

Breaking News English.com

Ready-to-Use English Lessons by Sean Banville

**“1,000 IDEAS & ACTIVITIES
FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS”**

breakingnewsenglish.com/book.html

**Thousands more free lessons
from Sean's other websites**

www.freесlmaterials.com/sean_banville_lessons.html

Level 5 – 16th February 2026

Elephants have a sixth sense from their whiskers

FREE online quizzes, mp3 listening and more for this lesson here:

<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2602/260216-elephant-whiskers-5.html>

Contents

The Reading	2
Phrase Matching	3
Listening Gap Fill	4
No Spaces	5
Survey	6
Writing and Speaking	7
Writing	8

Please try Levels 4 and 6. They are (a little) harder.

X (Twitter)



[X.com/SeanBanville](https://twitter.com/SeanBanville)

Facebook



www.facebook.com/pages/BreakingNewsEnglish/155625444452176

THE READING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2602/260216-elephant-whiskers-5.html>

Zoologists have uncovered a previously unknown sense ability in elephants. It explains why the elephant trunk is so dexterous. The scientists found that the whiskers at the end of the trunk are sensitive enough to feel very small and delicate objects. The scientists are from the Max Planck Institute for Intelligent Systems. They say the incredible sensitivity of the whiskers makes up for the elephant's poor eyesight. The whiskers are essential for navigating, finding food, and communicating. The researchers say the whiskers are "smart" and give elephants an added sense of intelligence.

Scientists believe their research will help advance robotics and neuroscience. A study co-author said: "Each whisker on elephants' trunks acts as a tactile sensory organ." This means elephants can pick up a delicate potato chip without breaking it. The research could help increase dexterity in robots. Another researcher is excited about how her research could advance neuroscience. She said her findings could increase our understanding of "tactile perception". She says the study will help us to understand how the brain's neurons process information to think, feel, and act.

Sources: <https://phys.org/news/2026-02-elephant-trunk-whiskers-material-intelligence.html>
<https://www.popsci.com/environment/elephant-whiskers-smart/>
<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/an-elephant-s-trunk-is-covered-in-whiskers-and-theyre-unlike-those-on-any-other-animal-a-new-study-suggests-180988199/>

PHRASE MATCHING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2602/260216-elephant-whiskers-5.html>

PARAGRAPH ONE:

1. uncovered a previously	a. and delicate objects
2. why the elephant trunk	b. for navigating
3. the whiskers at	c. is so dexterous
4. feel very small	d. of the whiskers
5. the incredible sensitivity	e. of intelligence
6. the elephant's poor	f. unknown sense
7. The whiskers are essential	g. eyesight
8. give elephants an added sense	h. the end of the trunk

PARAGRAPH TWO:

1. Scientists believe their research	a. and neuroscience
2. advance robotics	b. information
3. a tactile sensory	c. in robots
4. pick up a delicate potato chip	d. organ
5. increase dexterity	e. us to understand
6. her research could advance	f. will help
7. the study will help	g. without breaking it
8. the brain's neurons process	h. neuroscience

LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2602/260216-elephant-whiskers-5.html>

Zoologists have uncovered (1) _____ sense ability in elephants. It explains why the elephant trunk (2) _____. The scientists found that the whiskers at the end of the trunk are (3) _____. They feel very small and delicate objects. The scientists are from the Max Planck Institute for Intelligent Systems. They say the incredible sensitivity of the whiskers makes up for the (4) _____. The whiskers (5) _____ navigating, finding food, and communicating. The researchers say the whiskers are "smart" and give elephants (6) _____ of intelligence.

Scientists believe their research will (7) _____ and neuroscience. A study co-author said: "Each whisker on elephants' trunks acts as a (8) _____. This means elephants can pick up a (9) _____ without breaking it. The research could help increase dexterity in robots. Another researcher is excited about how her research could advance neuroscience. She said (10) _____ increase our understanding (11) _____. She says the study will help us to understand how the brain's (12) _____ to think, feel, and act.

PUT A SLASH (/) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2602/260216-elephant-whiskers-5.html>

Zoologists have uncovered a previously unknown senseability in elephants. It explains why the elephant trunk is so dexterous. The scientists found that the whiskers at the end of the trunk are sensitive enough to feel very small and delicate objects. The scientists are from the Max Planck Institute for Intelligent Systems. They say the incredible sensitivity of the whiskers makes up for the elephant's poor eyesight. The whiskers are essential for navigating, finding food, and communicating. The researchers say the whiskers are "smart" and give elephants an added sense of intelligence. Scientists believe their research will help advance robotics and neuroscience. A study co-author said: "Each whisker on elephants' trunks acts as a tactile sensory organ." This means elephants can pick up delicate objects to chip without breaking it. The research could help increase dexterity in robots. Another researcher is excited about how her research could advance neuroscience. She said her findings could increase our understanding of "tactile perception". She says the study will help us understand how the brain's neurons process information to think, feel, and act.

ELEPHANTS SURVEY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2602/260216-elephant-whiskers-4.html>

Write five GOOD questions about elephants in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1	STUDENT 2	STUDENT 3
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student A: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

f) _____

Elephants have a sixth sense from their whiskers – 16th February 2026

More free lessons at breakingnewsenglish.com

WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student B: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

f) _____

WRITING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2602/260216-elephant-whiskers-5.html>

Write about **elephants** for 10 minutes. Read and talk about your partner's paper.