



ДОНСКОЙ ГОСУДАРСТВЕННЫЙ ТЕХНИЧЕСКИЙ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ
УПРАВЛЕНИЕ ЦИФРОВЫХ ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНЫХ ТЕХНОЛОГИЙ

Кафедра «Научно-технический перевод и профессиональная коммуникация»

Учебное пособие

Слово, как основа единства языка, типы лексических единиц, структура словарного состава английского языка по дисциплинам

«Лексикология», «Теория языка»

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Аннотация

Данное учебное пособие предназначено для студентов, обучающихся по специальности 45.05.01 Перевод и переводоведение, изучающих английский, а также для всех студентов-лингвистов, желающих углубить знания о лексических единицах английского, их образовании, происхождении и структуре словарного состава английского языка. Пособие рекомендуется также для преподавателей английского языка как первого и второго иностранного.

Цель пособия – систематизировать знания студентов, развить навыки анализа лексических единиц, словообразования, создания связности текста.

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ПРЕДИСЛОВИЕ

Предлагаемое учебное пособие «Слово, как основа единства языка, типы лексических единиц, структура словарного состава английского языка (для обучающихся по специальности 45.05.01 Перевод и переводоведение)» рекомендуется для студентов 1 и 2 курсов очного и очно-заочного отделений, а также для преподавателей английского языка как первого и второго иностранного.

Задача данного пособия заключается в системном ознакомлении студентов с особенностями образования лексических единиц в английском языке. В работе представлены теоретические и практические материалы, приводится описание способов образования лексических единиц, рассматриваются инструменты создания связности текста посредством лексических единиц различных значений.

Учебное пособие даёт возможность сочетать самостоятельную и аудиторную работу студентов, позволяет осознать процессы и явления языка в целом.

На занятиях студенты выявляют свои знания теоретического материала и приобретают (или укрепляют) навыки работы с лексическими единицами языка, расширения своего словарного состава посредством использования различных словообразовательных элементов. Кроме того, контролируемая преподавателем самостоятельная работа студентов даёт им возможность получить более системное представление о предмете.

Содержание учебного издания полностью соответствует требованиям квалификационной характеристики выпускника согласно ГОС ВПО по данной основной образовательной программе.

Цель пособия – систематизировать знания студентов, развить навыки анализа лексических единиц, словообразования, создания связности текста.

Достижение данной цели предполагает решение следующих **задач**:

- познакомить студентов с общими закономерностями образования лексических единиц английского языка;
- сформировать у студентов представление о системности английского языка;
- рассмотреть основную проблематику английского национального языка;
- научить самостоятельной работе с лексическими единицами различных уровней.

PART 1.

Chapter 1. Suffixes

Suffixes can change the word-class and the meaning of the word.

Common noun suffixes

-er is used for the person who does an activity, e.g. writer, worker, shopper, teacher. You can use -er with a wide range of verbs to make them into nouns.

Sometimes, the **/e/** suffix is written as -or instead of -er. It is worth making a special list of these as you meet them, e.g. actor, operator, sailor, supervisor.

-er/-or are also used for things which do a particular job, e.g. pencil-sharpener, bottle-opener, grater, projector.

-er and -ee can contrast with each other meaning 'person who does something.' (-er) and 'person who receives or experiences the action' (-ee), e.g. employer/employee, sender/addressee, payee (e.g. of a cheque).

-(t)ion /sion/ is used to make nouns from verbs: complication, pollution, reduction, alteration, donation, admission

-ist [person] and -ism [activity or ideology]: used for people's politics, beliefs and ideologies, and sometimes their profession (compare with -er/-or professions above), e.g. Marxism, Buddhism, journalism, anarchist, physicist, terrorist.

-ist is also often used for people who play musical instruments, e.g. pianist, violinist, cellist.

-ness is used to make nouns from adjectives. Note what happens to adjectives that end in -y: goodness, readiness, forgetfulness, happiness, sadness, weakness.

Adjective suffix

-able/-ible / with verbs, means 'can be done': drinkable, washable, readable, recognizable, countable, forgivable.

Examples with -ible: edible (can be eaten), flexible (can be bent).

Verbs

-ise (or -ize) makes verbs from adjectives, e.g. modernise,

commercialise, industrialise.

Other suffixes that can help you recognise the word class:

-ment: (nouns) excitement, enjoyment, replacement

-ity: (nouns) flexibility, productivity, scarcity

-hood: (abstract nouns especially family terms) childhood, motherhood

-ship: (abstract nouns especially status) friendship, partnership, membership

-ive: (adjectives) passive, productive, active

-al: (adjectives) brutal, legal: (nouns) refusal, arrival

-ous: (adjectives) delicious, outrageous, furious

-ful: (adjectives) forgetful, hopeful, useful

-less: (adjectives) useless, harmless, cloudless

-ify: (verbs) beautify, purify, terrify

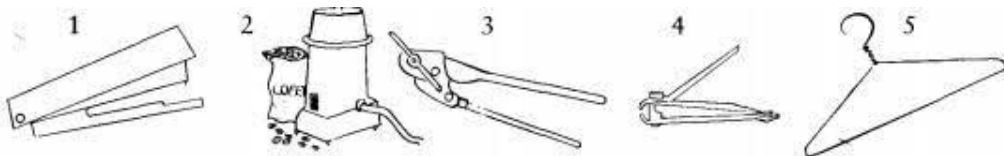
Note: the informal suffix -ish, which can be added to most common adjectives, ages and times to make them less precise, e.g. She's thirtyish. He has reddish hair. Come about eightish.

Exercises

1.1 Use the suffixes -er/-or, -ee and -ist to give the names of the following.

- 1 The thing that wipes rain off your car windscreen.
- 2 A person who plays classical violin.
- 3 A person who takes professional photographs.
- 4 A person who acts in amateur theatre.
- 5 The person to whom a cheque is made out.
- 6 A machine for washing dishes.
- 7 A person who donates their kidneys upon their death.
- 8 The person to whom a letter is addressed.

1.2 Each picture is of an object ending in -er. Can you name them?



1.3 List six jobs you would like to have in order of preference. How many different suffixes are there in your list? Do any of

the job names not have a suffix? (e.g. pilot, film star)

1.4 Do these words mean a thing, a person, or both?

- 1 a cooker 3 a ticket-holder 5 a cleaner 7 a drinker
 2 a typewriter 4 a record player 6 a smoker

1.5 Spelling changes. Rewrite each sentence by changing the underlined words, using a suffix from the left-hand page.

Make any spelling changes needed.

- 1 Most of his crimes can be forgiven.
 Most of his crimes are.....
- 2 The Club refuses to admit anyone not wearing a tie.
 The Club refuses to anyone not wearing a tie.
- 3 Her only fault is that she is lazy.
 Her only fault is.....
- 4 This firm has produced a lot in recent years.
 This firm has been very in recent years.
- 5 I found the book very easy and pleasant to read.
 I found the book very.....

1.6 Can you think of anything in your country which should be nationalised (e.g. banks, steel works), standardised, modernised, computerised or centralised?

1.7 Which word is the odd one out in each group and why?

- 1 brotherhood, neighbourhood, manhood, priesthood
 2 hair-restorer, plant-holder, step-ladder, oven-cleaner
 3 appointment, involvement, compliment, arrangement
 4 tearful, spiteful, dreadful, handful
 5 worship, kinship, friendship, partnership

Chapter 2. Prefixes

Prefixes are often used to give adjectives a negative meaning. The opposite of 'comfortable' is 'uncomfortable', the opposite of 'convenient' is 'inconvenient' and the opposite of 'similar' is 'dissimilar'. Other examples are 'unjust', 'inedible', 'disloyal'. Unfortunately, there

is no easy way of knowing which prefix any adjective will use to form its opposite. When you learn a new adjective note down whether it has an opposite formed with a prefix and, if so, what it is.

Note:

* in- becomes im- before a root beginning with 'm' or 'p', e.g. immature, impatient, impartial, improbable. Similarly in- becomes ir- before a word beginning with 'r', and il- before a word beginning with 'l', e.g. irreplaceable, irreversible, illegal, illegible, illiterate.

* The prefix in- does not always have a negative meaning - often it gives the idea of inside or into, e.g. internal, import, insert, income.

Although it is mainly adjectives which are made negative by prefixes, un- and dis- can also form the opposites of verbs too, e.g. appear disappear. The prefix is used here to reverse the action of the verb. Here are some more examples: disagree, disapprove, disbelieve, disconnect, discredit, dislike, dismount, disprove, disqualify, unbend, undo, undress, unfold, unload, unlock, unveil, unwrap, unzip.

Many other prefixes are used in English. Here is a list of prefixes which are useful in helping you to understand unfamiliar words. Some of these words are used with a hyphen. Check in a dictionary if you're not sure.

| <i>prefix</i> | <i>meaning</i> | <i>examples</i> |
|---------------|------------------|------------------------------------|
| anti | against | anti-war antisocial antibiotic |
| auto | of or by oneself | autograph auto- y |
| bi | two, twice | bicycle bi-monthly biannual bilin- |
| ex | former | ex-wife ex-student ex-president |
| ex | out | extract exhale excommunicate |
| micro | small | micro-computer microwave micro- |

| | | |
|--------|---------------|-----------------------------------|
| mis | badly/wrongly | misunderstand mistranslate misin- |
| mono | one/single | monotonous monologue monog- |
| multi | many | multi-national multi-purpose mul- |
| over | too much | overdo overtired oversleep over- |
| post | after | postwar postgraduate post- |
| pro | in favour of | pro-government pro-revolutionary |
| pseudo | false | pseudo-scientific pseudo- |
| re | again or back | retype reread replace rewind |
| semi | half | semicircular tached |
| sub | under | subway submarine subdivision |
| under | not enough | underused undercooked under- |

Exercises

2.1 Practice using words with negative prefixes. Contradict the following statements in the same way as the example. Not all the words you need are on the left-hand page.

***Example:* He's a very honest man. I don't agree. I think he's dishonest.**

- 1 I'm sure she's discreet.
- 2 I always find him very sensitive.
- 3 It's a convincing argument.
- 4 That's a very relevant point.
- 5 She's always obedient.

- 6 He's very efficient.
- 7 I always find her responsible.
- 8 He seems grateful for our help.
- 9 I'm sure she's loyal to the firm. 10 He's a tolerant person.

2.2 Which negative adjective fits each of the following definitions?

- 1 means not having a husband or wife.
- 2 means impossible to eat.
- 3 means unable to read or write.
- 4..... means not having a job.
- 5..... means fair in giving judgement, not favouring one side.
- 6 means unable to be replaced.

2.3 Choose a negative verb from B to fit each of the sentences below. Put it in the correct form. Example: The runner was disqualified after a blood test.

- 1 Children (and adults) love parcels at Christmas time.
- 2 I almost always find that I with his opinion.
- 3 I'm sure he's lying but it's going to be hard to his story.
- 4 After a brief speech the Queen the new statue.
- 5 It took the removal men an hour our things from the van.
- 6 His phone was because he didn't pay his last bill.

2.4 Answer the following questions. The answers are all in the table opposite.

- 1 What kind of oven cooks things particularly fast?
- 2 What kind of drug can help somebody with an infection?
- 3 What kind of company has branches in many countries?
- 4 How does a passenger aeroplane normally fly?
- 5 What is a student who is studying for a second degree?
- 6 What means 'underground railway' in the US and 'underground passage' in the UK?

2.5 Using the table opposite construct words or phrases to replace the underlined words. Example: He's in favour of the American approach. He's *pro-American*.

- 1 The BBC tries to avoid pronouncing foreign words incorrectly.
- 2 Most people say they have to work too hard but are paid too little.
- 3 He dated his cheque with a date that was later than the real date.
- 4 She's still on good terms with the man who used to be her husband.
- 5 He made so many mistakes in the letter that he had to write it again.

2.6 Think of two more examples for each prefix in C opposite.

Chapter 3. Roots

Many words in English are formed from a set of Latin roots with different prefixes and suffixes. Knowing the roots of such words may help you to remember or guess their meaning when you see them in context. These words are usually fairly formal. In their formation, they can perhaps be seen as the Latinate, formal, equivalent of phrasal verbs.

Here are some examples of the more common Latin roots, with some of the verbs derived from them. In each case an example sentence is given with the meaning of the verb in brackets at the end. You'll find some easier to understand than others:

spect: see, look

You should respect your parents / the laws of a country [look up to]

The police suspected he was guilty but they had no proof [had a feeling]

Many pioneers travelled west in America to prospect for gold [search]

vert: turn

I tried a word-processor but I soon reverted to my old typewriter [went back]

Missionaries went to Africa to convert people to Christianity [change beliefs]

The royal scandal diverted attention from the political crisis [took attention away]

port: carry, take

How are you going to transport your things to the

States? [send across]

Britain imports cotton and exports wool [buys in, sells out]

The roof is supported by the old beams [held up]

due, duct: lead

She was educated abroad [went to school]

He conducted the orchestra with great vigour [led]

Japan produces a lot of electronic equipment

[makes]

press: press, push

She was impressed by his presentation [full of admiration and respect]

This weather depresses me [makes me feel miserable]

She always expresses herself very articulately [puts her thoughts into words]

pose, pone: place, put

The meeting has been postponed until next week [changed to a later date]

The king was deposed by his own son [put off the throne]

I don't want to impose my views on you [force]

Above you only have examples of verbs. Note that for all the verbs listed, there is usually at least one noun and at least one adjective as well. Here are some examples.

| <i>verb</i> | <i>person noun</i> | <i>adjective</i> | <i>abstract noun</i> |
|-------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------------|
|-------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------------|

| | | | |
|-----------|------------|--------------|---------------|
| inspect | inspector | inspecting | inspection |
| advertise | advertiser | advertising | advertisement |
| deport | deportee | deported | deportation |
| introduce | introducer | introductory | introduction |
| oppress | oppressor | oppressive | oppression |
| compose | composer | composite | composition |

Exercises

3.1. Complete as much as possible of the table with other forms of some of the words presented. Use a dictionary to help you if necessary.

| | verb | person noun | adjective | abstract noun |
|--------------|------|-------------|-----------|---------------|
| convert..... | | | | |
| produce..... | | | | |
| conduct..... | | | | |
| impress..... | | | | |
| support..... | | | | |
| impose..... | | | | |

3.2. Fill in the gaps in the sentences below using words from the table in C.

1 We stayed in a town surrounded by high mountains. I found it very

-
- 2 He from the USA for having a forged passport.
- 3 The magazine seems to have nothing in it but for cosmetics.
- 4 May I you to my boss?
- 5 The tax..... decided I owed a lot of money.
- 6 The new take-away pizza service has a very goodoffer.
- 7 Business people always say that it pays
- 8 Tchaikovsky some wonderful ballet music.

3.3. Can you work out the meanings of the underlined words in the sentences below?

- 1 She's a very introspective person and he's also very introverted.
- 2 He always seems to oppose everything I suggest.
- 3 They have a very good induction programme for new staff in that company.
- 4 I don't think it is healthy to repress one's emotions too much.
- 5 Perhaps you can deduce what the word means from the way it is formed.
- 6 The documentary exposed corruption in high places.
- 7 She tried hard to suppress a laugh.
- 8 She transposed the music for the flute.

3.4. Think of three other words based on each of the roots listed in B opposite. Put each into an appropriate phrase.

3.5. Pair the formal verbs below with their phrasal verb equivalents.

Support, put off, oppose, look at, cut down, deposit, hold up, postpone, turn away, inspect, go against, divert, reduce, put down.

Chapter 4. Abstract nouns

An abstract noun is one which is used to mean an idea, expe-

rience or quality rather than an object. Thus happiness, intention and shock are abstract nouns whereas, for example, pen, bed and trousers are not.

There are a number of suffixes which are used particularly frequently in the formation of abstract nouns. Some of the most common are -ment, -ion, -ness and -ity.

Note: -ment and -ion are usually used to make verbs into abstract nouns whereas -ness and -ity are added to adjectives; -ion sometimes becomes -tion, -sion, -ation or -ition.

Here are some examples of abstract nouns using those suffixes.

| | | |
|----------------|-------------|----------------|
| achievement | action | aggressiveness |
| absurdity | | |
| adjustment | collection | attractiveness |
| anonymity | | |
| amazement | combination | bitterness |
| complexity | | |
| discouragement | illusion | carelessness |
| curiosity | | |
| improvement | imagination | consciousness |
| generosity | | |
| investment | production | permissiveness |
| hostility | | |
| replacement | recognition | tenderness |
| prosperity | | |
| retirement | reduction | ugliness |
| sensitivity | | |

Here are some examples of abstract nouns using those suffixes.

| | | | |
|----------------|-----------|----------|---------------|
| apprenticeship | boredom | breadth | adulthood |
| companionship | freedom | depth | brotherhood |
| membership | kingdom | length | childhood |
| ownership | martyrdom | strength | motherhood |
| partnership | stardom | warmth | neighbourhood |
| relationship | wisdom | width | (wo)manhood |

There are also a large number of abstract nouns which do not use any suffix at all. Here are some examples of these.

anger belief calm chance

| | | | |
|-------|-----------|--------|---------|
| faith | fear | humour | idea |
| luck | principle | rage | reason |
| sense | sight | speed | thought |

Exercises

4.1. What is the abstract noun related to each of the following adjectives? All the nouns are formed in ways described on the opposite page although not all are listed opposite.

Example: affectionate affection

| | | | |
|----------------|------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1 affectionate | 5 amused | 9 attentive | 13 equal |
| 2 excited | 6 graceful | 10 happy | 14 hopeful |
| 3 kind | 7 original | 11 popular | 15 resentful |
| 4 secure | 8 stupid | 12 weak | 16 wise |

4.2. Find at least one more noun using each of the suffixes in B and C.

4.3. Which abstract noun on the opposite page is a synonym of each of the following?

Example: animosity hostility or aggressiveness

| | | |
|-------------------|----------------|------------|
| 1 animosity | 5 substitution | 9 vision |
| 2 astonishment | 6 fame | 10 liberty |
| 3 inquisitiveness | 7 decrease | 11 fury |
| 4 fraternity | 8 area | 12 wealth |

4.4. Complete the following table:

| abstract noun | adjective | verb |
|---------------|-------------|------------|
| adverb | | |
| contentment | content(ed) | to content |
| contentedly | | |
| argument | ..... | ..... |
| | | |
| emptiness | ..... | ..... |
| | | |
| intensity | ..... | ..... |
| | | |
| satisfaction | ..... | ..... |
| | | |
| sentiment | ..... | ..... |
| | | |
| strength | ..... | ..... |

.....

4.5. Which of the words in the list below is being described in the following quotations? *Love, permanence, hope, jealousy, happiness, beauty*

- 1 '..... is no more than feeling alone among smiling enemies.'
- 2 '..... is like coke; something you get as the by-product of making something else.'
- 3 '..... is the power of being cheerful in circumstances which we know to be desperate.'
- 4 '..... is a universal migraine.'
- 5 'The British love more than they love.....'

4.6 Write your own quotations to describe the following abstract nouns.

- 1 freedom
- 2 friendship
- 3 life
- 4 curiosity
- 5 imagination

Chapter 5. Compound adjectives

A compound adjective is an adjective which is made up of two parts and is usually written with a hyphen, e.g. well-dressed, never-ending and shocking-pink. Its meaning is usually clear from the words it combines. The second part of the compound adjective is frequently present or past participle.

A large number of compound adjectives describe personal appearance.

Here is a rather far-fetched description of a person starting from the head dow:

*Tom was **a curly-haired, sun-tanned, blue-eyed rosy-cheeked, thin lipped, broad-shouldered, left-handed, slim-hipped, long-legged, flat-footed** young man, wearing an **open-necked shirt, brand-new, tight-fitting** jeans and **open-toed***

sandals.

Another set of compound adjectives describes a person's character. Here is a rather lighthearted description of a girl. The meanings are explained in brackets.

Melissa was absent-minded [forgetful], easy-going [relaxed], good-tempered [cheerful], warm-hearted [kind] and quick-witted [intelligent] if perhaps a little big-headed [proud of herself], two-faced [hypocritical], self-centred [egotistical] and stuck-up [snobbish (colloquial)] at times.

Another special group of compound adjectives are those where the second part is a preposition. Some of these adjectives are listed below with a typical noun: an all-out strike [total], a burnt-out car [nothing left in it after a fire], a broken-down bus [it won't work], a built-up area [lots of buildings in it], a hard-up student [poor], cast-off clothes [no longer wanted by the owner], worn-out shoes [can't be worn any more; of people - exhausted], a drive-in movie [you watch from your car], well-off bankers [wealthy], a run-down area [in poor condition].

Here are some other useful compound adjectives.

| | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|---------------|
| air-conditioned | bullet-proof | cut-price |
| drip-dry | | |
| duty-free | hand-made | interest-free |
| last-minute | | |
| long-distance | long-standing | off-peak |
| part-time | | |
| record-breaking | remote-controlled | second-class |
| so-called | | |
| sugar-free | time-consuming | top-secret |
| world-famous | | |

You can vary the compound adjectives listed by changing one part of the adjective. For example, curly-haired, long-haired, red-haired and straight-haired; first-hand (knowledge); first-class (ticket) and first-born (child).

Exercises

5.1 List as many compound adjectives beginning with self, as you can. Mark them P or N for positive or negative characteristics, or write neutral.

5.2 Answer the questions by using a compound adjective which is opposite in meaning to the adjective in the question.

Note that the answer may or may not have the same second element as the adjective in the question.

Example: *Is he working full-time? No, part-time.*

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1 Isn't she rather short-sighted? | 4 Are her shoes high-heeled? |
| 2 Is your brother well-off? | 5 Is this vase mass-produced? |
| 3 Would you say the boy's well-behaved? | 6 Do they live in south-east England? |

5.3 Think of two nouns that would frequently be associated with any ten of the compound adjectives listed in E opposite.

5.4 Add a preposition from the list below to complete appropriate compound adjectives.

back up out off on of

- 1 She's been doing the same low-paid job for so long that she's really fed-.... with it now.
- 2 The two cars were involved in a head- collision.
- 3 He has a very casual, laid- approach to life in general.
- 4 It'll never happen again. It's definitely a one- situation.
- 5 He's a smash hit here but he's unheard- in my country.
- 6 She bought a cut- paper pattern and made her own dress.

5.5 Which of the adjectives from this unit could you use to describe yourself and other students in your class or members of your family?

Chapter 6. Compound nouns - combinations of two nouns

A compound noun is a fixed expression which is made up of more than one word and functions as a noun. Such expressions are frequently combinations of two nouns, e.g. address book, human being, science fiction. A number of compound nouns are related to

phrasal verbs and these are dealt with in.

Compound nouns may be written as two words, e.g. tin opener, bank account, or they may be written with a hyphen instead of a space between the words, e.g. pen-name, baby-sitter. Some expressions are occasionally written with a hyphen and occasionally as two separate words. For instance, both letter box and letter-box are correct. Sometimes they may be written as one word, e.g. earring.

Compound nouns may be countable, uncountable or only used in either the singular or the plural. There are examples of each of these types below. Check that you understand the meanings of each of the expressions listed. If you understand both elements of the expression, the meaning will usually be clear. If the meaning is not fairly obvious, then it is provided below.

Usually the main stress is on the first part of the compound but sometimes it is on the second part. The word which contains the main stress is underlined in the compound nouns below. Here are some examples of common countable compound nouns.

| | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| <u>alarm</u> clock | <u>assembly</u> line | <u>blood</u> donor |
| <u>book</u> token | | |
| <u>burglar</u> alarm | <u>contact</u> lens | <u>credit</u> card |
| <u>handcuffs</u> | | |
| <u>heart</u> attack | <u>package</u> holiday | <u>pedestrian</u> crossing |
| <u>shoe</u> horn | | |
| tea-bag | <u>windscreen</u> | <u>windscreen</u> wiper |
| <u>youth</u> hostel | | |

Here are some examples of common uncountable compound nouns. These are never used with an article.

| | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| <u>air-traffic</u> control | <u>birth</u> control | <u>blood</u> pressure |
| cotton <u>wool</u> pocket | | |
| <u>data-processing</u> | family <u>planning</u> | <u>food</u> poisoning |
| money <u>hav</u> fever | | |
| <u>income</u> tax | <u>junk</u> food | <u>mail</u> order |
| (allergy to pollen) | | |

Here are some examples of common compound nouns used only in the singular.

arms race (countries wanting most powerful weapons)
death penalty

- generation gap
- labour force
- mother-tongue
- sound barrier
- greenhouse effect
- welfare state
- brain drain (highly educated people leaving country to work abroad)

Here are some examples of common compound nouns used only in the plural:

- grass-roots; luxury goods; human rights; kitchen scissors;
- race relations; roadworks; sunglasses; traffic lights

Exercises

6.1 Complete these networks with any appropriate expressions from the opposite page. Add extra bubbles if you need them.



6.2 In some cases more than one compound noun can be formed from one particular element. What, for example, are the two expressions listed opposite with blood as an element and what are the two based on control? Complete the following compound nouns with a noun other than the one suggested opposite.

- 1token 5 tea
- 9.....crossing
- 2 junk 6 mother
- 10lights
- 3 sound 7 tax
- 11 food.....

4 blood..... 8 processing 12
race

6.3 What are they talking about? In each case the answer is a compound noun opposite.

Example: 'I had it taken at the doctor's this morning and he said it was a little high for my age.' blood pressure

- 1 'You really shouldn't cross the road at any other place.'
- 2 'It's partly caused by such things as hair sprays and old fridges.'
- 3 'She always has terrible sneezing fits in the early summer.'
- 4 'I can't understand why they spend so much money on something so destructive.'
- 5 'Working there is supposed to be much more stressful than being a pilot.'
- 6 'The worst time was when I dropped one at the theatre and spent the interval scrabbling around on the floor.'
- 7 'I don't think it should ever be used under any circumstances.'
- 8 'It's much easier not to have to make your own arrangements.'
- 9 'He can't possibly run away from the policeman with those on!'

6.4 Now make up some sentences like those in exercise 13.3 relating to some of the new expressions you made in exercise 13.2.

6.5 Choose any article in a magazine or newspaper and write down all the compound nouns which you find.

6.6 Look at all the compound expressions you have worked with in this unit. Mark all those that you feel you need to be able to use yourself rather than just to understand when others use them.

Chapter 7. Compound nouns - verb + preposition

A large number of compound nouns are based on phrasal verbs. Nouns based on phrasal verbs often have an informal feel to them and they are particularly common in newspaper reporting. Here are examples of such nouns in use.

In response to the pay offer, there was a walk-out at the fac-

tory [strike]

There is going to be a crack-down on public spending [action against]

There has been a break-out from the local prison [escape]

Last month saw a tremendous shake-up in personnel[change]

I never expected the break-up of the USSR [collapse]

A number of these nouns have economic associations.

The takeover of one of our leading hotel chains has just been announced [purchase by another company]

We're trying to find some new outlets for our products [places to sell]

Take your things to the check-out to pay for them [cash-desk]

Cutbacks will be essential until the recession is over [reductions]

We made a profit of £1000 on a turnover of £10,000 [money passing through a company]

Some of these nouns are associated with technology and other aspects of contemporary life.

What the computer produces depends on the quality of the input [information that is put in]

Output has increased thanks to new technology [production]

We have a rather rapid staff turnover [change]

Just after leaving school he went through the stage of being a dropout [person who rejects society]

It will be a long time before the consequences of fallout from Chernobyl are no longer felt [radio-active dust in the atmosphere]

I can easily get you a printout of the latest figures [paper on which computer information has been printed]

A breakthrough has been made in AIDS research [important discovery]

Some of the words can be used in more general circumstances.

Many of the problems were caused by a breakdown in communications [failure] The outlook for tomorrow is good - sunny in most places[prospect]

There are drawbacks as well as advantages to every situation [negative aspects] The outcome of the situation was not very satisfactory [conclusion]

TV companies always welcome feedback from viewers [comments]

It was clear from the outset that the set-up would cause problems [start; situation]

We parked in a lay-by on the by-pass [parking space at the side of a road; road avoiding the centre of a town]

The outbreak of war surprised them [start of something unpleasant, e.g. disease, violence]

Exercises

7.1 Here are some more compound nouns based on phrasal verbs. Guess the meaning of the underlined word from its context.

- 1 Because of the accident there was a three-mile tailback along the motorway.
- 2 Police are warning of an increased number of break-ins in this area.
- 3 The papers are claiming the Prime Minister organised a cover-up.
- 4 Unfortunately, our plans soon suffered a setback.
- 5 I'm sorry I'm late. There was a terrible hold-up on the bridge.
- 6 The robbers made their getaway in a stolen car.

7.2 Which of the words studied on the opposite page would be most likely to follow the adjectives given below?

- 1 radioactive 5 final
.....
- 2 nervous 6 sales
.....
- 3 computer 7 positive
.....
- 4 annual 8 drastic
.....

7.3 Fill in the blanks with an appropriate word from those opposite.

- 1 A and C Ltd. have made a bid for S and M pic.
- 2 The Prime Minister yesterday announced a..... in the Cabinet.
- 3 The negotiations aim to end the 10-day-old
- 4 She provided some very valuable to the discussion.

- 5 CIRCUS LION IN
 HORROR.....
 6 There's a terrible queue at this
 Let's find another one.
 7 There has been a disturbing
 of violence in prisons recently.
 8 The office wall was covered in

7.4 Here are some more words of this type. In each case the preposition element of the noun is given but the other part is missing. Choose from the list of possibilities.

work hand hold clear write lie turn press

- 1 Their car was a-off after the accident.
 2 The lecturer distributed..... -outs before she started speaking.
 3 Jack does a daily.....-out at the gym, starting with 20 -ups.
 4 There is an interesting..... -up of the match in today's paper.
 5 I'm giving my office a major -out this week.
 6 Did you read about the -up at our bank?
 7 There was a surprisingly large..... -out at the concert.
 8 I love having a-in on Sundays.

7.5 Can you explain the difference between these pairs? Use a dictionary if necessary.

- 1 outlook/look-out 2 set-up/upset 3 outlet/let-out 4 out-lay/layout

7.6 Choose eight of the words in this unit which you particularly want to learn and write your own sentences using them.

Chapter 8. Words with interesting origins - people and places

A number of words in English have originated from the names of people:

biro: [bail-point pen] named after Laszlo Biro, its Hungarian inventor

boycott: [refuse to deal with or a refusal to deal with] after a landlord in Ireland who made himself unpopular by his treatment of his tenants and was socially isolated

braille: [name of a raised writing system used by blind people] from the name of its French inventor, Louis Braille

chauvinist: [strong belief that your country or race is superior to others] after the Frenchman, Nicolas Chauvin, who was fanatically devoted to Napoleon

hooligan: [a rough, lawless youth] from the Irish family name, Hooligan

machiavellian: [cunning, deceitful, unscrupulous in the pursuit of a goal] from Niccolo Machiavelli, the Italian statesman who died in 1527

mentor: [loyal and wise adviser] from Mentor, friend to Odysseus

pamphlet: [a small leaflet] from a character Pamphilus, in a 12th century love poem

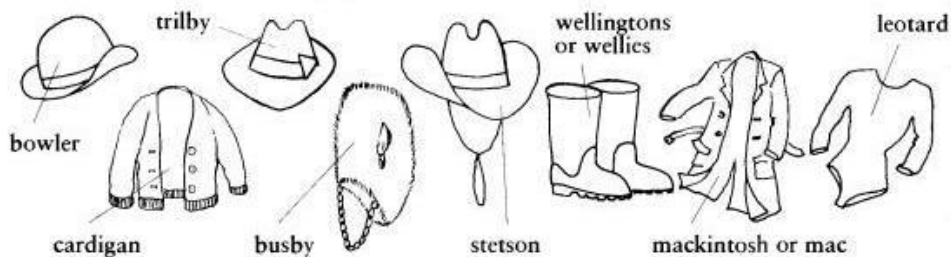
to pander: [to indulge someone's desires] from Pandaros, a procurer or pimp in Ancient Greek mythology

saxophone: [musical instrument] invented by the Belgian, Adolphe Sax

tawdry: [cheap and tasteless] from St Audrey, at whose annual fair in the town of Ely, near Cambridge, cheap gaudy scarves were sold

watt: [unit of power] from the 18th century Scottish inventor, James Watt

Quite a few names of types of clothing, particularly hats, originate from the people who invented them or made them popular.



A number of other words in English come from place names.

bedlam: [chaos] from the name of a famous London mental hospital once situated where Liverpool Street Station now stands

spartan: [severely simple] from the ancient Greek city of Sparta, famed for its austerity

canter: [movement of a horse, faster than a trot but slower than a gallop] a shortening of Canterbury, a town in south-east England

gypsy: [member of a particular group of travelling people] These people were once thought to have come from Egypt, hence the name.

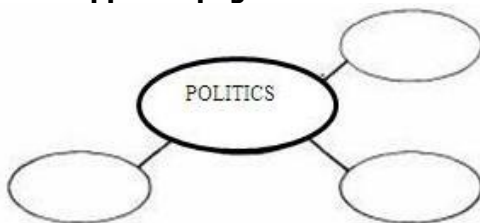
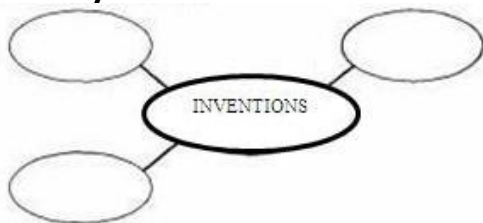
A number of names of different kinds of cloth originate from place names. The place of origin is shown in brackets.

| | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|--------|
| angora (Ankara) | cashmere (Kashmir) | damask |
| (Damascus) | | |
| denim (Nimes, France) | gauze (Gaza) | muslin |
| (Mosul, Iraq) | | |
| satin (Qingjiang, China) | suede (Sweden) | tweed |
| (River Tweed, Scotland) | | |

Exercises

8.1 Which (if any) of the words listed on the opposite page are familiar to you because there are similar words in your own language?

8.2 Complete the networks below with as many other words as you can from the words listed on the opposite page.



8.3 Complete the sentences with appropriate words.

- 1 It looks like rain. Don't forget your and your.....
- 2 I wish I could play the

- 3 It's in here. Let's go somewhere quieter.
 4 The anarchist speaker urged all citizens tothe elections.
 5 What a beautiful..... sweater! Where did you get it?

8.4 Choose two adjectives to use with the following words.

Example: *Wellington red, muddy*

- 1 hooligan 3 stetson 5 leotard
 2 pamphlet 4 gypsy 6 biro

8.5 And now suggest how the following sentences could end.

- 1 I can't stand the way he panders..!
 2 She buttoned up her cardigan because...
 3 The horse cantered...
 4 It has been agreed to boycott...
 5 A busby must be...

8.6 Here are some more words of this type in English. Can you explain (a) their meaning and (b) their origin?

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 herculean effort | 4 jersey | 7 bottle of champagne |
| 2 platonic friendship | 5 Caesarean section | 8 atlas |
| 3 teddy bear | 6 July | 9 magnolia |

Chapter 9. Onomatopoeic words

Onomatopoeic words are those which seem to sound like their meaning. The most obvious examples are verbs relating to the noises which animals make, e.g. cows moo and cats mew or meow.

If the vowel sound in a word is short, an onomatopoeic word usually signifies a short, sharp sound. If it is long (indicated in the International Phonetic Alphabet by :) then the word usually signifies a longer, slower sound. Compare pip /pip/ which is a short sound with peep /piip/ which is a long sound.

Particular combinations of letters have particular sound associations in English.

gr- at the beginning of a word can suggest something unpleasant or miserable, e.g. groan [make a deep sound forced out by pain or despair], grumble [complain in a bad-tempered way],

grumpy [bad-tempered], grunt [make a low, rough sound like pigs do, or people expressing disagreement or boredom], growl [make a low, threatening sound].

cl- at the beginning of a word can suggest something sharp and/or metallic, e.g. click [make a short sharp sound], clang [make a loud ringing noise], clank [make a dull metallic noise, not as loud as a clang], clash [make a loud, broken, confused noise as when metal objects strike together], clink [make the sound of small bits of metal or glass knocking together]. Horses go clip-clop on the road.

sp- at the beginning of a word can have an association with water or other liquids or powders, e.g. splash [cause a liquid to fly about in drops], spit [send liquid out from the mouth], splutter [make a series of spitting sounds], spray [liquid sent through the air in tiny drops either by the wind or some instrument], sprinkle [throw a shower of something onto a surface], spurt [come out in a sudden burst].

ash- at the end of a word can suggest something fast and violent, e.g. smash [break violently into small pieces], dash [move or be moved violently], crash [strike suddenly violently and noisily], bash [strike heavily so as to break or injure], gash [a long deep cut or wound].

wh- at the beginning of a word often suggests the movement of air, e.g. whistle [a high pitched noise made by forcing air or steam through a small opening], whirr [sound like a bird's wings moving rapidly], whizz [make the sound of something rushing through air], wheeze [breathe noisily especially with a whistling sound in the chest], whip [one of these or to hit with one of these].



-ckle, -ggle, or -zzle at the end of a word can suggest something light and repeated, e.g. trickle [to flow in a thin stream], crackle [make a series of short cracking sounds], tinkle [make a succession of light ringing sounds], giggle [laugh lightly in a nervous or silly way], wriggle [move with quick short twistings], sizzle [make a hissing sound like something cooking in fat], drizzle [small, fine rain]

Exercises

9.1 Which of the consonant combinations listed in C opposite exist in your language? Do they have similar associations?

9.2 Look in your dictionary. Can you find any other examples of words beginning with *gr-*, *cl-*, *sp-* or *wb-* with the associations described opposite?

9.3 Which of the words from C opposite fit best in the sentences below.

- 1 She heard his key..... as it turned in the lock.
- 2 The blades of the propeller noisily.
- 3 I love to hear sausages..... in the pan!
- 4 They glasses and drank to each other's health.
- 5 There was a terrible car..... on the motorway today.
- 6 Everyone with disappointment at the news.
- 7 The baby loves in its bath.
- 8 I can feel raindrops..... down the back of my neck.

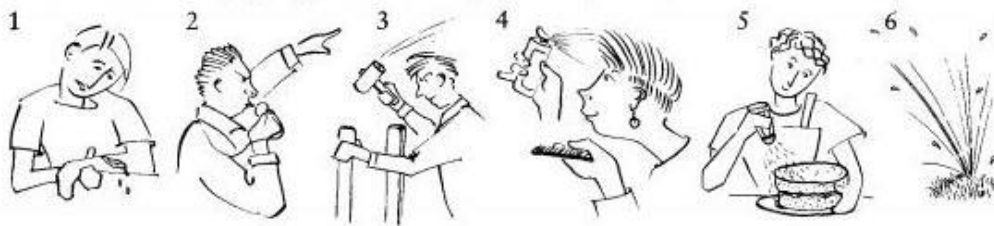
9.4 Almost all the words in C opposite can be both nouns and regular verbs. There is, however, one irregular verb, one word which is only an adjective, one word which is both verb and noun but the noun has a rather different meaning from the verb. What are these words? Choose from the alternatives offered below.

- 1 The irregular verb: whip, grunt, spurt, spit or wriggle?
- 2 The word which is only an adjective: gash, grumpy, clip-clop, or whirr?
- 3 The word which is both a verb and a noun but the noun has a different meaning: trickle, spray, growl, splutter, spit, splash or crash?

9.5 Can you guess the meanings of the underlined words from their sounds?

- 1 The child sploshed through the puddles.
- 2 If you have a sore throat, try gargling with some salt water.
- 3 I couldn't concentrate on the play because of the rustle of sweet papers behind me.
- 4 Speak up. Don't mumble.
- 5 That step always creaks.
- 6 He whacked the ball into the air.

9.6 What words on the page opposite do these pictures represent?



9.7 Pair the words below so that in each case there is a noun and a matching verb.

Schoolchildren crackles tinkles a bad-tempered person or dog
 the bell on a cat's collar a bored child clanks whistles
 a fire giggle growls a church bell a steam train
 clangs wheezes a prisoner's chain wriggles someone
 with asthma

Chapter 10. Time

One thing before another

Before I went to work I fed the cat [or, more commonly in written English: Before going to work...]

I had written to her prior to meeting the committee [formal/written style]

It was nice to be in Venice. Previously I'd only been to Rome [fairly formal, more informal would be before that, I...]

I was in the office from 2.30. I was out earlier on [before then, fairly informal]

The city is now called Thatcherville. Formerly it was Grabtown [used when something has changed its name, state, etc.]

Things happening at the same time

While I waited, I read the newspaper [or, more formal: While waiting, I read...; the waiting and reading happen together.]

As I was driving to work, I saw an accident [As describes the background when something happens in the foreground.]

I saw her just as she was turning the corner [precise moment]

During the war, I lived in Dublin [does not specify how long]
Throughout the war, food was rationed [from beginning to end]

She was entering at the very dme/the very moment I was leaving [These two are stronger and more precise than as or just as.]

One thing after another

After I'd locked up, I went to bed [or, more formal: After locking up... ; we do not usually say 'After having locked up...']

We went to the castle. Then we caught a bus to the beach.

First we went to the theatre. After that, we had a meal.

He fell ill and was admitted to hospital. He died soon afterwards [In these two examples, after that and afterwards are interchangeable.]

Following my visit to Peking, I bought lots of books about China [fairly formal]

Time when

When I'm rich and famous, I'll buy a yacht [Note: not 'When I will be rich...']

As soon as we've packed we can leave [immediately after]

Once we've finished we can go and have a coffee, [less specific]

The moment/the minute I saw his face I knew I'd met him before.

I stayed in that hospital the time (that) I broke my leg.

I met Polly at Ken's wedding. On that occasion she was with a different man.

Connecting two periods or events

The meal will take about an hour. In the meantime, relax and have a drink [between now and the meal]

The new whiteboards are arriving soon. Till then, we'll have to use the old ones.

I last met him in 1985. Since then I haven't set eyes on him.

By the time I retire, I will have worked here 26 years.

Exercises

10.1 Look at these pages from the personal diary of Laura, a businesswoman who travels a lot, then do the exercise.

| | | |
|---|--|---------------|
| Mon Paris – day 5 | Up early. Said goodbye to Nick and left. Saw bad accident on motorway. | Fri 16 |
| 12 Pompidou Centre then theatre | Answered all the mail, then felt I could watch TV! | Sat 17 |
| Tue Been away 6 days! | Lots of phone calls! Sandra, Joyce – and Dougy all in a row! Lazy day! | Sun 18 |
| 13 Paris OK, but miss home. | book tickets for Dublin | Notes |
| Wed Left Paris 10 am. | – 24th! | |
| 14 Huge pile of mail waiting! Manchester, then | | |
| Thu Glasgow. Met Maura at Nick's. | | |
| 15 | | |

Fill in the blanks with connectors. An example is given.

1 Prior to going to Manchester, Laura was in Paris.

2 Her next trip after Glasgow is on 24th.

..... she can have a quiet time at home.

3 She was in Paris for over a week

..... she got home there was a big pile of mail waiting for her.

4she was at Nick's place on the 16th, she met Maura.

5 She went to the theatre in Paris on Mon-

day..... , she had been to the Pompidou Centre.

6 she had said goodbye to Nick, she left.

7 she had answered all her letters, she felt she could watch TV for a while.

8 she put the phone down it rang again. This time it was Dougy.

Make more sentences with connectors you haven't used, based on the diary information.

10.2 Think of things that are true for you in these situations and complete the sentences. Add more sentences if you can. An example has been done.

1 While I'm asleep, I usually dream a lot.

- 2 After I've eaten too much,...
- 3 The moment I wake up, I...
- 4 Throughout my childhood I...
- 5 I'm doing vocabulary right now. Earlier on, I was...
- 6 Once I've finished my language course, I'll...
- 7 Before I go on holiday, I always...
- 8 Following an argument with someone, I always feel

Follow-up: If you can, get hold of a news report in English. Underline all the time connectors and see if there are any which you can add to those on the left-hand page. If there are, write a whole sentence in your notebook showing how the connector is used.

Chapter 11. Condition

As well as if, there are a number of other words and phrases for expressing condition.



- 1 You can't come in unless you have a ticket.



- 2 You can borrow the bike on condition that you return it by five o'clock.



- 3 In case of fire, dial 999 [usually seen on notices (see Unit 96); it means 'when there is a fire'; don't confuse with 'take your mac in case it rains'; not it might rain.]



- 4 You can stay, as long as you don't mind sleeping on the sofa [less formal than so long as and less formal and not so strong as on condition that]

Providing (that) or provided (that) can also be used in examples 2 and 4. They are less formal and not so strong as on condition that but stronger and more restricting than as long as, e.g. Provided/Providing you don't mind cats, you can stay with us. Note the use of supposing and what if (usually in spoken language) for possible situations in the future. What if is more direct, e.g. Supposing/What if he doesn't turn up; what shall we do then.

Conditions with -ever

However you do it, it will cost a lot of money.
 You'll get to the railway station, whichever bus you take.
 Whoever wins the General Election, nothing will really change.
 That box is so big it will be in the way wherever you leave it.
 These four sentences can also be expressed using no matter.
 No matter how you do it, it will cost a lot of money.
 You'll get to the railway station, no matter which bus you take.

Some nouns which express condition

Certain conditions must be met before the Peace Talks can begin.
 A good standard of English is a prerequisite for studying at a British University [absolutely necessary; very formal word]
 What are the entry requirements for doing a diploma in Management at your college? [official conditions]
 I would not move to London under any circumstances. It's awful!

Exercises

11.1. Fill the gaps with a suitable word from A opposite.

- 1 You can come to the party you don't bring that **hastly** friend of yours.
- 2 emergency in the machine-room, sound the alarm and notify the supervisor at once.
- 3 I hear from you, I'll assume you are coming.
- 4 A person may take the driving test again they have not already taken a test within the previous fourteen days.
- 5 I lent you my car, would that help?

11.2. The pictures show conditions that must be met to do certain things. Make different sentences using words and phrases from the opposite page.

Example: You can have a passenger on a motorbike provided they wear a helmet.
or Unless you wear a helmet, you can't ride on a motorbike.



11.3 Change the sentences with **-ever** to **no matter**, and **vice-versa**.

- 1 Wherever she goes, she always takes that dog of hers.
- 2 If anyone rings, I don't want to speak to them, no matter who it is.
- 3 No matter what I do, I always seem to do the wrong thing.
- 4 It'll probably have meat in it, whichever dish you choose. They don't cater for non-meat eaters here.
- 5 No matter how I do it, that recipe never seems to work.

11.4 What would your answers be to these questions?

- 1 Are there any prerequisites for the job you do or would like to do in the future?
- 2 Under what circumstances would you move from where you're living at the moment?
- 3 What are the normal entry requirements for university in your country?
- 4 On what condition would you lend a friend your house/flat?

Chapter 12. Cause, reason, purpose and result

Cause and reason

You probably know how to use words like because, since and as to refer to the cause of or reason for something. Here are some other ways of connecting clauses to express causes and reasons. Note how verbs and nouns can do the same job as conjunctions.

- Owing to the icy conditions, the two lorries collided.
- The collision was due to the icy conditions.
- The collision was caused by ice on the road.
- The cause of the collision was ice on the road.
- Here are some other 'cause' words and typical contexts they are used in.
- The rise in prices sparked off a lot of political protest [often used for very strong, perhaps violent, reactions to events]
- The President's statement gave rise to / provoked / generated a lot of criticism [slightly less strong than spark off]
- The new law has brought about / led to great changes in education [often used for political/social change]
- This problem stems from the inflation of recent years [explaining the direct origins of events and states]
- The court-case arose out of allegations made in a newspaper [the allegations started the process that led to the court-case]

Reasons for and purposes of doing things

- Her reason for not going with us was that she had no money, or The reason she didn't go with us was that... [less formal]
- I wonder what his ipotives were in sending that letter? [purpose]
- I wonder what prom pled liim to send that letter? [reason/cause]
- She wrote to the press with the aim of exposing the scandal [purpose]
- I've invited you here with a view to resolving our differences [sounds a bit more indirect than with the aim of]
- He refused to answer on the grounds that his lawyer wasn't

there [reason]

- The purpose of her visit was to inspect the equipment.
- **Results**
- He did no work. As a result / As a consequence / Consequently, he failed his exams.
- The result/consequence of all these changes is that no-one is happy any more [The examples with consequence/consequently sound more formal than result]
- His remarks resulted in everyone getting angry [as a verb + in]
- The events had an outcome that no-one could have predicted [result of a process or events, or of meetings, discussions, etc.]
- The upshot of all these problems was that we had to start again [less formal than outcome]
- When the election results were announced, chaos ensued [formal]

Exercises

12.1 Make full sentences using 'cause' words.

Example: *closure of 20 mines -> strikes in coal industry. The closure of 20 mines sparked off a lot of strikes in the coal industry.*

- 1 announcement ----- * strong attack from opposition
- 2 new Act of Parliament ----- » great changes in industry
- 3 signalling fault ----- * train crash
- 4 violent storm ----- * wall collapsed
- 5 food shortages ----- * riots in several cities
- 6 food shortages ----- » poor management of the economy

12.2 Make two sentences into one, using the 'reason and purpose' words in brackets.

Example: *There was a controversial decision. She wrote to the local newspaper to protest, (prompt) The controversial decision prompted her to write to the local newspaper to protest.*

- 1 I didn't contact you. I'd lost your phone number, (reason)
- 2 I will not sign. This contract is illegal, (grounds)
- 3 The government passed a new law. It was in order to control prices, (aim)
- 4 She sent everyone flowers. I wonder why? (motives)

5 The salary was high. She applied for the job. (prompt)

12.3 The pictures show the results of events. Imagine what the causes might be and describe the events in different ways.



1 The road was blocked.



2 Everyone got a refund.



3 The customers got angry.



4 We had to walk home.

12.4 Fill in the missing words.

- 1 My reasons..... not joining the club are personal.
- 2 The purpose..... this pedal is to control the speed.
- 3 I came here the aim..... resolving our dispute.
- 4 His stupidity has resulted us having to do more work.
- 5 All this arose one small mistake we made.
- 6 It was done a view..... lowering inflation.
- 7 That press article has..... rise a lot of criticism.

Chapter 13. Concession and contrast

Concession means accepting one part of a state of affairs but putting another argument or fact against it.

Although they were poor, they were independent.

He is a bit stupid. He's very kind, nevertheless.

Verbs of concession

example

paraphrase

and comment

I acknowledge/accept that he has
- worked hard but it isn't enough.
[more than acknowledge]

I agree but...
[accept is less formal]

I admit I was wrong, but I still
of what I'm accused of.
think we were right to doubt her.

I accept I'm guilty

I concede that you are right
point in our argument,
about the goal, but not the method.

You have won this

[formal]

Adverbs and other phrases for concession

OK, you're sorry. That's all well and good, but how are you going to pay us back?

You shouldn't seem so surprised. After all, I did warn you.

It's all very well saying you love dogs, but who'll take it for walks if we do get one?

He is boring, and he is rather cold and unfriendly, but, for all that, he is your uncle and we should invite him.

Admittedly, she put a lot of effort in, but it was all wasted.

Everywhere in Europe they use metric measures. In contrast, Britain still uses non-metric.

It's not actually raining now. On the other hand, it may rain later, so take the umbrella.

Remember: On the other hand means 'that is true and this is true'; On the contrary means 'that is not true, but this is true', e.g. John, quiet? On the contrary, he's the noisiest person I know or John is rather arrogant. On the other hand, he can be very kind.

Note also these collocating phrases for contrast.

When it comes to politics, Jim and Ann are poles apart.

There's a world of difference between being a friend and a lover.

There's a great divide between left and right wing in general.

A yawning gap divides rich and poor in many countries.

There's a huge discrepancy between his ideals and his actions.

Exercises

13.1 Rewrite these sentences using the most likely verb from A opposite (there is usually more than one possibility).

- 1 I know that you weren't solely to blame, but you must take some responsibility.
- 2 Okay, I was wrong, you were right; he is a nice guy.
- 3 The company is prepared to say that you have suffered some delay, but we do not accept liability.
- 4 She didn't deny that we had done all we could, but she was still not content.

13.2 Write a beginning for these sentences, as in the example.

- 1 *I expected Mary to be fall and dark.* The reverse was true; she was short, with fair hair.
- 2 On the other hand, it does have a big garden, so I think we should rent it.
- 3 *Jim:* ? *Mary:* On the contrary, it's one of the cheapest hotels in town.
- 4 In contrast, the traffic in Britain drives on the left.
- 5 ; quite the opposite. I feel quite full. I had a huge breakfast.

13.3 Complete the sentences with phrases from B opposite.

- 1 Okay, you've cleaned the kitchen, , but what about the mess in the dining-room.
- 2 No need to panic , it doesn't start till six.
- 3 She's bossy and sly, but , she is a friend.
- 4 saying you'll pay me back soon; when is what I want to know!

13.4 Choose between on the other hand and on the contrary.

- 1 I'm not worried, , I feel quite calm.
- 2 It's expensive, but..... , we do need it.

Chapter 14. Text-referring words

Text-referring words are ones that pick up their content from the surrounding text. This sentence in isolation does not mean much:

We decided to look at the problem again and try to find a solution.

What problem? We need to refer to some other sentence or to the context to find out. Problem and solution help organise the argument of the text, but they do not tell us the topic of the text. They refer to something somewhere else. Here are some examples. What the word in bold refers to is underlined.

Pollution is increasing. The problem is getting worse each day.

Should taxes be raised or lowered? This was the biggest issue in the election, [topic causing great argument and controversy]

Whether the war could have been avoided is a question that continues to interest historians.

Let's discuss crime. It's always an interesting topic, [subject to argue about or discuss, e.g. in a debate or in an essay]

Punishment is only one aspect of crime, [part of the topic]

Problem-solution words

Text-referring words are often associated with common patterns in text, such as the 'problem-solution' type of text. Note the words in bold connected with problems and solutions here and try to learn them as a family.

The situation in our cities with regard to traffic is going from bad to worse.

Congestion is a daily feature of urban life.

The problem is now beginning to affect our national economies.

Unless a new approach is found to controlling the number of cars, we will never find a solution to the dilemma.

In this dialogue, two politicians are arguing on the radio. Note how the words in bold refer to parts of the argument.

A: Your claim that we are doing nothing to invest in industry is false. We invested £10 billion last year. You have ignored this fact.

B: But the investment has all gone to service industries. The real point is that we need to invest in manufacturing.

A: That argument is out of date in a modern technological society. Our position has always been that we should encourage technology.

B: But that view will not help to reduce unemployment.

A: Rubbish. Utter rubbish.

Here are some more words associated with problem-solution texts. They are grouped in families associated with the key-words in bold. The prepositions which are normally used with these words are given in brackets.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|----------|
| situation: | state of affairs | position (with regard to) | |
| problem: | difficulty [more formal] | crisis matter | |
| response: | reaction (to) | attitude (to) | |
| solution: | answer (to) | resolution (to) | key (to) |
| way out (of) | | | |
| evaluation [of the solution]: | assessment | judgement | |

Exercises

14.1 Draw lines from the left-hand column to the right-hand column joining each sentence with a suitable label, as in the example.

1 The earth is in orbit around the sun.

problem

2 World poverty and overpopulation.

evaluation

3 God exists and loves everybody.

fact

4 I've run out of cash.

belief

5 It has proved to be most efficient.

view

6 They should get married, to my mind.

Issue



14.2 Fill the gaps with an appropriate word to refer to the underlined parts of the sentences.

1 So you were talking about animal rights? That's quite big..... in Britain nowadays.

2 We are running short of funds. How do you propose we should deal with

the

3 Is there life on other planets? This is a nobody has yet been able to answer.

4 (Teacher to the class) You can write your essay on 'My best holiday ever'. If you don't

like that..... , I'll give you another one.
 5 She thinks we should all fly around in tiny little helicopters. Thisto the traffic problem in cities is rather new and unusual. I wonder if it is viable?

14.3 These newspaper headlines have got separated from their texts. Put each one with a suitable text.

NEW APPROACH TO CANCER TREATMENT

NEW ARGUMENT OVER ECONOMIC RECESSION

SCIENTIST REJECTS CLAIMS OVER FAST FOOD

PRIME MINISTER SETS OUT VIEWS ON EUROPEAN UNION

SOLUTION TO AGE-OLD MYSTERY IN KENYA

SITUATION IN SAHEL WORSENING DAILY

1 /she said if the world community failed to respond, thousands of children could die and

2 there was no proof at all that such things were harmful, and in

3 also said that he believed that most people had a similar vision of

4 tests were being carried out to see if the new drug really did

5 the bones proved beyond doubt that human beings had inhabited the region during

6 Mr Wallis denied that this was true and said instead that all the evidence pointed to

14.4 Answer these questions with regard to yourself.

- 1 What's your approach to learning vocabulary?
- 2 What aspect of your work/studies do you find most interesting?
- 3 Which topics in this book are most useful?

PART 2.

Read through the dialogues, underline key expressions. Put the phrases under discussion into your own context. What is the etymology of the expressions mentioned?

Text 1. To pull the wool over someone's eyes

Feifei

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak with me, Feifei...

Neil

And hello, I'm Neil. And I have to say, Feifei, that's a very cool, but warm, woolly hat you're wearing.

Feifei

Oh thanks, Neil. It's unusual to get a compliment from you!

Neil

You're welcome. But why are you wearing it in the studio?

Feifei

Well, it's so cold outside. I had to wear something to keep my head warm. I suppose I should take it off now?

Neil

Actually, no. Can you pull it down a bit more, so it covers your eyes?

Feifei

Well, if you say so. There. How do I look?

Neil

Beautiful! And it demonstrates the English phrase perfectly – to pull the wool over your eyes.

Feifei

Another strange English phrase! Neil, does it mean 'not being able to see' or maybe, 'to have a very warm head'?

Neil

No. **To pull the wool over somebody's eyes** means 'to trick or deceive someone so it stops them discovering something'.

Feifei

Right. But you don't actually have to wear a woolly hat to do this.

Neil

You don't. But for now, keep the hat where it is while we hear some examples...

Examples

You can't pull the wool over my eyes! I know you've been smoking. I can smell it!

He tried to pull the wool over the eyes of the shareholders and not tell them the company was bankrupt. But they soon found out.

You can't pull the wool over her eyes. She's too smart. She'll find out you've been dating her best friend.

Feifei

You're listening to The English We Speak from BBC Learning English and we're finding out about the expression 'to pull the wool over someone's eyes', which means 'to trick or deceive someone to stop them discovering something'. So it's really about hiding something from someone?

Neil

Exactly!

Feifei

So are you pulling the wool over my eyes? Neil? Are you there?

Neil

Ha ha! She'll never know I've taken the biscuits from her handbag. OK, Feifei, you can remove your hat now. Sorry, it was just funny looking at you like that!

Feifei

Pulling the wool over my eyes is no joke! I know you stole my biscuits. You'll pay for this.

Neil

Oh no! Time to go! Bye.

Feifei

Neil, come back!

Text 2. To take the rough with the smooth

Feifei

Hello, this is The English We Speak and I'm Feifei.

Neil

And hello, I'm Neil.

Feifei

Hey great news, Neil!

Neil

Oh yes, what's that?

Feifei

I got a promotion.

Neil

Oh well done. Congratulations and all that.

Feifei

Come on, Neil – you were never going to get one. And anyway, it's not all good news.

Neil

A promotion – a pay rise, more power – how is that not all good news?

Feifei

Well, it means longer hours, harder work, having to work with you more. I expect you have some English expression to describe that!

Neil

I do, Feifei. You have to take the rough with the smooth. It means you have to accept the bad or unpleasant things in a situation as well as the good things. In other words, you can't have everything.

Feifei

Thanks for the sympathy, Neil.

Neil

Here are some good things though, Feifei: examples!

Examples

A: I'm going to use my qualification to get a really good job, but I've lots of studying to do before I get it.

B: Well you have to take the rough with the smooth but good luck!

Having kids is very fulfilling but it can be challenging too, especially the lack of sleep – but I guess I have to take the rough with the smooth!

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English and we're learning about the phrase 'to take the rough with the smooth' which means you have to accept the bad things in a situation as well as the good things.

Neil

So poor you, Feifei – you've got a great news promotion but you're going to have to work longer. So fewer lunches with me, less time at the pub...

Feifei

The expression for that would be 'to take the smooth with the smooth'. But do you know what – this programme is a good example of taking the rough with the smooth.

Neil

So you mean there are some good things and some bad things? Hmm, so what are they?

Feifei

Well, the rough things are presenting with you...

Neil

And the smooth things?

Feifei

The smooth things – the good things – are it's a short programme and it's nearly over. It's time to go, Neil.

Neil

Thank goodness. Enjoy your promotion then – hope it goes smoothly

Feifei

It will! Bye.

Neil

Bye.

Text 3. Hard-nosed

Feifei

Hello, welcome to The English We Speak, with me, Feifei.

Rob

And me, Rob. Now Feifei, would you call yourself hard-nosed?

Feifei

Oh here we go again – you're trying to insult me. Can we leave my nose out of the conversation please?

Rob

I was starting to compliment you.

Feifei

Go on... why is having a hard nose a compliment?

Rob

Not having a hard nose but being hard-nosed describes someone who is practical...

Feifei

OK.

Rob

...someone who is determined and tough-minded. That's you, isn't it?

Feifei

Hmmm maybe. Well, yes I suppose that could describe me.

Rob

I thought so. Let's hear some more examples of this word 'hard-nosed'....

Examples

She's a hard-nosed reporter - she got the scoop that none of the other TV channels managed to get.

When my son was ill I asked my boss for time off but he's so hard-nosed he said 'no'!

Our company is in financial trouble, we need a hard-nosed business person to come in and save us from closing.

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English and we're learning about the word 'hard-nosed', which describes someone who is practical, determined and tough-minded. But hold on, Rob...

Rob

Yes?

Feifei

I've been researching this word and understand that being hard-nosed also describes someone who is stubborn, unforgiving and insensitive! Erm, Rob, can we talk about this please?

Rob

I was trying to be nice!

Feifei

I don't care. I will not forgive you.

Rob

What about if I called you soft-nosed?

Feifei

No. From now on I'm only going to present with Neil. Now, I've got a pile of work to do so I'm off to write some scripts.

Rob

There you go – hard-nosed – practical, determined, stubborn and unforgiving.

Feifei

Goodbye!

Rob

What did I say?

Text 4. To have a soft spot

Feifei

Hello, this is The English We Speak and I'm Feifei.

Rob

And hello, I'm Rob.

Feifei

Rob, didn't you know it's very rude to eat while talking?

Rob

Sorry! It's just... somebody left these doughnuts here and I had to eat them – I have a soft spot for doughnuts.

Feifei

Couldn't you wait?

Rob

No, sorry I can't – ooo, is that chocolate I can see in your bag – you couldn't spare a few chunks could you? I have a soft spot for chocolate as well.

Feifei

No Rob, you can't but can I assume a 'soft spot' refers to your large and soft belly you have as a result of eating too many sweet things?

Rob

How dare you! Having a soft spot does not mean having a fat belly – not that I have one anyway. If you have a soft spot for something, it means you have the feeling of really liking something or someone.

Feifei

Right. And it's quite a strong feeling?

Rob

It is. When you have a soft spot for someone it means you have a lot of affection for them. Is there anyone you have a soft spot for, Feifei?

Feifei

Hmmm. At the moment I just have soft spot for some examples!

Examples

He always had a soft spot for the woman in accounts – and guess what? Now they're getting married!

She has a soft spot for designer shoes – her cupboard is crammed with hundreds of pairs, some she's never even worn!

She's got a soft spot for her English teacher and keeps buying him presents – and she's always the first to turn up for his lessons.

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English and we're learning about the phrase 'to have a soft spot' – which is a feeling of really liking something or someone. So Rob, you asked if I had a soft spot for someone and I do!

Rob

Ooo, go on.

Feifei

He's tall and handsome...

Rob

Oh yes.

Feifei

A little beard...

Rob

Of course...

Feifei

And a natural performer.

Rob

I knew it! You only had to say, Feifei...

Feifei

Yes, it's the great actor, Scott Foley.

Rob

Oh I see. You have a soft spot for him?

Feifei

I do. And how about you, Rob?

Rob

There's nobody – just doughnuts – soft, round, sweet and squidgy in the middle – what's not to like?

Feifei

Ah, just like you then!

Rob

Time to go Feifei. Bye!

Feifei

Bye bye!

Text 5. Give us a bell

Rob

Hello, I'm Rob...

Feifei

... and I'm Feifei and this is The English We Speak.

Rob

So Feifei, what are you doing this weekend?

Feifei

I thought I'd do some sightseeing in London – I never get time to see my home city, so that's what I'm going to do.

Rob

Good idea. You mean the Tower of London, St Paul's Cathedral, Westminster Abbey...

Feifei

...yes and especially Big Ben. I've always wanted to stand underneath and hear the clock strike 12.

Rob

Do you know what, I might the do same thing. When you're there, give us a bell and I'll come and meet you.

Feifei

'Give us a bell'? There is no way I can give you a bell – do you know how heavy it is?

Rob

Errr, I don't want a bell from the clock tower. I just meant, give me a call – on your phone. Give us a bell!

Feifei

Why didn't you just say that!

Rob

'A bell' originates from the days when phones had a bell that rang when someone called it. So when I say 'a bell', I mean 'a call'. So will you 'give us a bell'?

Feifei

Let me just think about that, while we hear some more examples...

Examples

When you get there, give us a bell and tell us what it's like.

Just give us a bell and I'll tell you how to get here.

After our blind date, he told me to give him a bell but every time I call it his phone diverts to voicemail.

Feifei

That's give me – or give us – a bell, meaning phone me! But Rob, you said give US a call – are you going to be with someone else?

Rob

No. In informal English we tend to say 'us' even when there's just one of us – just me. But of course 'us' can mean more than one person.

Feifei

Right. But this weekend you want me to call you because you'll be on your own and you've got nothing else to do – so you want to spend the day sightseeing with me?

Rob

Yes. Just give us a bell and I'll be there.

Feifei

Hmmm, well sorry I can't – I haven't got your number.

Rob

Well, I could give you a bell – what's your number again?

Feifei

Ah, saved by the bell – sorry, got to go, maybe next time. See ya.

Rob

Oh. Bye

Text 6. Keep a lid on it

Feifei

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Feifei.

Neil

And hello, I'm Neil. Phwa! What is that smell?

Feifei

Rob's homemade cooking.

Neil

Rob cooks?!

Feifei

Yes, he does. But it doesn't taste very nice.

Neil

So why do you have to eat it – and why do have to make the studio stink of it?

Feifei

Well, I don't want to offend him. He keeps giving me his homemade food and asking me for some honest feedback. And I just tell him 'it's interesting, unique, special'.

Neil

Oh Feifei, you need to keep a lid on it.

Feifei

Well, if you think that'll stop the smell, I will.

Neil

That's not what I meant, although it's a good idea. If you 'keep a lid on something' it means to keep something under control – to stop the situation getting worse.

Feifei

OK, Neil!

Neil

Here are some examples of this phrase in action.

Examples

I couldn't keep a lid on my feelings about the rota so I shouted at the boss!

With rising food prices, it's hard to keep a lid on how much I spend at the supermarket.

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English and we're looking at the phrase 'to keep a lid on something' which means to keep something under control and to stop the situation from getting worse. But this isn't the only meaning, is it?

Neil

No. If you keep a lid on something, it can also mean you keep something secret. Like this...

Example

I've heard that Daisy is expecting a baby – but keep a lid on it until it's official!

Feifei

OK Neil, you're telling me to keep a lid on things by telling Rob to stop giving me his homemade food?

Neil

Yes – unless his cooking is amazing.

Feifei

It's not.

Neil

Right, well tell him you're on a diet or you've become vegan and that should stop him. And I will keep your little lie a secret.

Feifei

You mean, you'll keep a lid on it?

Neil

Exactly. But in the meantime, could you actually keep a lid on that box of food please? It stinks!

Feifei

OK. Right, I'm off to speak to Rob. Bye.

Neil

Remember to be firm and say what you mean.

Rob

Hi, Neil. Feifei doesn't seem to want this delicious food I made. Would you like it?

Neil

Err... go on then. Looks lovely. Bye.

Text 7. Bleed someone dry

Feifei

Hello. I'm Feifei and this is The English We Speak.

Neil

And I'm... ouch... Neil.

Feifei

Oh, Neil, are you in pain?

Neil

Yeah. I cut my hand yesterday. Blood everywhere. Look at this cut!

Feifei

Yuk! That's horrible. So tell me how it happened.

Neil

Well, my shower has been leaking for ages. I'm not good at fixing things so I got this plumber in to fix it. I found his details on the internet – D. Odgy Plumbers – "Got a leak? We'll make you pay for it."

Feifei

Hmm. That doesn't sound like a very reputable plumber.

Neil

Well, he wasn't. He bled me dry!

Feifei

What? You mean he attacked you and that's how you cut your hand. Oh, Neil, you need to tell the police.

Neil

Don't panic, Feifei. He didn't touch me, but what he did do was a very bad job, he made lots of mess and then charged me lots of money for doing it – he basically charged me a whole month's salary – that's what I mean by 'bleeding me dry'.

Feifei

So you gave him the money - he didn't steal it?

Neil

Yeah - not exactly, but somehow he managed to extract all my money from me. Let's hear some examples, shall we?

Examples

My old car keeps breaking down. It's bleeding me dry!

John is taking legal action against the company. He wants to bleed them dry for all the pain he has suffered.

This divorce has bled me dry – I can't even afford to go on holiday now.

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from the BBC and we're finding out about the phrase 'to bleed someone dry', meaning to extract or drain all of someone's money. But Neil, why did you pay the plumber if he

did such a bad job?

Neil

Well, he was a big guy and... well, I don't like to complain or make a fuss.

Feifei

Oh, how very English! But how did you cut your hand?

Neil

After he left, I tried to use the shower but I slipped over because of all the water.

Feifei

Oh, poor you. Shall we go for lunch and take your mind off things?

Neil

Sorry, Feifei. I can't afford it – the plumber bled me dry, remember!

Feifei

My treat!

Neil

Oh, come on. Let's go. See ya.

Feifei

Bye.

Text 8. Pot luck

Feifei

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak, I'm Feifei...

Rob

...and hello, I'm Rob. Now Feifei, I've got a confession to make...

Feifei

OK, so what is this confession?

Rob

Well, I haven't chosen a piece of authentic real English to explain today.

Feifei

Oh. Do you have any choices?

Rob

Well here is the list of phrases... have a look, what do you think?

Feifei

Hmmm, let me see.... Shall we take 'pot luck'?

Rob

'Pot luck' – So you mean one at random and see what happens?

Feifei

No, I mean let's pick 'pot luck' as a phrase – look, it's there on your list.

Rob

Feifei you are a genius. You have just explained an authentic English phrase – job done.

Feifei

Don't sound so surprised!

Rob

Well our phrase is pot luck which describes a situation in which one must take a chance that whatever is available will prove to be good or acceptable.

Feifei

Yes, pot luck describes a situation that isn't planned or prepared, you just take a chance and hope that the result will be good or acceptable. Let's take pot luck Rob and hope these examples will show this phrase in action...

Examples

We didn't know which restaurant to eat at, so took pot luck and chose the one recommended in the guide book.

If you can't decide which book to pick, take pot luck, I'm sure they'll all be good to read.

I'm going to take pot luck, and I'm sure the course I choose will be the right one for me.

Feifei

So if you take pot luck at something, you take a chance that whatever is available will prove to be good or acceptable. It's a bit like presenting this programme with you Rob!

Rob

Not exactly Feifei – I am the only presenter available so you don't get any choice about who you present with – there is no luck involved.

Feifei

True – that's not pot luck, that's bad luck – is that on your list of phrases?

Rob

Let me have a look... no, but next time let's choose our English phrase before we come to the studio so we won't be taking pot luck anymore.

Feifei

Yes let's. See ya.

Rob

Bye.

Text 9. Donkey's years

Feifei

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Feifei...

Rob

And I'm... Rob.

Feifei

Errr... sorry Rob. What did you say?

Rob

I said, I'm... Rob.

Feifei

Right, and why have you brought a donkey into the studio?

Rob

To help with today's authentic

English phrase – which is... donkey's years.

Feifei

So is this about age and how I look like a donkey?

Rob

Not exactly Feifei. The phrase comes from rhyming slang – donkey's years rhymes with donkey's ears, yes?

Feifei

Yes. 'Donkey's years' does rhyme with 'donkey's ears' – so you're saying my ears are like a donkey's?

Rob

No. Unlike your ears, donkey's ears are long and when we say we haven't done something for 'donkey's years' we mean we haven't done something for a long time.

Feifei

Right. Good, so it's got nothing do with me looking like a donkey?

Rob

Absolutely not. Let's hear the phrase in action...

Examples

I'm so bored; I've been doing this job for donkey's years!

I haven't driven a car for donkey's years; I hope I can remember what to do.

We've got to go to Lily's party; I haven't seen her for donkey's years so it'll be great to catch up.

Feifei

That's 'donkey's years' – when we haven't done something for donkey's years, we haven't done it for a very long time. So Rob, I could say we haven't been to the cinema for donkey's years?

Rob

Yes and you'd be correct. We haven't. Shall we go now?

Feifei

OK. But does your donkey have to come too?

Rob

Oh look, he's very excited!

Feifei

Yuk! I can see.... What's that on the floor?

Rob

Ooooh yes! Perhaps we'll leave him shall we, clear that up later. Perhaps he could present some more programmes while we're away.

Feifei

Ha – that is donkey work! Bye

Rob

Bye.

Text 10. Snowflake

Neil

...Hello and welcome to The English We Speak, I'm Neil. (conspiratorially) Feifei will be joining me in just a second. She's a little bit... sensitive, so I'm going to try to deliberately upset her - just to teach you an expression in English!

Feifei

Hi Neil

Neil

Oh hi Feifei! What do you think of the new Justin Bieber album?

Feifei

Oh it's just great. I love it!

Neil

Really? (Pause) I think it's rubbish. You must have terrible taste to like Justin Bieber.

Feifei

Neil that's so rude!

Neil

It's not rude – it's just a difference of opinion. Honestly Feifei,

you're such a snowflake.

Feifei

Oh you mean beautiful and totally unique?!

Neil

Err, no... I mean you melt easily. You can call someone who gets offended or upset too easily a 'snowflake'. Here are some examples:

Examples

A so-called friend of mine deleted a comment I made on his social media page just because I didn't agree with him. What a snowflake.

There are so many places you can express yourself these days but at the same time everyone gets offended so easily. You can see why it's called 'generation snowflake'.

Neil

Generation snowflake. This expression refers to young adults who are too sensitive to handle criticism of their opinions.

Feifei

This is pretty insulting, Neil.

Neil

It IS pretty insulting, Feifei – but you're only upset because you're such a snowflake... Though, of course you're also unique and beautiful...

Feifei

Oh I see – trying to be nice in case you offend me? Who's the snowflake now, Neil!?

Neil

Well it's just better if we all get along, isn't it? Bye!

Feifei

Bye!

Text 11. Wet weekend

Feifei

Hello. I'm Feifei and this is The English We Speak.

Rob

... and hello, it's Rob here. Good weekend Feifei?

Feifei

Amazing – the weather was great so I went on a trip to the seaside. And you were going camping weren't you?

Rob

I was but it turned out to be a bit of a **wet weekend**.

Feifei

Oh no, you mean it rained? That's unlucky, the sun was out all weekend here.

Rob

Oh well the weather was fine – but I didn't go. The car broke down again so I stayed at home, doing DIY *all* weekend – boring!

Feifei

So a **wet weekend** doesn't have to involve rain?

Rob

Nope. A **wet weekend** means a boring and disappointing time.

Feifei

And it doesn't have to be at the weekend either?

Rob

Correct. This phrase just means the situation is boring just like a **wet weekend** is. You can also use the expression to describe boring people. Here are some examples...

Examples

That was a **wet weekend**, my friends were coming to stay but cancelled at the last minute.

My cousin's a bit of a **wet weekend**, he's got no personality and nothing to say.

I had to do my accounts yesterday – it was like a **wet weekend** in a

paint factory!

Feifei

So a **wet weekend** describes a boring or disappointing experience or person. Well I'm glad to say that you're not a **wet weekend** Rob – I like your sense of adventure, so when are you going to go camping again?

Rob

Next weekend.

Feifei

Oh really. Have you seen the weather forecast?

Rob

No.

Feifei

Rain *all* weekend.... Oh what's wrong? You have a face like a **wet weekend**!

Rob

A face like a **wet weekend**? You mean I look unhappy? Well I'm not, if it rains, I'm coming round to yours for dinner!

Feifei

Oh no. Bye.

Rob

Bye.

Text 12. Out of the loop

Feifei

Hello, and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Feifei and with me is Neil.

Neil

Hi there.

Feifei

Neil, what are you doing sitting down?

Neil

Presenting this programme – like we always do – sitting in a chair.

Feifei

You clearly don't know about our new healthy working policy – no more sitting down – standing up is better for you!

Neil

Oh, alright then, I'll stand up if I have to.

Feifei

Oh, Neil! No drinking coffee in the studio. Health and safety! Obviously, you missed our meeting about the new healthy working policy. You are clearly out of the loop.

Neil

What? There's a loop I have to stand in now?

Feifei

No, Neil. You missed our meeting where we discussed the new healthy working policy, and now you're out of the loop. It means you don't have, or are not aware of the knowledge a particular group of people do have. In other words, you've missed out on something.

Neil

Oh, I hate missing out on things. We'd better hear some examples so I can be 'in the loop' about this English phrase.

Examples

I've been out of the loop since I went on holiday. I didn't know Geeta and Bilal had got engaged!

They kept me out of the loop, so it was a shock to discover that they were moving our sales team to Birmingham!

Please keep me in the loop if you have any more discussions about the building work. Thanks!

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English. And we're hearing about the phrase 'out of the loop', which describes not having, or not being aware of the knowledge a particular group of people do have. The opposite is being 'in the loop'. But Neil, you are out of

the loop.

Neil

Yes, yes, yes. You've made that clear. I missed the meeting and I don't know about this stupid 'healthy working policy'.

Feifei

Where were you anyway?

Neil

Down at the café. You know, having a big fry-up. Eggs, bacon, sausages! Delicious!

Feifei

So unhealthy! That's got to stop. Come on, Neil!

Neil

Where are we going?

Feifei

We're going for a lunchtime run with the rest of the team. It's part of our new healthy working policy!

Neil

Urghh! I think I'd rather stay out of the loop from now on.

Both

Bye!

Text 13. Smombie

Neil

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Neil and joining me today is...

Feifei

Argh! Ouch!

Neil

...Feifei... who's just walked right into a door.

Feifei

Hi. I was just catching up on some messages on my phone and

I sort of lost track of where I was.

Neil

Hmm, yes, you were walking around like a zombie – a smartphone zombie. A 'smombie' is a person who walks around with their head bowed down, writing messages or playing games on their phone and not paying any attention to the world around them!

Feifei

Even if they're in a situation which might be dangerous – like crossing a road.

Neil

Or walking into a radio studio door! How's your nose?

Feifei

OK, OK, Neil. You've made your point. Let's hear some examples.

Examples

I'm too terrified to drive past the college these days. You never know when a smombie's going step into the road in front of the car!

I was knocked flying the other day by a smombie as I was trying to get a bus. I don't even think she knew she'd bumped into me!

People don't know how to communicate with each other face-to-face any more. They are such smombies!

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English and in this programme we're learning a really new word which is made up of two words – 'smartphone' and 'zombie'.

Neil

The word is 'smombie'. It's actually from German and has won Germany's 'Youth Word of the Year' competition.

Feifei

But people are now starting to use it in English too. It describes people who walk around totally absorbed by their smartphones.

Neil

You know, the kind of people who walk into the road without looking

at the traffic... Or into studio doors.

Feifei

Enough now Neil!

Neil

Bye!

Feifei

Bye.

Text 14. Freegan

Feifei

Hello again. I'm Feifei and this is The English We Speak, and Rob's here too...

Rob

Yes I am. Hello. And I'm feeling a bit peckish.

Feifei

Peckish?

Rob

You know, a little bit hungry.

Feifei

Well when we've finished, you can go down to the canteen and buy yourself a bite to eat.

Rob

What?

Feifei

A bite to eat – a snack, a sandwich and a packet of crisps maybe. And can you get me something too please?

Rob

No I won't be doing that – not now that I'm a freegan. That means I don't pay for food - I only eat what's free.

Feifei

Right. So Rob, how do you get it – beg for it, steal it?

Rob

Of course not, Feifei. I just eat food that's been wasted – maybe thrown away by supermarkets or restaurants. You know, I hate to see food being wasted.

Feifei

Me too. So a freegan eats food that has been wasted - maybe because it is out of date or too much has been made. Wow, Rob. This sounds like a good idea.

Rob

Yes it is. Let's hear from some other freegans in these examples – which are also free!

Examples

I'm trying to do my bit for the environment by reducing food that's thrown away – so I'm becoming a freegan.

My brother was so annoyed when he saw loads of food dumped in a bin at the back of the supermarket that he decided to collect it and give it to the homeless – I suppose you could call him a freegan.

Thrown away food isn't rubbish, it's free food! That's why I'm a freegan.

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English and today Rob is telling us about being a freegan – that's someone who only eats food that has been wasted or thrown away.

Rob

And Feifei, freegans like me don't just eat free food, we give it to people who need it more than us.

Feifei

Rob, you've changed. Why are you being so responsible and charitable?

Rob

I'm just a good person – oh and it's saved me loads of money.

Feifei

Oh I get it. You're not being a good person – you're just being tight!

Rob

Tight – you mean not generous? Honestly!

Feifei

You're not a freegan – you are a freeloader. Someone who expects things for free without giving anything in return. Come on admit it Rob.

Rob

Errm, I'm just going to the canteen. What was it you wanted? Oh and could you lend me some money to buy something please?

Feifei

Bye Rob

Rob

Bye.

Text 15. Barking up the wrong tree

Feifei

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Feifei...

Rob

And I'm Rob. Hello. Errr, Feifei, you're looking a bit angry.

Feifei

Me, angry! I am angry.

Rob

Oh no, what's the problem?

Feifei

I think you know Rob. Somebody told the boss that I spilt coffee over his computer yesterday – and now he's angry with me.

Rob

Oh no. What kind of mean and horrible person would try and get you

into trouble?

Feifei

You and the boss were the only people left in the office last night. Hmmm?

Rob

Whoa – hold on Feifei. If you are implying it was me who told the boss, then you are barking up the wrong tree.

Feifei

Please don't make me any angrier by saying that I am like a dog!

Rob

No, no Feifei. Just calm down. I should be angry because you are making the wrong assumption about who told the boss, OK? That's what I mean by barking up the wrong tree – you want to blame someone but you got the wrong person. I didn't even know you had done it.

Feifei

OK, I'm sorry. So the phrase 'barking up the wrong tree' means making the wrong assumption when trying to achieve something. Shall we hear some examples while I make you a coffee to say sorry...?

Examples

If you think I have enough spare cash to pay for your holiday, then you're barking up the wrong tree.

You're barking up the wrong tree if you think I was the one who said you were leaving. It wasn't me!

You're barking up the wrong tree if you think I'm going to lend you my car. I've seen how you drive!

Feifei

You're listening to The English We Speak. We're talking about the phrase 'barking up the wrong tree'. It means to make a wrong assumption about someone or something.

Rob

The phrase can also mean doing something in a way that will not work – you're basically wasting your time. Like a detective trying to solve a crime by obviously arrest- ing the wrong man – he's barking

up the wrong tree.

Feifei

OK Rob understood – and here's your coffee to say sorry for barking up the wrong tree.

Rob

Thanks – make sure you don't spill it this time. The boss would be really angry!
(ANGRY DOG GROWL!) ...what did I say?

Feifei

If I find out you did tell the boss, I'll make sure to bark up the right tree, OK?

Rob

Oh Feifei, I hope your bark is worse than your bite. Bye.

Feifei

Bye

Text 16. Happy-go-lucky

Feifei

Hello, I'm Feifei, and this is The English We Speak. You are Rob...

Rob

Yes and hello, you are Feifei! And Feifei, if you don't mind me saying, you're looking a bit stressed.

Feifei

Stressed! Yes, I am. I've got to give a presentation later and I don't feel very prepared.

Rob

Oh relax Feifei. There's nothing to worry about.

Feifei

Really... well I've booked the room, got my laptop ready, printed out the handouts... but there must be something else.

Rob

Well you sound very well organised to be honest so stop worrying. It's only a presentation. Everyone will be asleep anyway.

Feifei

It's easy for you to be so calm and relaxed about it – you're not doing it.

Rob

Oh come on Feifei, you know me – I'm always calm and relaxed. You could say I'm a happy-go-lucky kind of guy.

Feifei

Happy-go-lucky? Well I know you're always happy but I'm not sure about lucky!

Rob

No! Happy-go-lucky describes someone who doesn't worry about the future and just accepts what happens. It's not really about luck – it's about keeping calm and not planning everything – like you do! Now chill out and listen to these examples...

Examples

My sister is happy-go-lucky: she doesn't worry about a thing, not even exams!

I like you your happy-go-lucky attitude but you're going to have make a decision on our wedding date!

Jake's so happy-go-lucky he doesn't seem to be worried that he's losing his job. I guess he thinks everything will work out well in the end.

Feifei

So that's 'happy-go-lucky' – a phrase that describes someone who doesn't worry about the future and accepts what happens. It's something that Rob claims to be but I'm not so sure. Hey Rob, how's your presentation coming along?

Rob

What presentation?

Feifei

The one you're doing next Monday. Don't you remember, the boss said we have to take it in turns to do one?

Rob

Oh yeah, I remember. Don't worry, it'll be fine. What's the worst that can happen?

Feifei

Are you sure? Have you booked a room, prepared your notes, got your laptop working?

Rob

Of course... there's plenty of time to sort that out... isn't there? I'm afraid I've just got to head off now, things to do... bye!

Feifei

Oh dear. It looks like his happiness and luck have gone. Perhaps 'happy-go-lucky' isn't the best phrase to describe Rob. Bye.

Text 17. Whizz-kid

Feifei

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Feifei.

Rob

And I'm Rob.

Feifei

Hey Rob, have you ever wondered what you'd be doing if you weren't here?

Rob

Hmmm... Lying on the sofa, watching TV I expect.

Feifei

No Rob. I mean in your career – if you weren't a talented presenter like you are?

Rob

I'd be a financial whizz-kid: investing in the stock market, making loads of money.

Feifei

A whizz-kid? You mean someone young, very clever and successful at

doing something?

Rob

Yes, that's a whizz-kid! I don't know why I didn't do it.

Feifei

Do you want me to tell you?

Rob

No. Let's just hear about some other whizz-kids who are young, intelligent and successful, just like me...

Examples:

My nephew is a computer whizz-kid: he earns a fortune fixing people's laptops!

Our new financial whizz-kid has come straight from university and he's doing really well.

She was a whizz-kid at university, so it's no wonder she's now a partner at one of the top legal firms.

Feifei

So they are whizz-kids – clever, successful or skilful people – and most of all, they are young, like kids! And there's the problem Rob.

Rob

A problem?

Feifei

Yes, you're not young anymore.

Rob

OK, clever then!

Feifei

Hmm, I'm not so sure about that.

Rob

Alright, successful – one out of three isn't bad.

Feifei

Well, erm, errr...

Rob

OK. Perhaps I'd never be a financial whizz-kid. Maybe I'll stick to my other plan.

Feifei

Which is?

Rob

Sitting on the sofa, watching TV. I'm off to do it now. Bye.

Feifei

Hmm, not a whizz-kid then, just a lazy man. Bye.

Text 18. Just the ticket

Feifei

Hello, I'm Feifei, and this is The English We Speak and today I'm with Rob. Hi Rob, how are you?

Rob

Hi Feifei... I'm fine but I can't quite understand why you've brought me to a railway station.

Feifei

Isn't that obvious?

Rob

No. And what's that piece of paper you're waving in your hand?

Feifei

Oh this? This is a ticket.

Rob

A ticket. Why would you bring me to a railway station and show me a ticket? It's cold and we could be in a warm studio presenting this programme. And anyway, don't you know it's my birthday and we're supposed to be going out to celebrate later?

Feifei

I know it's your birthday, you told me last week and you said something about wanting a present that was 'just the ticket'. So here it is.

Rob

Oh Feifei – I didn't want a ticket – when I said 'just the ticket' I meant I wanted something that was exactly what I wanted or needed: A camera, a computer game or maybe a nice bottle of whisky.

Feifei

Oh right, I see.

Rob

Oh dear, what a wasted trip Feifei. Now we're here, let's hear some more examples of the phrase 'just the ticket'...

Examples

Oh I feel terrible: I've got a cold and my nose it blocked but a drink of hot honey and lemon would be just the ticket to make me feel better.

I think a new art gallery will be just the ticket for improving the image of the town and encouraging more people to visit.

Our car has got seven seats, so it's just the ticket for taking all the kids to football practice every week.

Feifei

So that's 'just the ticket' – which describes something that exactly what is wanted or needed. OK Rob, so you wanted something for your birthday that was 'just the ticket' – well you're looking at it.

Rob

You Feifei?

Feifei

No Rob. This ticket in my hand. Have you actually looked at it?

Rob

OK let me see... Wow! A train ticket to Paris, for me? That's really generous of you. Thanks Feifei! When do we go?

Feifei

We? No, it's just one ticket – I couldn't afford two. Now look, the train's about to leave so you had better go. Have a good trip!

Rob

Oh right. Well I had better go. See ya.

Feifei

Bye Rob. Phew, two days in the office without Rob – that is 'just the ticket' for me!

Text 19. Do a runner

Feifei

Welcome to The English We Speak, I'm Feifei...

Rob

And I'm Rob. Quick Feifei, shut that door.

Feifei

OK, calm down Rob, what's the problem?

Rob

Well there's something going on in the office – everyone's shouting and arguing about who broke the computer – you know, the new one with all that fancy software on it.

Feifei

Oh yes, that really expensive one. So you've run away from the situation – that makes you look very guilty.

Rob

That's true – but the problem is, I am guilty. But the boss seemed so angry, I thought it best to... well... sort of...

Feifei

Do a runner!

Rob

If you mean to leave a place in order to avoid a difficult or unpleasant situation – then I suppose you're right.

Feifei

I am!

Rob

Oh no, is someone coming? I'll just hide under the desk while we hear some examples of this phrase in action...

Examples

The new trainee did a runner after the first day – I don't think he

could cope with the high-pressure environment.

When they started to blame me for the mistake, I felt it best to do a runner and keep out of the way.

Feifei

So that's the phrase, to do a runner, which means leave a place quickly in order to avoid a difficult or unpleasant situation. But Rob, this phrase has another similar meaning too?

Rob

Yes. You can 'do a runner' from a place to avoid paying for something.

Feifei

Like a restaurant. Have you done that Rob?

Rob

Of course not! You know how honest I am.

Feifei

Honest? Is that why you are hiding in this studio, rather than admit you broke the new computer?

Rob

Well, it was an accident. Oh no... the boss is heading straight for the studio. I had better dash... see ya.

Feifei

Bye Rob. It looks like he's done a runner... again. Bye.

Text 20. Up your game

Neil

Welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Neil.

Feifei

And I'm Feifei.

Neil

Actually, Feifei, can you help me with something?

Feifei

Go on.

Neil

There's this girl I like. I want to ask her for coffee. But I don't want to seem too serious or creepy or anything. Just friendly.

Feifei

And you're writing her a message? OK.

Neil

I just can't find the words.

Feifei

Easy. Stick a couple of emojis on there. Much less formal!

Neil

You mean, like, a smiley face?

Feifei

Yeah, but those are so last year.

Neil

Maybe a love heart?

Feifei

Seriously? That's a bit too much. You need to up your emoji game!

Neil

My emoji game... like an emoji of a video game... or a football?

Feifei

No. The phrase 'to raise your game', or 'to up your game', means to improve.

Neil

Yes, it's a good phrase. Feifei, you're not working hard enough, you need to up your game!

Feifei

That's not true... but good use of 'up your game'. The phrase has now developed a bit. We often add what we're trying to improve before

the word 'game'.

Neil

Like this:

Examples

I never finish novels. I need to up my reading game.

I badly need to work on my interview game before my big interview next week.

You could do with a bit more exercise, mate. You should raise your running game!

Feifei

Great. Hope those examples help. Any progress with that text message?

Neil

Here goes: "Lucy. Please have a coffee with me tomorrow." And then some coffee emojis.

Feifei

Well, it's direct! But I still think we need to up your emoji game. Actually, and your texting game. Oh, and your dating game... We've got a lot of work to do!

Neil

Oh, ok. Well I already sent the message. Let's hope it works! And she's replied already.

Feifei

No way, what did she say?

Neil

"Neil. I thought you'd never ask! I'd love to have coffee. 3pm?" And then a couple of big smiley emojis.

Feifei

Wow, congratulations. Maybe it's me who needs to up my game.

Neil

Looks like it!

Neil+ Feifei

Bye.

Text 21. To put someone on the map

Feifei

Hello I'm Feifei and this is The English We Speak.

Neil

And hello I'm Neil.

Feifei

Neil, I wonder if you could help me. I'm trying to find something on this map.

Neil

Oh yes, map reading – I'm good at that. What are you trying to find?

Feifei

Well, I went to a gig last night and saw this new singer – he was amazing.

Neil

Thanks for inviting me! Anyway, what's that got to with a map?

Feifei

Well, afterwards everyone was talking about it and saying the gig was so good that it will 'put him on the map'. But... I just can't find him on here.

Neil

Put the map away Feifei – you won't find him there. When we say someone will be 'put on the map' it means they will become famous or become more prominent – but not on a map!

Feifei

Right! Actually Neil, I've heard about a new restaurant I ate at being 'put on the map'.

Neil

Yes, *something* as well as someone can be put on the map – or in other words, become famous, popular or well known. You must have

eaten at a good quality restaurant for it to be put on the map!

Feifei

I did! Let's tuck into some examples shall we?

Examples

Her first exhibition at the Tate gallery has put her on the map as a serious modern artist. .

This great tasting food has really put this new restaurant on the map.

Hosting the Olympics has put this city on the map as a great place to come for a holiday.

Feifei

So that's to put someone or something on the map – to become famous, popular or more prominent. I suppose it suggests that becoming famous means you are now important enough for your name to be seen or heard by everyone.

Neil

That's right. In the old days when a place was too small and unimportant it wasn't shown on a map – but when it became more important it was 'put on the map'.

Feifei

Right. Anyway Neil, let me look at that map again...

Neil

OK.

Feifei

Look! That singer I saw really is on the map – right there.

Neil

Really? What was he called?

Feifei

'Man-chester'

Neil

Manchester. Of course!

Both

Bye.

Text 22. Down in the dumps

Neil

Hello, I'm Neil... but where is Feifei?

Feifei

... sorry I'm late! Is it time for The English We Speak?

Neil

It is Feifei – but catch your breath and have a seat. Are you ok? You look a bit of a... mess!

Feifei

Me? A mess! You would be a mess if you had been where I have been.

Neil

OK calm down... and what's that smell?

Feifei

So you think I smell now! I've been to the rubbish dump!

Neil

The rubbish dump?! Why did you go there?

Feifei

Because I was looking for Rob earlier and someone said he was down in the dumps.

Neil

Feifei, that is the last place you will find someone who is down in the dumps. It's just a saying that describes someone who is unhappy, fed up and sometimes feels there is no hope.

Feifei

Oh I get it! Being depressed or unhappy is a miserable feeling – a bit like being at a rubbish dump, actually.

Neil

Exactly. Let's hear some exam- ples...

Examples

Don't be so down in the dumps, you're going on holiday tomorrow!

Oh it's Monday again, no wonder I feel so down in the dumps.

Reshma has been so down in the dumps since her boyfriend left her.

Feifei

So that's being 'down in the dumps' – feeling unhappy and miserable. So I've had a wasted trip – but I wonder why Rob is 'down in the dumps'?

Neil

It could be because his football team lost... again.

Feifei

No, he's used to that happening. It must be something more serious than that.

Neil

I know – he's feeling sad because he's not presenting this wonderful programme with you – it's such a great script isn't it!

Feifei

There's only one place for this script Neil – down in the dump!

Neil

Ha ha, very funny!

Both

Bye.

Text 23. FOMO**Rob**

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak from BBC Learning English. I'm Rob...

Feifei

And hello, I'm Feifei. We're here to teach you a real English phrase... Rob, what's that you're holding there?

Rob

Oh this... just a ticket to see one

of my favourite rock bands in concert – The Rolling Thrones.

Feifei

Oh great – and I see you've got more than one ticket.

Rob

Yes, that's right, a few of us from the office are going – it's tonight!
I'm very excited.

Feifei

[SOUNDING JEALOUS] Oh right – Rob, it sounds fun - maybe I could get a ticket and join you?

Rob

Why? You don't like rock music and you always stay in and wash your hair on a Thursday – or so you tell me anyway. Oh Feifei, you've got FOMO.

Feifei

I've got 'FOMO'? Is that bad? Is that why you didn't invite me? Oh dear, should I go and see a doctor?

Rob

No, don't see a doctor. FOMO is an acronym for 'fear of missing out'. It's a worried feeling you have that other people are doing fun things when you are not – you're missing out!

Feifei

Oh, we'd better hear some examples of other people with FOMO...

Examples

I know Martha's got FOMO, she's been moaning about not being invited to Wang's karaoke party – but she doesn't even like karaoke!

All my friends are going on holiday together but I can't afford it so I've got FOMO.

There's a message on Facebook that all the tickets to that gig are sold out – now I have a feeling of FOMO!

Feifei

So that's FOMO – fear of missing out – which describes a feeling you might have when you feel other people are doing something fun, when you are not. Well Rob, now I know what it means, I know I

haven't got it. I just wanted to be sociable, and have some fun with you all.

Rob

Sorry Feifei, even if you could get a ticket, it's boys only I'm afraid.

Feifei

Oh look, I've got a message on my social media feed... is the lead singer of your band called Mick Dagger?

Rob

That's him – the finest rock singer around – why?

Feifei

It says here, he's fallen down the stairs and broken his leg. The rock concert is cancelled!

Rob

Cancelled? Oh no. Err, what did you say you were doing tonight?

Feifei

Washing my hair.

Rob

Any chance I could come round... watch a movie, get a takeaway?

Feifei

Oh dear Rob. Have you got FOMO now? Bye.

Rob

Bye.

Text 24. To blow the cobwebs away

Feifei

Hello, I'm Feifei and welcome to The English We Speak.

Neil

... and hello, it's Neil here. Are you feeling OK Feifei – you don't look very happy?

Feifei

Oh Neil, it's been a stressful week

– I've been working late, I'm so tired - and I've had no time to do any housework – my house is a mess!

Neil

Isn't your house always a mess?!

Feifei

Ha ha, very funny!

Neil

Seriously, you need a break. Take some time off.

Feifei

Easier said than done – but how will that help?

Neil

Well, having a break from work will help blow away the cobwebs.

Feifei

Excuse me? Are you saying I should take time off so I can do my housework – and get rid of all the cobwebs in my house – do you think my house is haunted Neil?

Neil

I never said you said had cobwebs in your house – what I meant was, get some fresh air – do some exercise, get rid of that tired feeling – that's 'blowing away the cobwebs'!

Feifei

Got it! So no spiders involved?

Neil

Absolutely not. Let's hear some examples of this phrase in action.

Examples

Do you want to go hillwalking this weekend? It might help you blow the cobwebs away.

I've been stuck indoors for days, I need to blow the cobwebs away and go for a run.

I know studying is hard, why don't you go for a walk in the park to blow the cobwebs away? It might help you think more clearly.

Feifei

'To blow the cobwebs away' is the same as 'to blow away the cobwebs'. It means to get some fresh air and exercise so that you feel refreshed and can think more clearly. So it's about feeling more lively and alert?

Neil

Yes.

Feifei

Now how about blowing the cobwebs away with me and going for a run?

Neil

Running? Oh I don't know... I'm feeling a little tired actually.

Feifei

Don't be so lazy Neil! Come on, it's time to blow away your cobwebs too!

Neil

Maybe I could do your housework instead?

Both

Bye.

Text 25. A sting in the tail

Feifei

Hello I'm Feifei and welcome to The English We Speak – and joining me is Rob.

Rob

Hello everyone.

Feifei

So Rob, I hear you have a new a hobby?

Rob

Yes that's right – it's very exciting – let me show you...

Feifei

Arghh! Bees! I don't like them – shut the door! So your new hobby is bee keeping?

Rob

Yes I'm a bee keeper – and I love it - but there is a sting in the tail.

Feifei

Of course there's a sting in the tail – bees sting – and it hurts, that's why I don't like bees.

Rob

They only sting when they're angry Feifei – and anyway, when I said 'there's a sting in the tail' I wasn't referring to the bees. I meant something unpleasant comes with something that is meant to be pleasurable.

Feifei

Yes, as I said – looking after bees means you're likely to get stung.

Rob

That's true – but what I meant was bee keeping is fun but I wasn't expecting it to cost so much money – I had to buy all these hives and these special protective clothes.

Feifei

Yes, you do look silly! So you're saying bee keeping is fun but the unexpected cost of it is the sting in the tail?

Rob

Exactly. Let's hear some examples while I go and get some honey...

Examples

We had a great holiday but it had a sting in the tail – when we got home we discovered our house had been broken into.

I love her new book – the story is funny and romantic – but there's a sting in the tail when someone dies.

Yeah, we all got a pay rise this month, but there's a sting in the tail – we're expected to work longer hours.

Feifei

So that's 'a sting in the tail' – a phrase that means something un-

pleasant and sometimes unexpected happens when doing something good or fun.

Rob

OK Feifei, one of the good things about bee keeping is you get this delicious honey – and that's free - go on Feifei, try some.

Feifei

Hmmm honey, delicious! Oh no, you've brought something else with you... it's a bee!

Rob

Don't panic – I'll try to catch it... ouch! That hurt.

Feifei

Oh dear – it looks like bee keeping has more than one sting in the tail!

Rob

Very funny!

Feifei

Bye!

Text 26. Fuddy-duddy

Rob

Hello, I'm Rob...

Feifei

... And I'm Feifei and this is The English We Speak. Hey, happy birthday for last week Rob.

Rob

Thanks Feifei, yes 21 years old – where has the time gone?

Feifei

Are you sure – you don't act like a 21-year-old.

Rob

What are you saying, Feifei?

Feifei

Well, errr, look at your clothes – they're not very trendy, they're a bit

boring!

Rob

Boring?

Feifei

Yes... and come on, you're not very youthful.

Rob

Youthful?! Just because I haven't got any tattoos – who wants a tattoo anyway, they look silly, don't they? And they damage the skin as well...

Feifei

There you go – old fashioned attitudes – no way're you 21!

Rob

So you're saying I am a **fuddy-duddy**?

Feifei

A **fuddy-duddy** – that's an informal phrase to describe someone who is boring, dull and has old-fashioned attitudes. Let's hear some examples of this phrase.

Examples

Ling thinks I'm an old **fuddy-duddy** because I don't drive a flashy sports car.

My dad's a bit of a **fuddy-duddy** - he still listens to music on cassette tapes.

The bank has lost many customers over the years, probably due to its **fuddy-duddy** image.

Feifei

So a **fuddy-duddy** is someone who is old-fashioned and sometimes pompous. But Rob, being a **fuddy-duddy** isn't all bad.

Rob

Oh yes? Boring, old-fashioned – how can that be a good thing?

Feifei

Well, you make us all laugh.

Rob

Yes but for the wrong reasons – I'm off.

Feifei

Oh dear, it seems like a **fuddy-duddy** doesn't even a sense of humour. Where are you going?

Rob

To get a tattoo done.

Feifei

It'll hurt. Bye!

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