

Series 1 – No.7 Emotional

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 'emotional'. The dictionary gives three entries for 'emotional' – we will work with the second one: 'emotional' in its 'strong feelings' meaning. It is a four-syllable word, with the main stress on the second syllable 'e'motional', 'e'motional'. It very often becomes close to a three-syllable word 'e-mo-tional'. The dictionary tells us that it means 'having and expressing strong feelings.'

Part 2 Examples

There are four examples. As I say them, listen for the word 'emotional' – in three of the examples it will be easy to hear, in the other one it will be difficult.

Example 1

He's a very emotional man.

Example 2

I felt quite emotional during the wedding ceremony.

Example 3

He became very emotional when I told him.

Example 4

The President has made an emotional plea.

It was in example number 1, that you heard the shorter version of 'emotional', 'emotional'. In this example, there are two words which are highlighted: 'very' and 'man' - 'He's a very emotional man'. You might think it surprising that 'emotional' is not highlighted, but that 'very' is. However, in everyday speech, it often happens that in very-plus-adjective combinations, the word 'very' is highlighted, but the adjective isn't highlighted. So we often hear // it's VErY easy to SEE // where 'easy' is gabbled.

Part 3 Practice

To help you handle such speech in both pronunciation and listening, let's work with this first example at different speeds. Imagine first that you are speaking very emphatically, and slowly, with rising tones on 'VEry' and 'eMOtional', and a falling tone on 'MAN':

Example 3A

// HE's a VErY // eMOtional // MAN //

Now say it rhythmically, with three beats:

Example 3B

// he's a VErY eMOtional MAN //

Rhythmic speech units with three beats like this do occur in everyday speech, but they are relatively rare. So we will now practise this sentence in a speech unit with two highlighted words, and two beats, on 'VEry' and 'MAN'. We will do it at three different speeds: 120, 200, and 300 words per minute.

Example 3C

C1// he's a VErY emotional MAN // 120

C2// he's a VErY emotional MAN// 200

C3// he's a VErY emotional MAN // 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 the syllables before and between highlighted words to be gabbled like this. The first three words 'HE IS A' become 'he's a', 'he's a', 'he's a' - 'He's a very emotional man'. And the five syllables between the stresses 'RY-E-MO-TIO-NAL' become virtually three syllables 'ryemotional', 'ryemotional', 'ryemotional' - 'He's a very emotional man'.

Part 4 Pairwork

To end with, let's add a reply:

Example 3D

// he's a VErY emotional MAN //

// REAlly // i DIDn't KNOW that //