

Series 1 – No.9 Else

Audioscript

Welcome to **Words Alive**. The **Words Alive** series helps with the pronunciation of, and listening to, words and their examples in the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary. **Words Alive** is written and recorded by Richard Cauldwell, and brought to you by Cambridge University Press.

Part 1 Today's Word

Today's word is 'else'. The dictionary tells us that it is 'used after words beginning with 'any-', 'every-', 'no-' and 'some-', or after 'how', 'what', 'where', 'who', 'why', but not 'which', to mean other, another, different, additional'. Thank goodness for the examples, which make everything much clearer. Let's listen to four of them.

Part 2 Examples

As I say them, listen for the word 'else'. I shall read three of the examples clearly, but with anger in my voice; I shall read one as if it were normal everyday speech, and not angry. As you listen, decide which one is normal and not angry.

Example 1

It's not my bag. It must be someone else's.

Example 2

The book isn't here. Where else should I look?

Example 3

He came to see you. Why else would he come?

Example 4

After I'd thanked them I didn't know what else to say.

It is the last example, which is most typical of everyday speech. But this example is not entirely without emotion. You might be able to hear a bit of regret here – the speaker wishes he or she could have said more.

Part 3 Practice

To help you handle everyday speech, let's work with the fourth example at different speeds. Have you ever met someone famous and struggled to say anything? Afterwards, you are annoyed with yourself for not having thought of good things to say. Imagine you are saying this angrily (angry at yourself) to a friend. Say it with six stresses, with a rising tone on 'KNOW' and a falling tone on 'SAY' – we will do it at three different speeds 120, 200, and 300 words per minute:

Example 3A

// I DIDn't KNOW // WHAT ELSE to SAY //

Now say it in just one speech unit, with three rhythmic beats but with one falling tone starting on 'SAY':

Example 3B

// i DIDn't know WHAT else to SAY //

As I have said before, the rhythmic three-beat speech unit does occur in everyday speech, but it is not as common as the two-beat speech unit. Let us practise this sentence with two beats, with all of the syllables "n't know what else to" unstressed:

Example 3C

C1 // i DIDn't know what else to SAY // 120

C2 // i DIDn't know what else to SAY // 200

C3 // i DIDn't know what else to SAY // 300

The last version, at 300 words per minute may seem too fast for you, but these kinds of speeds are very common in everyday speech. Remember it is very common for words to be gabbled when they are not highlighted: 'what else' becomes 'whadelse', 'whadelse', 'whadelse', and 'else to say' becomes 'elstuhsay', 'elstuhsay', 'elstuhsay' // i DIDn't know what else to SAY // – with the word 'to' only just surviving and being crushed by the 's' sounds before and after it.

Part 4 Pairwork

To end with, let's add a reply from a friend who wants to show you some sympathy:

Example 4

A // i DIDn't know what else to SAY //

B // OH // WHAT a PIty //