not identify. Could this really be a doctor's office? It seemed very strange to me. When I met the doctor, he explained that Chinese medicine is thousands of years old. The plants in the jars in his office were herbs. These herbs could be mixed together to make medicines. He explained the philosophy of Chinese medicine. The philosophy of traditional Chinese medicine is not the same as the philosophy of modern medicine, but it is useful for curing many health problems.

Modern medicine focuses on illness. If a patient with a cough visits a modern doctor, then the doctor will give the patient a medicine to stop the cough. If the patient also has a fever, the doctor may give a different medicine to stop the fever. For every person with a cough, the doctor will probably recommend the same cough medicine. The philosophy of modern medicine is to stop problems like coughing and fever as quickly as possible. Western doctors usually see illness as an enemy. They use medicines like weapons to fight diseases.

Chinese medicine, in contrast, has a different philosophy. Instead of focusing on a patient's health problems, Chinese medicine tries to make the patient's whole body well again. Specifically, doctors of Chinese medicine believe that inside people, there are two types of energy. The first type of energy, called "yin," is quiet and passive. The other type of energy, called "yang," is active. When these two energies are in equal balance, a person is healthy. When there is an imbalance—too much yin, for example—a person becomes unhealthy. A doctor of Chinese medicine doesn't try to stop a person's cough by giving a cough medicine. Instead, the doctor gives a mixture of herbs that will restore balance in the patient's body. As a result, when the body is in balance, the cough will stop naturally.

The Chinese doctor's herbs seemed strange to me at first, but they made me feel better. My cold wasn't cured instantly, but I felt healthy again after a few days. For a very serious health problem, I would probably visit a modern hospital, but the next time I catch a cold, I am going back to the Chinese doctor. Chinese medicine definitely works for some health problems.

Critical Reading

Learning to read accurately and quickly will be one of your primary goals at SISU Bilingual School. Becoming an accomplished reader is essential for success not only on your IELTS, TOEFL, ACT and SAT exams but also for all the AP and A-level courses that you will take. Ultimately, success at college is largely down to your ability as a reader. The mantra that you will hear from all your English teachers at our school is ‘Read! Read! Read!’ Here are some suggestions for how to become an expert reader.

1. It is irrelevant whether reading is your passion or not: you must set time aside for reading every day.
2. Start by finding reading materials that are of particular interest to you.
3. Then, read widely. Any subject can begin to feel dry if you focus all your attention on it. Therefore, read about a range of subjects and topics in both fiction and non-fiction.
4. Read deliberately. Are you interested in physics? Then read about Albert Einstein or Richard Feynman. Are you interested in economics? Then read about the ‘Chicago Boys’!
5. Read interactively: underline words; make notes; scribble questions.
6. Read new books: keep up-to-date with the world around you.
7. Read old book: know about what has gone before you.
8. Practice! The more you read, the better reader you’ll become.



Test your knowledge!

Here are some challenging texts. Read them carefully and try to answer the questions that follow.

1. In this poem, a house and the objects in the house tell the story of a couple whose relationship has come to an end. Can you identify the object ‘speaking’ in each stanza?

Household Gods (by Philip Hobsbaum)

“I mirrored their breaking lives, I saw their pale
Distraught coming and going, lined despair,
His shaken bulk, her calm pose in the doorway—
I saw them. I was there.”

“I have so long been silent, even now

Hardly at all remember how her slim
Long fingers once caressed me—was that how
At one time she touched him?”

“His lips on mine in the morning, or, in darkness,
After a happy embrace, warmed my clay.
Where is the firm mouth now, where the kiss?
Broken and swept away.”

“They lay me down to serve their steady feet,
How many times they strode over my pile!
Of late those steps were tentative. Now, a street
For strangers, I am so much jute and wool.”

“Bit by bit they painted my walls, the ceiling,
Made me in terms of their vision—I was glad.
But signs of time flake down, the walls are peeling,
What is a house when occupants are fled?”

“My hands repeat themselves, so does not time.
The climactical moment is past, whoever will come.
I gather myself to cough one cautious chime,
But the works are rusted. Henceforth I am dumb.”

“I mirrored their coming here, I see their going,
Together once, now separately. Their outer
Semblance concerns me. I have no way of knowing
Their motives, or their reasons for departure.”

“Dust settles in the fireplace, and the curtains
Hang without a purpose in neat folds.
The books are stacked, chairs not to be sat on
Grouped over-nicely in a house grown cold.”

“I see no more. Their life gave our lives meaning,
But broken homes will not set again.
Their parting was our dissolution, they
Will never know their household gods are slain.

2. This poem describes aftermath of the death of a small child. What is the relationship between the poet and deceased child? How old was the child when he died? How did he die?

I sat all morning in the college sick bay
Counting bells knelling classes to a close.
At two o'clock our neighbors drove me home.

In the porch I met my father crying--
He had always taken funerals in his stride--
And Big Jim Evans saying it was a hard blow.

The baby cooed and laughed and rocked the pram
When I came in, and I was embarrassed
By old men standing up to shake my hand

And tell me they were 'sorry for my trouble,'
Whispers informed strangers I was the eldest,
Away at school, as my mother held my hand

In hers and coughed out angry tearless sighs.
At ten o'clock the ambulance arrived
With the corpse, stanced and bandaged by the nurses.

Next morning I went up into the room. Snowdrops
And candles soothed the bedside; I saw him
For the first time in six weeks. Paler now,

Wearing a poppy bruise on his left temple,
He lay in the four foot box as in his cot.
No gaudy scars, the bumper knocked him clear.

A four foot box, a foot for every year.

(Midterm Break by Seamus Heaney)