

Magic of Three

Learn the "Magic of 3" technique used by English presenters, politicians, and writers. I'll show you why and how to use this literary technique to get higher marks on your IELTS, TOEFL, or TOEIC exams. You can learn it easily and use it in personal, social, and business situations too, with the same positive results. <http://www.engvid.com/improve-your-en...>

TRANSCRIPT

Hi. My name is Rebecca, and in today's lesson, you'll have a chance to learn a very powerful technique in English -- a very powerful communication technique. It's called "The Magic of Three". I'll explain to you exactly what it is, but first, let me give you some examples of the "Magic of Three". You might have heard of this expression by Julius Caesar. It was originally in Latin, but I'll say it for you in English: "I came. I saw. I conquered." Similarly, modern times, Obama, in his inauguration speech said: "We have a responsibility to ourselves, our nation, and our world." Okay? See three there? There's another example by Ben Franklin. Some people also say this is a Chinese proverb: "Tell me, and I forget. Teach me, and I remember. Involve me, and I learn." Now, what all three famous men here were doing was using what you're going to learn how to use by the end of this lesson, which is the "Magic of Three".

What is the "Magic of Three"? The "Magic of Three" is a literary device, a literary technique, a rhetorical technique, which is used by leaders, by politicians, by writers, by speakers, by orators to make the language come alive, to give it more rhythm, to give it more power, to give it more detail. All right? And you can learn how to do this. This is especially important if you're preparing for an exam like the TOEFL or the IELTS or anything in English, all right? You can use it in your personal life. You can use it in your professional life. And you can use it in your academic life, okay? So I'll give you examples of all of these, and then you will see how easy it is to start using this technique.

Now, what are the advantages of using this technique? Especially if you are an ESL student, well, **if you give one example** of something like, "I enjoy reading", well, it's just one example. It shows you don't have too many ideas. And you also don't have -- you're also not displaying too much vocabulary. **If you give two examples of something, it's a little bit better**, but **if you give three examples, it's excellent**. It shows not only that you can think of different ideas, but also that you have the vocabulary -- and extensive vocabulary -- to express those ideas, but just because of time limitations, you're not going on and on, giving hundreds of examples. **Three examples sounds like you have lots of ideas**, but you're just restricting it for the purpose, all right? Let's look at some of the examples on the board so you can learn how to do this. In personal life you could say, "I enjoy reading, dancing, and travelling." All right? Three examples. "She loves roses, tulips, and daisies." "They serve Italian, Chinese, and Indian food." Now, you will see another grammatical principle at work here. I hope you see it. And what is that? When I said, "reading, dancing, travelling", what was common about those three words? They are all gerunds, right? So not only do you need to give three examples, but you need to give three examples in the same form of speech. Same here: "roses, tulips, daisies" -- three nouns. "Italian, Chinese, Indian" -- three adjectives. All right? So remember that principle, too.

There is also another related principle called "parallelism", which you -- which talks about the same principle, okay? Let's continue. In your professional life, you could say, "The job requires hard work, long hours, and organizational skills." Now, here you see not just one word being repeated, but a pattern of words, right? Adjective-noun, adjective-noun, adjective-noun. So if you do that, try to keep that consistency, all right? Don't say, The job requires hard work, long hours, and organization", because then, you've lost the parallelism; you've lost the Magic of Three; you've lost the rhythm, okay? So remember that, as well. In this -- these examples have been taken, in fact, from some TOEFL essays. These are various TOEFL topics that had been given in previous exams. One was about success. Let's see how we could write it. "To some, success means fancy cars, huge mansions, and luxurious holidays." **By using an adjective and a noun, you're showing off -- you're showing the examiner, "I have lots of vocabulary available, and I'm going to show you. Here it is.**" All right? Excellent idea in an exam to write this way. "My opinion is based on social, cultural, and financial reasons." See? **Three examples -- very powerful, very strong.** "This policy will have local, national, and international implications." All right? See how well that -- how good that sounds? How well it flows?