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6 Minute Vocabulary

Pronunciation: words that start with 'c'

This is not a word-for-word transcript

Neil

Hello! And welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary with me, Neil...

Catherine

... and me Catherine. Today we're talking about how to pronounce words that begin with the letter **c.**

Neil

We'll look at lots of examples...

Catherine

...we'll give you a quiz and we'll leave you with a top tip for remembering English spellings.

Neil

So, to start off, let's listen to Maria. She works in a circus - do you like circuses Catherine?

Catherine

When I was a kid I think I wanted to join a circus. These days I'm not so sure, performing animals – not my thing really.

Neil

Well Maria is a circus performer and we're going to hear her talking about how she started in the job.

Catherine

And here's a question to think about while you listen:

Neil

What didn't Maria do at weekends? Here she is.

INSERT

Maria

I started performing in my family's **circus** when I was nine years old. I loved it. At the weekends, me and my sisters didn't go to **cybercafes** or the **cinema** or hang around the

park smoking **cigarettes** like other teenagers. We practiced performing. I **celebrated** my 16th birthday by learning to ride a **cycle** that was only 20 **centimetres** high! My brother's bike was so high it reached the **ceiling**!

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Catherine

So Maria had an interesting childhood, didn't she?! And we asked you: what didn't she do at weekends?

Neil

And the answer is: She didn't go to the park or the **cinema** like other kids.

Catherine

And **cinema** is an important word in the show today because we spell it with a letter c, but we pronounce it with an **/s/** sound. We don't say 'kinema', it's **cinema**. A lot of words that start with the letter **c** are pronounced with a /k/ sound, like **cake... crime, count, my name Catherine, card,** lots of them...

Neil

But most words that start with the letters **c-i** are pronounced with a **/s/** sound. Words like **cinema**, **cigarette**, and **circus**. And that's rule one. Listen again.

INSERT CLIP I

I started performing in my family's circus when I was nine years old. I loved it. At the weekends, me and my sisters didn't go to cybercafes or the cinema or hang around the park smoking cigarettes like other teenagers.

Neil

Good. Now let's see how we pronounce words that start with the letters **c-e.** Listen to this clip and see if you can spot those words.

Maria

I **celebrated** my 16th birthday by learning to ride a **cycle** that was only 20 **centimetres** high! My brother's bike was so high it reached the **ceiling**!

Catherine

So we had three **c-e** words there: all pronounced with a /s/ sound. We had **celebrate**, **centimetre** and **ceiling**. That's our second rule.

Neil

And perhaps you spotted our third rule in that last clip...

Catherine

Yes, well done if you've already noticed that words like **cycle** and **cybercafé** are pronounced with a **/s/** sound even though they are spelt with **c-y**. Here's the whole clip again.

Maria

I started performing in my family's **circus** when I was nine years old. I loved it. At the weekends, me and my sisters didn't go to **cybercafes** or the **cinema** or hang around the park smoking **cigarettes** like other teenagers. We practiced performing. I **celebrated** my I6th birthday by learning to ride a **cycle** that was only 20 **centimetres** high! My brother's bike was so high it reached the **ceiling**!

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6 Minute Vocabulary from BBC Learning English.

Neil

And we're talking about how to spell words that begin with the /s/ sound. When a word starts with the letters **c-e**, **c-i** or **c-y**, we usually pronounce it with a /s/ sound.

Catherine

Right, it's quiz time! How many words in these sentences are spelt with the letter **c** at the beginning? Number one, listen carefully. I **can't** see my **cycle** anywhere.

Neil

And there were two words with c at the beginning – can't and cycle.

Catherine

Excellent! Number two: **Christopher** has gone to the **cinema** but **Colin** is **coming** to the **cybercafé**.

Neil

There were five that time: Christopher, cinema, Colin, coming, cybercafé.

Catherine

OK. And get ready for number three: **Crazy coloured circus clowns create chaos** in **cinema circles**.

Neil

And that was a whopping eight words beginning with the letter c. Crazy, coloured, circus, clowns, create, chaos, cinema, circles.

Catherine

And congratulations if you got them all right! That's the end of the quiz!

Neil

And here's a top tip to help you with new vocabulary. When you learn a new group of words, try to put them together in one long crazy sentence like you heard earlier. It'll help you to remember them.

Catherine

Top tip, Neil! There's more about this at <u>bbclearningenglish.com</u>. Join us again for more 6 Minute Vocabulary

Both

Bye!

Vocabulary points to take away:

If a word begins with an *IsI* sound, look at the second letter. If the second letter is **a**, **o** or **u**. the word begins with the letter **s**. I saw a suitable suit for sale and so I bought it.

The letter **c** is pronounced **/s/** before **e**, **i** or **y**. So if the second letter is **e**, **i** or **y**, the word might begin with the letter **c** or **s**. Check which it is and learn it.

The man was **selling celery** in the **centre** of the **city**, so I gave some to my **sick sister**.

If the second letter is not a vowel, the word begins with an **s**. Get **started** and **study** the **spellings**!