

VOCABULARY · EPISODE 55

Think For Yourself A Challenge

Key words & expressions · English + Español

10 words

Your English Toolbox

1

to think for yourself

pensar por ti mismo · formarte tu propia opinión**DEF**

to form your own opinions and conclusions through independent reasoning, rather than simply accepting what you are told or following the crowd

Think for yourself is both a cognitive skill and a cultural value, particularly in British and American intellectual tradition. For language learners, developing the English vocabulary to express independent thought is an advanced and liberating milestone.

ES

Formarte tus propias opiniones y conclusiones a través del razonamiento independiente, en lugar de simplemente aceptar lo que te dicen o seguir a la multitud.

Es tanto una habilidad cognitiva como un valor cultural, particularmente en la tradición intelectual británica y americana.

Don't just echo what you read online — think for yourself and build your own view on the topic.

Don't just echo what you read online — think for yourself and build your own view on the topic. -> No te limites a repetir lo que lees en línea — piensa por ti mismo y construye tu propia opinión sobre el tema.

The most fluent speakers are not the ones who know the most phrases, but the ones who think for themselves in English.

The most fluent speakers are not the ones who know the most phrases, but the ones who think for themselves in English. -> Los hablantes más fluidos no son los que conocen más frases, sino los que se forman su propia opinión en inglés.

2

to challenge an idea

cuestionar una idea · poner en duda lo que se da por sentado

DEF

to question, examine, or dispute a belief or statement rather than accepting it uncritically

Challenge an idea is different from attacking a person — it is intellectual, not personal. This distinction is crucial in English-speaking academic and professional culture, where robust challenge of ideas is encouraged.

ES

Preguntar, examinar o disputar una creencia o afirmación en lugar de aceptarla sin crítica.

Cuestionar una idea es diferente de atacar a una persona — es intelectual, no personal.

Challenge the ideas you agree with as well as the ones you disagree with — that is real critical thinking.

Challenge the ideas you agree with as well as the ones you disagree with. -> Cuestiona las ideas con las que estás de acuerdo además de las que no.

She learned to challenge ideas in English by starting with 'I see the logic, but have you considered...?'

She learned to challenge ideas in English by starting with 'I see the logic, but have you considered...?' -> Aprendió a poner en duda lo que se da por sentado en inglés comenzando con '¿Entiendo la lógica, pero ¿has considerado...?'

3

to question something

cuestionar algo · dudar de si algo es verdad o está justificado

DEF

to express doubt about whether something is true, right, or justified — to not accept it without examination

Question is the core verb of critical thinking. It does not mean to be negative or aggressive — it means to not accept automatically. The best English learners question the grammar rules they are taught: is this always true? Are there exceptions? What is the logic?

ES

Expresar duda sobre si algo es verdadero, correcto o justificado — no aceptarlo sin examinarlo.

El verbo central del pensamiento crítico. No significa ser negativo — significa no aceptar automáticamente.

Critical thinking starts with a simple habit: question what you are told before you accept it.

Critical thinking starts with a simple habit: question what you are told before you accept it. -> El pensamiento crítico comienza con un hábito simple: cuestiona lo que te dicen antes de aceptarlo.

She questioned the grammar rule she had learned for years and discovered there were important exceptions.

She questioned the grammar rule she had learned for years and discovered there were important exceptions. -> Cuestionó la regla gramatical que había aprendido durante años y descubrió que había excepciones importantes.

4

to back up a claim

respaldar una afirmación · apoyar una declaración con evidencia

DEF

to support a statement with evidence, reasoning, or examples that make it credible

Back up a claim is the academic skill made conversational. Every time you make a statement in English, native speakers unconsciously evaluate whether it is backed up. Adding evidence — 'because', 'for example', 'studies show' — makes your English more persuasive and more natural.

ES

Apoyar una afirmación con evidencia, razonamiento o ejemplos que la hacen creíble.

La habilidad académica hecha conversacional. Añadir evidencia hace tu inglés más persuasivo y más natural.

Back up your claims with evidence — 'I think X because Y' is more convincing than 'I think X'.

Back up your claims with evidence — 'I think X because Y' is more convincing than 'I think X'. -> Respalda tus afirmaciones con evidencia — 'I think X because Y' es más convincente que 'I think X'.

She learned to back up her claims in discussion by preparing one example for every opinion she planned to share.

She learned to back up her claims in discussion by preparing one example for every opinion she planned to share. -> Aprendió a respaldar sus afirmaciones en discusión preparando un ejemplo para cada opinión que planeaba compartir.

5

to see both sides

ver ambos lados · comprender los argumentos a favor y en contra de una posición

DEF

to understand and fairly represent the arguments for and against a position, rather than only one perspective

See both sides is the hallmark of intellectual balance. In English conversation and writing, showing that you have considered multiple viewpoints before reaching a conclusion makes you sound both thoughtful and persuasive. It signals that your position is informed, not just emotional.

ES

Comprender y representar de manera justa los argumentos a favor y en contra de una posición, en lugar de solo una perspectiva.

La marca del equilibrio intelectual. Mostrar que has considerado múltiples puntos de vista hace que tu inglés suene reflexivo y persuasivo.

Before forming your opinion, see both sides — it will make your English arguments far more credible.

Before forming your opinion, see both sides — it will make your English arguments far more credible. -> Antes de formarte una opinión, ve ambos lados — hará que tus argumentos en inglés sean mucho más creíbles.

She always tried to see both sides before speaking, which made her trusted in every discussion.

She always tried to see both sides before speaking, which made her trusted in every discussion. -> Siempre intentó ver ambos lados antes de hablar, lo que la hacía de confianza en cada discusión.

6

to draw a conclusion

sacar una conclusión · llegar a un juicio basado en evidencia o razonamiento

DEF

to reach a judgement or decision based on evidence or reasoning you have gathered

Draw a conclusion is the endpoint of reasoning. In academic English and formal discussion, the way you conclude — 'so it seems that...', 'this suggests that...', 'based on this, we can conclude...' — is a set of specific phrases worth learning and using.

ES

Llegar a un juicio o decisión basado en evidencia o razonamiento que has recopilado.

El punto final del razonamiento. Las frases de conclusión — 'so it seems that...', 'this suggests...' — valen la pena aprenderlas.

Practice drawing conclusions out loud in English — 'based on what I know, I think...' is a useful frame.

Practice drawing conclusions out loud in English — 'based on what I know, I think...' is a useful frame. ->

Practica sacar conclusiones en voz alta en inglés — 'based on what I know, I think...' es un marco útil.

After hearing both arguments, she drew a conclusion and explained exactly which evidence had changed her mind.

After hearing both arguments, she drew a conclusion and explained exactly which evidence had changed her mind. -> Después de escuchar ambos argumentos, sacó una conclusión y explicó exactamente qué evidencia había cambiado su opinión.

7

to distinguish between

distinguir entre · notar o explicar la diferencia entre dos cosas que parecen similares

DEF

to notice or explain the difference between two things that might appear similar

Distinguish between is the precision phrase for making fine differences clear. In language learning, distinguishing between 'borrow' and 'lend', or 'since' and 'for', or 'make' and 'do' is exactly what separates fluent use from near-fluent use.

ES

Notar o explicar la diferencia entre dos cosas que podrían parecer similares.

La frase de precisión para aclarar diferencias finas. Distinguir entre 'borrow' y 'lend' es exactamente lo que separa el uso fluido del casi fluido.

Can you distinguish between 'I lend' and 'I borrow'? Getting these right is a fluency test.

Can you distinguish between 'I lend' and 'I borrow'? Getting these right is a fluency test. -> ¿Puedes distinguir entre 'I lend' y 'I borrow'? Usarlos correctamente es un test de fluidez.

She had never been able to distinguish between 'affect' and 'effect' until she read them in context ten times each.

She had never been able to distinguish between 'affect' and 'effect' until she read them in context ten times each. -> Nunca había podido distinguir entre 'affect' y 'effect' hasta que los leyó en contexto diez veces cada uno.

8

to reason through something

razonar algo paso a paso · trabajar una conclusión mediante la lógica

DEF

to work out a conclusion step by step using logic rather than instinct or assumption

Reason through is the process of structured thinking. Instead of jumping to an answer, you trace the logic from beginning to end. In English, this is expressed through discourse markers: 'first of all', 'this means that', 'and therefore'. Reasoning through is a language skill as much as a thinking skill.

ES

Llegar a una conclusión paso a paso usando la lógica en lugar de instinto o suposición.

El proceso del pensamiento estructurado. En inglés se expresa con marcadores del discurso: 'first of all', 'this means that', 'therefore'.

Reason through the grammar question step by step rather than guessing — the answer will stick better.

Reason through the grammar question step by step rather than guessing — the answer will stick better. -> Razona la pregunta gramatical paso a paso en lugar de adivinar — la respuesta se quedará mejor.

She reasoned through the vocabulary error and understood exactly why she had made it, not just that it was wrong.

She reasoned through the vocabulary error and understood exactly why she had made it, not just that it was wrong. -> Razonó el error de vocabulario paso a paso y entendió exactamente por qué lo había cometido, no solo que era incorrecto.

9

an open mind

una mente abierta · disposición a considerar nuevas ideas sin rechazarlas automáticamente

DEF

a willingness to consider new ideas, perspectives, or information without automatically rejecting them

Open mind is one of the most important qualities for language learners. Keeping an open mind about different accents, different grammar explanations, and different learning methods allows you to evolve. Learners who close their minds around one method or one 'right' English often plateau.

ES

Una disposición a considerar nuevas ideas, perspectivas o información sin rechazarlas automáticamente.

Una de las cualidades más importantes para los estudiantes de idiomas. Mantener la mente abierta permite evolucionar.

Keep an open mind about different English accents — they are all valid and you may need to understand them.

Keep an open mind about different English accents — they are all valid and you may need to understand them. -> Mantén una mente abierta sobre los diferentes acentos del inglés — todos son válidos y puede que necesites entenderlos.

She kept an open mind about her teacher's unusual methods and found they worked better than anything she had tried.

She kept an open mind about her teacher's unusual methods and found they worked better than anything she had tried. -> Mantuvo una mente abierta sobre los métodos inusuales de su profesora y descubrió que funcionaban mejor que cualquier cosa que hubiera probado.

10

to reconsider

reconsiderar · volver a pensar sobre una decisión u opinión con nueva información

DEF

to think again about a decision, opinion or plan — especially after receiving new information or a strong counterargument

Reconsider is the intellectual flexibility word. The ability to reconsider your position without feeling defeated is a sign of maturity, not weakness. In language learning, reconsidering means: when you meet a grammar explanation that contradicts what you believed, you look at the evidence rather than defend your belief.

ES

Volver a pensar sobre una decisión, opinión o plan — especialmente después de recibir nueva información o un contraargumento sólido.

La palabra de la flexibilidad intelectual. La capacidad de reconsiderar sin sentirse derrotado es una señal de madurez.

Be willing to reconsider what you think you know about English — new information changes understanding.

Be willing to reconsider what you think you know about English — new information changes understanding. -> Está dispuesto a reconsiderar lo que crees saber sobre el inglés — la nueva información cambia la comprensión.

She reconsidered her belief that grammar was not important after speaking with a native speaker for the first time.

She reconsidered her belief that grammar was not important after speaking with a native speaker for the first time. -> Reconsideró su creencia de que la gramática no era importante después de hablar con un hablante nativo por primera vez.