
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

The Grammar Gameshow

Prepositions

Will

Hello and welcome to today's Grammar Gameshow! I'm your host, Will! And Will, I am! And of course, let's not forget Leslie, our all-knowing voice in the sky.

Leslie

Hello, everyone!

Will

Tonight we're going to ask you three questions about...

Leslie

Prepositions. Those little but oh-so-important words for talking about movement, place and time!

Will

OK! Now, let's meet our contestants!

Sully

Hello, all. My name's Sully.

Will

And contestant number two?

Liz

It's nice to meet you. I'm Liz.

Will

Welcome to the Grammar Gameshow both of you. Enjoy the experience... it could be your last.

Sully and Liz

Pardon?

Will

I said, let's get going fast! And there's nothing suspicious about that! Our first round is a

quick-fire round. Prepositions are often used to connect sentences with a time word. I'm going to tell you a time word, and I want to know the preposition. Here goes! Four o'clock.

Liz

At four o'clock.

Leslie

Correct!

Will

2016.

Sully

In 2016.

Leslie

Correct!

Will

Friday.

Liz

On Friday.

Leslie

Correct!

Will

Night.

Sully

At night.

Leslie

Correct!

Will

Morning.

Liz

In the morning.

Leslie

Correct!

Will

Christmas.

Sully

At Christmas.

Leslie

Correct!

Will

Leslie?

Leslie

Excellent work! There are three basic prepositions of time. 'At' is used for times of the day, for example, at four a.m. 'On' is used for days such as 'on Sunday', or 'on Christmas day'. 'In' is used for periods, such as months, years and seasons. But be careful, some times are irregular, such as 'at night'.

Will

There's nothing irregular about what you do at night, Leslie. We've all occasionally cried in a ball on the floor... every night, right Sully?

Sully

What are you trying to say?

Will

Nothing! You just look like the type.

Sully

What?

Will

I said, make sure your answers are right! And there's nothing suspicious about that. Liz has six points, but you only have three! On to round two, and this round is a picture round. Look at the picture and tell me where each person is. One point for every correct preposition.

Sully

He's in the pool.

Leslie

Correct!

Liz

But he's also at the pool.

Leslie

Also correct!

Liz

His finger's in his nose.

Leslie

Correct!

Sully

They're walking on the bridge.

Leslie

Correct!

Will

Leslie?

Leslie

Good! Prepositions are used to describe the positions of things to other things. Words like 'in', 'on', 'at', 'over' and 'between', among others, tell us where things are or where they are moving to. Unfortunately, English has a lot of prepositions which need to be learned. So study hard!

Will

Well done Liz. You did best there so you can have another four-and-a-half points. How are you doing?

Liz

To be honest, I'm just really thrilled to be here. I never thought I'd get to go onto a quiz programme!

Will

Nor did we! Especially with that face!

Liz

What?

Will

I said, no more prepositions of place! And there's nothing suspicious about that. On to our third round. Another group of prepositions is called 'dependent prepositions'. They are the

ones which must follow a verb, noun or adjective to connect them to a sentence. Listen to these sentences and tell me why each one is wrong. She's always been good to speaking in public.

Liz

At. Good at speaking in public.

Leslie

Correct!

Will

I take a lot of pride to working hard.

Sully

In. Pride in working hard.

Leslie

Correct!

Will

You should never rely for other people.

Liz

On. Rely on people.

Leslie

Correct!

Will

Leslie?

Leslie

Good job! Dependent prepositions are the prepositions which follow a noun, verb or adjective in order to connect it to a sentence. 'Good at', 'pride in', 'rely on'. Be careful though, some words can have more than one preposition, and the choice may determine the meaning.

Will

And that brings us to the end of today's Grammar Gameshow. Let's count out the points... and the winner is... Liz with points! Well done! Here's what you've won!

Leslie

It's a thumbs up!

Will

We'll see you again next week, where you can play for another prize. And Sully, you managed to answer quite a few questions, which surprised me because when I first saw you, I thought you were incredibly stupid!

Sully

What?

Will

I said I thought you were incredibly stupid!

Sully

Oh! Good! That's what I thought you said.

Will

Bye-bye. Release the octopi! It looks like we'll need another contestant. Thanks for joining us. Say goodbye Leslie.

Leslie

Au revoir, Leslie!

Will

See you next time.