

Words with silent letters discussion questions

Take turns asking each other questions from below, not showing the worksheet to the person who should answer. Your teacher will tell you which page(s) to use. Be careful to pronounce all the words correctly, including words with silent letters.

Ask about any questions which you couldn't understand, weren't sure how to pronounce, or weren't sure how to answer.

Work together to put brackets () around one silent letter in each sentence below. If there seems to be more than one silent letter, only put brackets around the letters which don't seem to affect the pronunciation at all (so not "magic E" at the end of words, etc).

Hint: The questions are in alphabetical order (= A to Z) by the word which has a silent letter which you should put brackets around.

Check with the partial answer key and/ or as a class.

Test each other on the same words:

- say a word with a silent letter and see if your partner can identify the letter which is spelt but not pronounced
- say a sentence and see if your partner can identify the word which has a silent letter
- say a word with a silent letter and see if your partner can spell the word
- mispronounce a word by also saying the silent letter and see if your partner can pronounce it correctly

Level 1 discussion questions with silent letters

- Do you usually take a long time to answer emails?
- How do you feel about autumn in this town?
- Do you like ballet?
- Are biscuits very fattening, do you think?
- Do you think buffet-style restaurants are bad for you?
- Do you spend too much money at Christmas?
- Can you explain the advantages and disadvantages of living on an island?
- Are there any ugly buildings in this town?
- Do you think banks are good businesses to work for?
- Do you want to climb Everest?
- How many hours a week of exercise is best?
- Do you usually hold a knife during dinner?
- Do you know anyone really ambitious?
- Are movies good for improving your English listening skills?
- How long do you keep receipts for?
- How healthy or unhealthy are sandwiches, do you think?
- Did you enjoy studying science?
- Would you live in space if it was possible?
- Are you good at wrapping presents?
- Do you like wrestling?
- How good are you at writing English emails?
- Is it wrong to eat dog meat?
- Do you think that yoghurt makes you healthier?

Level 2 discussion questions with silent letters

- Do you prefer an aisle seat or window seat on the plane? Why?
- If anywhere was okay, is there a place you really want to live?
- Do you think that it was okay for the Americans to bomb Japan in the Second World War?
- How do you feel about visiting castles?
- Is there a kind of exhibition that you particularly like or dislike?
- Can you give two good places for foreign people to visit in this town?
- Do you believe in ghosts?
- It is worth paying extra for a 10-year guarantee on electronics?
- Is being a bodyguard a good job?
- Are there advantages to using a handkerchief instead of paper tissues?
- Are most Hollywood actors especially handsome, do you think?
- Are you very honest if people ask your opinion?
- How do you feel about ironing?
- Are knitting lessons for children a good idea?
- Is a lamb a good pet for kids?
- Do you have any good ideas to get more muscle?
- Do you think plumbers are too expensive?
- Is studying rhyming words a good way to learn English?
- How can you learn the natural rhythm of English?
- Is there any nice scenery near here?
- Do you think it's okay to thumb a lift from a passing driver if you can't afford a bus ticket or train ticket?
- Do you have an opinion on whale meat?
- Do you think rice is healthier than wheat?
- Could you change a bicycle and/ or car wheel?
- Do you study English while you are travelling?
- Are you good at whistling?
- Do you agree that a war in one country is a problem for the whole world?

Level 3 discussion questions with silent letters

- How popular is cabaret in your country?
- Do you support any political or social campaigns?
- Is renting an entire chalet good value for money, do you think?
- Do you prefer reading news stories or analysis by columnists?
- How do you feel about being in debt?
- Do you sometimes feel doubtful about stories on the TV news?
- Do you have a good solution to feeling exhausted?
- Are you fascinated by any periods of history?
- Do you ever ignore the cabin crew telling you to fasten your seatbelt?
- Are you a gourmet, do you think?
- Do you think it's a good idea to take hourly breaks from studying?
- Many children nowadays can't tie a knot. Does it matter?
- How can teachers give children good knowledge of world geography?
- Is it too difficult for young people to get a mortgage?
- Do you think that your country's parliament is attractive?
- Do you trust psychiatrists?
- How useful is psychotherapy?
- How do you feel about people that take medicine made with rhino horn?
- Is salmon a healthy food, do you think?
- Is everyone somewhat selfish, in your experience?
- Is sorbet healthier than ice cream?
- Do you think big expensive tombs are impressive?
- Are there some streets in this town that should be blocked for vehicles?
- Whereabouts do you live?
- Is it okay to whisper in quiet places like libraries, in your opinion?
- Do you usually buy wholemeal foods?
- Have you ever shopped at a wholesale shop such as Costco?

Level 4 discussion questions with silent letters

- Is a toilet with a bidet function worth paying more money for?
- Is it okay to feed crumbs to wild birds, do you think?
- Can condemned criminals vote in your country? How do you feel about this?
- How is it best for democracies to respond to coups in other countries?
- Is it a good idea for doctors to hide the truth from the critically ill?
- Do most politicians lie cynically?
- Do you know have a cure for mild diarrhoea?
- How can we shop ethically?
- Are any sports exhilarating for you?
- How can we hasten the end of recessions?
- Is it easy to pass family heirlooms on without paying too much tax in your country?
- Is it okay for pupils to be made to sing religious hymns?
- Are there situations that are common times to kneel in your country?
- Are T-shirts with rude words on obscene, funny or just harmless?
- Have you ever been overwhelmed by your work or studies?
- Are online pseudonyms mainly a good or bad thing?
- Do psychic powers really exist?
- Is good rhetoric more important than good ideas in politics and business?
- Is fabric softener worth the extra money?
- Have you ever worn or smelt a unisex scent? How was it?
- Are funerals mainly solemn or mainly celebratory in your culture?
- If people get whiplash in cars, are the drivers or the car manufacturers mainly to blame?
- Do people in your country try to whiten their skin?
- Is it fair for some companies to be wholly nationalised?
- Do you mind having wrinkles on your face?

Partial answers – Level 1

The words with silent letters are underlined, so make sure that you have put brackets around one letter in each.

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- Do you think buffet-style restaurants are bad for you?
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- How many hours a week of exercise is best?
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- Are movies good for improving your English listening skills?
- How long do you keep receipts for?
- How healthy or unhealthy are sandwiches, do you think?
- Did you enjoy studying science?
- Would you live in space if it was possible?
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Partial answers – Level 2

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Partial answers – Level 3

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