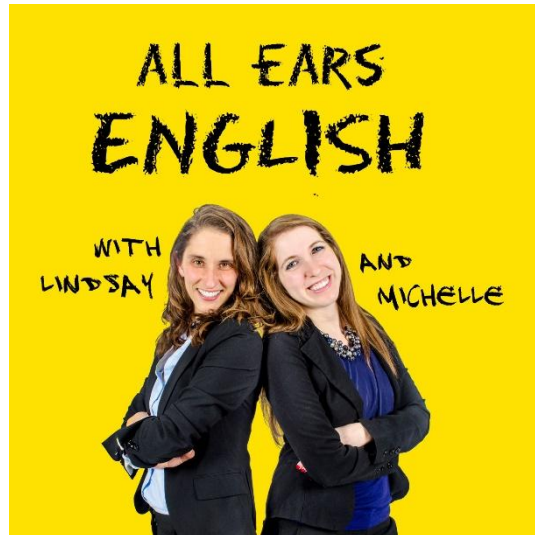


Premium Transcripts

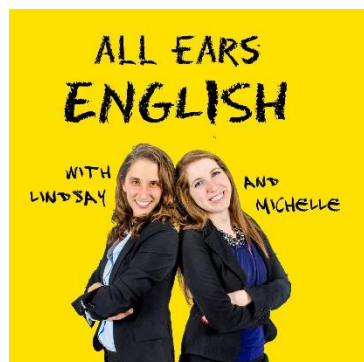
Episodes 1038-1041



Thank you so much for purchasing the premium transcripts for Episodes 1038-1041!
Good luck, enjoy the transcripts, and thanks again for being a part of All Ears English!

Connection NOT Perfection™

AEE Episode 1038: Attending a Dinner Party? How to Be a Great Guest in English.



Announcer: This is an All Ears English podcast Episode 1038: “Attending a Dinner Party? How to Be a Great Guest in English.”

[Instrumental]

Announcer: Welcome to the All Ears English Podcast, downloaded more than 50 million times. We believe in Connection NOT Perfection™, with your American hosts Lindsay McMahon, the ‘English Adventurer’, and Michelle Kaplan, the ‘New York Radio Girl,’ coming to you from Boston and New York City, U.S.A.

[Instrumental]

Announcer: And to get your transcripts delivered by email every week, go to AllEarsEnglish.com/subscribe.

[Instrumental]

Announcer: Are you getting a lot of dinner party invitations this season? Wondering what you should bring when you get invited to a dinner party in American culture? Get all of your confusion cleared up today.

[Instrumental]

Michelle: Hey (hi) Lindsay, how's it going.



Lindsay: Hey (hi) Michelle, it's going so well, it's going so well. Yeah (yes), how about you, what's up?

Michelle: Yeah (yes), everything's going really well. I have a question. Have you been to any dinner parties lately?

Lindsay: Yes, I know I have. I just can't think of which one. Yeah (yes), for sure. I mean, this weekend I'm going out to Colorado to visit my friend's family. I'm sure we'll have a dinner party out there for sure, yeah (yes).

Michelle: Ohh, okay. So, when you're going to visit your friend's family, are you going to bring them anything, like, as a gift?

Lindsay: That's a good question. So, I'm a little bit on the fence about this. I know I'm supposed to. I know when I come to visit, when I stay in someone's home, I should bring a gift, but I'm not quite sure what to bring. So, I'm kind of on the fence. But yeah (yes), in general, I would bring a gift to a dinner party.

Michelle: Okay, yeah (yes). I mean, me too. Because I've been to a few recently. I don't know, just something about the time of year. And yeah (yes), I tend to, sometimes it can be a little bit hard to figure out if you should or not. And, I don't know, kind of, I wonder about in places around the world, like, in other cultures, is it common that you also feel that you should bring something or not? But, I mean, I think in American culture it's pretty important. What do you think, Lindsay?

Lindsay: I think it's pretty important to not show up empty-handed. Actually, yeah (yes), now I remember one. We had dinner, actually, with my best friend from middle school and high school last Friday. And we went out there with her and her husband and we brought some beer, we brought some craft beer and two bottles of wine. So yeah (yes), typically, you might show up with a bottle of wine, beer if you know the person likes a special kind of beer, or a dish. But are we talking about gifts like physical gifts or what do you usually bring, Michelle?



Michelle: Yeah (yes), I mean, it really depends on the situation. I don't think that I usually bring, like, a real, like, gift gift. Like, I'm not going to give someone, like, a shirt.

Lindsay: [laughter] That would be weird.

Michelle: Yeah (yes). You know, I wouldn't say it's something like that, more something having to do with, like, the home or a meal or something like that. So, that's what we're going to go into a little bit more today. Because we may have some listeners who are maybe living in the U.S. and they're invited to a dinner party and, you know. You don't want to kind of, like you said, I like what your phrase was, was you don't want to show up empty-handed. Right, Lindsay?

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), I think this is the perfect topic for this time of year. Like you said, you're going to a lot of dinner parties and our listeners will be doing that. Because, well, you know, the fall season is coming. People like to have dinner parties and warm, you know, stay inside, be cozy in the fall. And then Thanksgiving comes and then we we're all into Christmas parties. So yeah (yes), this is good, this is good.

Michelle: Right, okay, awesome, alright. But what do we want to remind our listeners of before we get started?

Lindsay: Alright. So, guys, we want to remind you, if you are taking the IELTS exam this year, the only resource that you need to get started is the IELTS Energy podcast. It's with me and Jessica. You can search, type into your search bar in iTunes, IELTS Energy podcast and you will find us over there. And Michelle, I want to say thank you to our reviewers, people who reviewed us in Apple podcast. So, thank you to, let's see, Masa D from Japan, Christian Souza from Brazil, Ecrom Bay from Turkey and someone from Russia on September 10th. Michelle, these are great reviews. People are saying that they are improving their listening skills, they're feeling motivated. Doesn't that feel great to read these reviews?

Michelle: That makes me so happy to hear that. Like, you know, it's -- I love hearing about people, you know, like the show, and especially when they say, like,



you know, it's motivating or that it's improving their skills. Like, oh my gosh, that means so much. Like, I am so honored, actually. Really.

Lindsay: That's awesome, Michelle. It's so good. So, guys, yeah (yes), if you haven't reviewed the show, make sure you do it. We want to see what you think about the show. We want to see your question for a topic inside your review. That's a great place to ask your question. Michelle, what kind of questions do we like?

Michelle: We like specific questions.

Lindsay: Exactly. The more specific, the better.

Michelle: That's right, that's right. Alright, well, thank you again. Alright. So, let's get back into it, Lindsay. So, what you should do, I mean, what should you do if you're invited to a dinner party? So, you know, of course, you're going to figure out if you're going or not, but let's say you decide that you're going. I think that there are kind of two major steps that you want to think about. Do you want to hear what they are?

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), what are they? I need to know. Because sometimes I get confused too.

Michelle: Ohh God. Alright. Well, this is what I would do. So, typically, I think that you should ask if the host needs you to bring something. Right? Like, maybe you want to contribute something to the meal, maybe. I mean, I've had friends say, "Sure, could you make a salad?" or something like that. Right?

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), yeah (yes), that's good. Okay.

Michelle: So, first you can just be direct. And then I think if the host says no, this is number two. Unless you're, like, this is your best friend and you know for sure they really actually mean no, and you guys go over to each other's place a lot, then you should still consider bringing something. So, even if they say, "Ohh no, no, I'm good, thanks." I mean, I still think you should bring something. What do you think?



Lindsay: I do, I do. I mean, I like to, I think we're going to get into the phrases in just a minute, but I even lean, for number one, I lean even more into, like, just saying, "What should I bring?" Just assuming that I'm going to bring something and just tell me what it is.

Michelle: Yeah (yes).

Lindsay: You know what I mean?

Michelle: That's true. Yeah (yes), yeah (yes), we're definitely going to get into that, so I like that a lot. But yeah (yes), I mean, even if they say no, like, don't necessarily take it as then it doesn't matter if I don't go, if I don't get something.

Lindsay: Right, right, right. You might still want to pick something up even if they say they don't need anything at all. And you know, you could let them know or not, but you could even just surprise them. Say, "On the way over I just picked up some brownies for dessert." Even something as simple as that. And then if no one wants to eat them, it doesn't matter. The point is you're bringing this over as a gift because this person is going way out of their way to host you for dinner.

Michelle: Right, right, exactly, exactly. So, we're going to get into that in a second, like, how can you ask these things. But before we do that we wanted to direct you guys to a great episode. It was Episode 795, and we went into the topic just a little bit and we talked about the difference between "bring" and "take", which can be kind of tricky. Right, Lindsay?

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), this is perfect. And when it comes to the context of bringing something or taking something to dinner, this is the perfect example, guys. So, to learn the differences between "bring" and "take" go and look at that episode right there. If you're listening inside the app at AllEarsEnglish.com/bonuses, you can search for 795 in the search bar, or you can be on our website too at AllEarsEnglish.com/episodes and type in 795. Awesome.

[Instrumental]



Announcer: Guys, it's webinar week, and if you are preparing for IELTS, you absolutely cannot miss it. Go to AllEarsEnglish.com/mistakes to register your spot before they fill up. We'll show you the one mistake that you are guaranteed to make on speaking part three and we'll show you how to prepare correctly so that you don't make that mistake. Go to AllEarsEnglish.com/mistakes.

[Instrumental]

Michelle: Perfect. Alright. So, let's get into it. So, how do you ask? What could you say if you say, "Okay, great, I'm coming to the party. Woohoo." Right? What's the first thing you could say, Lindsay?

Lindsay: Okay. So, you know, I just had a bonus of what I would say, is just, like, "What can I bring?", or you could say, "Is there anything I can bring?"

Michelle: Right. So, we have, "Is there anything I can bring?" and then my version of, "What can I bring?", which is what you said. Guys, we all have different ways of saying similar things. I said, "Tell me what I can bring." I mean, what, I mean, but this is something that I wanted to talk about. So, what's the difference between "is there anything I can bring" and "tell me what can I bring".

Lindsay: "Tell me what I can bring", yeah (yes), I think that the second one, so those two other ideas, "what can I bring" or "tell me what I can bring" are assuming you're going to bring something.

Michelle: Yeah (yes).

Lindsay: It's a yes or yes scenario.

Michelle: Right, right, right. So, "tell me what I can bring", it's like 'you don't have a choice, I'm bringing something' in a nice way. It's not like, "You better tell me what I can bring." [laughter]

Lindsay: [laughter]



- Michelle:** But it just kind of, "Tell me what I can bring." I'm not even giving, I'm saying I will bring something; I'm going to help you out with something. Right?
- Lindsay:** Exactly, exactly. And then there's a few others like, "Let me know what I can make for the meal." Okay?
- Michelle:** Right. So, this one is "let me know", right? So, it's similar, right? Also, like, another way to be, like, "Well, I'm bringing something; just tell me what it should be."
- Lindsay:** Yeah (yes). I'm imagining this conversation may be happening by text message, by email. It could happen in person too, or on the phone, but these phrases I would say would work for any of those contexts. Don't you think so?
- Michelle:** I think so, yeah (yes), for sure, yeah (yes). And just one other, like, little bonus, I could say, like, "Is there anything you need?" or something like that. Right? Because we talked about, I mentioned that earlier. So, that's something you could say as well. And then there's one last thing where it could kind of imply that you're bringing something. What is it, Lindsay?
- Lindsay:** Well, so, asking about dietary restrictions. Nowadays this is huge. Right? This is huge. So, "Do you or any of the other guests have any dietary restrictions? I'd like to make something for dessert or something for an appetizer."
- Michelle:** Right.
- Lindsay:** Yeah (yes). So, you do want to ask that. I mean, these days there's lots of different diets and some people have allergies. So, we want to be careful.
- Michelle:** Right, right, right, definitely. So, that's an important one and it also shows, "Okay, I'm bringing something." Right? So, I think that these are all good, but they kind of vary in terms of how direct they are. Like, "tell me" is different than "is there" or something like that. Right?
- Lindsay:** Yeah (yes), for sure, for sure. It's about tone of voice as well if you're speaking in person. But all of these are going to be polite because, I mean,



you are offering to bring something to their home. So, it's a custom. This is a custom. This is a tradition in American culture to bring something with you when you go to someone's home for dinner. Yeah (yes).

Michelle: Right. So, when we say direct, it's not, like, in a bad way. So, saying, like, "tell me what I can bring" isn't rude, it's not, like, invasive or anything like that, but just a little bit more, like, I want to bring something. Right?

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), absolutely. I like it, I like it. Okay.

Michelle: Okay. So, I mean, if they say no, right, "No, no, we're good. Thanks anyway.", what's something you could say?

Lindsay: Well, so, you could just bring something anyways. Or you could just say, "Okay, great. Let me know if you change your mind."

Michelle: And then still bring something anyway.

Lindsay: Still bring something. Or you could say, "Sounds good, I can't wait."

Michelle: Right. Yeah (yes). So, just those kind of simple phrases. I mean, you don't have to argue with them and say, "No, no, I want to bring something."
[laughter]

Lindsay: [laughter] Yeah (yes), yeah (yes).

Michelle: Right? So, I think just kind of accept it and then know that this is my cue. Like, if they ask you to bring something specifically, like if my friend says, "Can you bring a salad, could you make an appetizer?" I don't know, would you bring something extra?

Lindsay: In addition to the salad or the appetizer? I might bring the appetizer or the salad and maybe a bottle of wine.

Michelle: Yeah (yes), maybe, yeah (yes).

Lindsay: You know? And then that gets a little bit tricky with the wine, because we're going to lead into the things you can bring now, right, Michelle? But with the wine, like, I often want to know what the person's serving to know what goes with the wine. Like, what kind of wine would go.



Michelle: Ohh wow, you're fancy. I never think about that.

Lindsay: Ohh really? Okay. Well, I mean, I'm not sure I can always correlate it correctly, but at least I want to find out. Right? Like, you know, if it's, like, a white fish or something with a red, it could be a little bit weird, but I'm not that snobby. I promise, I'm not. [laughter]

Michelle: [laughter] That's so funny. So, if they say no, or even if they say yes, and you want to bring something in addition, or you want to bring something because they told you not to bring something, whatever it is, so, we said what can you bring. So I said yeah (yes), a bottle of wine. So, we talked about what else could you bring.

Lindsay: So, dessert. I mean, you can't go wrong just getting cupcakes or a pie or brownies. You can never go wrong with some cookies. Just, I don't know, something simple. Dessert is always value added. Right, Michelle?

Michelle: Ohh yeah (yes), ohh yeah (yes). If somebody shows up with dessert, no one's going to be mad.

Lindsay: [laughter] Right. You can also bring flowers. Like a nice flower arrangement that could be the centerpiece on the table that could be kind of nice.

Michelle: Right, definitely. Or, I mean, you could bring, like, a little gift. I mean, like I said, you're not going to bring something like a shirt or like a book.

Lindsay: A gift certificate.

Michelle: I don't know, yeah (yes), like...

Lindsay: [laughter] That would be super weird. Maybe, like, a candle arrangement.

Michelle: Yes.

Lindsay: Something that would be related to the room where you're dining or the kitchen or the experience you're all having together. I think.

Michelle: Right, right, exactly. Yeah (yes), something for the home, maybe a little, I don't know what. Just, I like the candle arrangement, that's a nice one.



But I think most frequently it's usually, like, wine or dessert or flowers or something like that.

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), it's really about, it's really about the food, for sure.

Michelle: Yeah (yes), yeah (yes). And, I mean, don't worry if somebody said, like, "I don't need you to bring anything." Don't worry if you still bring food. Like, it's not now impolite, you're not overshadowing their meal or anything like that.

Lindsay: No, I agree, I agree. No, this is great. This is really an important topic, Michelle. I like it.

Michelle: Alright, awesome, yes, good, thanks. Alright. So, should we give it a try?

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), let's do a quick role play. So, what's happening here?

Michelle: Okay. Well, you are having a dinner party and we are going to talk about the plan. So, guys, we're not going to use every single phrase, of course, but we chose a couple.

Lindsay: Okay, cool, alright, here we go. So, "Hey, Michelle, are you free to come to my dinner party on the 28th?"

Michelle: "Ohh sure, I'd love to. Thanks for the invite. What time?"

Lindsay: "8 p.m."

Michelle: "Great. Is there anything I can bring?"

Lindsay: "No, just yourself."

Michelle: "Okay, great. Let me know if you change your mind."

Lindsay: Yeah (yes). So, that's a common thing for people to say, "No, just bring yourself." Right? That's so common.

Michelle: Yeah (yes), yeah (yes), "just bring yourself", exactly. Yeah (yes), when they don't really need anything else. Yeah (yes). And also, I said, when you asked me if I wanted to come I said, "Thanks for the invite." That kind of seemed like a natural thing to say.



Lindsay: Yeah (yes), very natural. Instead of "invitation", "Thanks for the invite."
Yeah (yes), I love it. Super native here today, Michelle.

Michelle: Definitely, definitely. You know, so, of course, you know, maybe in the future we could do something about, like, if you're staying at someone's house, like, for a longer period, you know. But this is, like, pretty good, pretty typical for a dinner party, I think. Yeah (yes). Yes, so, again, just here, you know, I said, "Is there anything I can bring?" and you said no, and I said, "Let me know if you change your mind." So, really simple, friendly. Right?

Lindsay: Yeah (yes). I think this is good, a quick conversation about it, and then you don't need to keep coming back to it. You know what I mean? I mean, I think we pretty much covered it here today.

Michelle: I think so too.

Lindsay: And then kind of the extension topic that we don't have time for today, but kind of is related to this is, when you're staying at someone's home. Right?

Michelle: Yeah (yes).

Lindsay: Like, this weekend we're going to be staying with my roommate's family out in Colorado. And certainly I feel like we should bring something. But I'm just not sure what we're going to bring. And I'm getting a little bit, like, "Okay, what are we going to bring?"

Michelle: [laughter] You have to let us know what you end up deciding.

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), I know. Maybe it's just more we'll take them out for dinner, that's another option. Right? If you're staying in someone's home.

Michelle: That's true. That's really good. Yeah (yes), we should definitely do a follow-up on this. That's another interesting topic because I'm sure our listeners are also staying with people as house guests.

Lindsay: Absolutely. But we don't have time for it today. But what's the takeaway today, Michelle?



Michelle: Yeah (yes), guys, it's important to know this proper etiquette, right? I don't know across cultures, like, is it common to bring something. I'm not sure, let us know definitely in the comments. But you know, these are the phrases that you're going to need, you know. Kind of like these two steps to think about when somebody invites you for dinner. And it's going to make you feel comfortable and it's going to make your connection even stronger. And you know, that's what this is all about. Right, Lindsay?

Lindsay: Yeah (yes). I think, when in doubt, always ask. You know what I mean? Like, it's better to ask if you should bring something rather than just assume you shouldn't or assume you should.

Michelle: Right.

Lindsay: Just kind of communicate, connecting, communicate. That's what this show is all about, guys.

Michelle: Perfect.

Lindsay: So, remember, guys, you can grab your transcripts for today's episode by going to AllEarsEnglish.com/subscribe. You can subscribe to get them on Mondays to your email inbox. Very cool. Okay.

Michelle: Perfect. Alright. Well, have good dinner parties everyone, and Lindsay, let us know what happens.

Lindsay: Okay. Sounds good, Michelle. Talk to you soon.

Michelle: Alright. Bye.

Lindsay: Bye, bye.

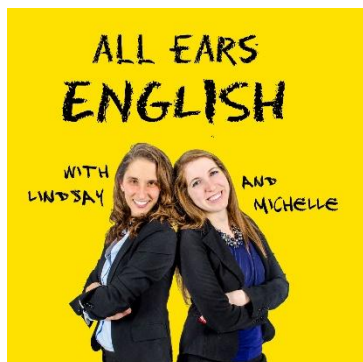
[Instrumental]

Announcer: Thanks so much for listening to All Ears English. And if you need a seven or higher on your IELTS exam to achieve your life vision, then our "Insider Method" can get you there. Start with our free video series master class. Get video one now at AllEarsEnglish.com/INSIDER. And if you believe in Connection NOT Perfection™, then subscribe to our show on your phone or on your computer. See you next time.





AEE Episode 1039: How to Be Funny When You're at a Loss for Words.



Announcer: This is an All Ears English podcast Episode 1039: "How to Be Funny When You're at a Loss for Words."

[Instrumental]

Announcer: Welcome to the All Ears English Podcast, downloaded more than 50 million times. We believe in Connection NOT Perfection™, with your American hosts Lindsay McMahon, the 'English Adventurer', and Michelle Kaplan, the 'New York Radio Girl,' coming to you from Boston and New York City, U.S.A.

[Instrumental]

Announcer: And to get your transcripts delivered by email every week, go to AllEarsEnglish.com/subscribe.

[Instrumental]

Announcer: Do you ever have a moment when you can't articulate what you want to say? Maybe your brain is working faster than your tongue? Today, find out how to take the situation and make it funny with self-deprecating humor in English.

[Instrumental]

Michelle: Hey (hi) Lindsay, how's it going?



Lindsay: Hey (hi) Michelle, I'm feeling great. I went to a Red Sox game this past weekend. That was super fun.

Michelle: Ohh, nice. Did they win?

Lindsay: They lost so bad. They lost, like, 7-0.

Michelle: Ooh. Ohh, no. I mean, do you think that made it, like, less fun? Did it bother you?

Lindsay: No. It's all good. I didn't care because I'm not a baseball fan; I just love the experience of being at a baseball game. I feel like over the last couple of years I've actually come to appreciate, like, typical American sports more than I ever did. I used to kind of overlook them, like, "It's so boring and typical." But now I actually enjoy, like, going to sporting events. It's funny. I don't know. Yeah (yes).

Michelle: Yeah (yes), baseball is such an experience, too. Like, it's, like, oh, a quintessential American.

Lindsay: My God, yeah (yes), you get your hotdog, you get your beer, you sit in your seat, you know, you have the national anthem. It's just like there are so many traditions that you can take part in. We heard so many Boston accents.

Michelle: I bet. I bet.

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), which we don't hear over here in Cambridge all that much. [laughter]

Michelle: Yeah (yes) . So, did you get a hotdog?

Lindsay: Actually, I decided I wasn't going to this time; I went for a sausage and peppers-type sandwich. So, it's, like, basically hot pepper, not hot peppers, just peppers, like green peppers, red peppers, and onions with a sausage in a bun. So, that was actually, it's actually better; it's a bit more of a meal than a hotdog.

Michelle: Yeah (yes), yeah (yes), yeah (yes). That sounds a little bit more substantial.



Lindsay: Yeah (yes). It was yummy. It was yummy.

Michelle: Good, good. Well, I'm glad you had fun. So, Lindsay, we have a really good listener question today about kind of like, it's a topic that we've gone over a little bit before, but I would say it's with a twist.

Lindsay: Okay. What are we talking about then today? What is the topic about?

Michelle: The topic is about if you kind of, like... We'll talk about in a second, but, like, losing what you were going to say and how to not make it awkward. Right? But let's read the listener question and you'll see how it's, like, a little bit, how we're going to play with it today. It's a fun one.

Lindsay: Okay, I'm excited. Alright, here we go. "Hey, Lindsay and Michelle, nice to e-talk to you" meaning "e", like "electronically talk" to you. Alright. "Thank you for the brilliant work you're sharing every day, which makes my mornings brighter and warmer." That's so nice. Okay, cool.

Michelle: Aww.

Lindsay: "I live in London and I hear your podcast daily on my commute to work. I'm Brazilian and I lived the past three years in Orlando, Florida, before I moved here couple months ago. I need to say that there are a lot of differences between the two countries, for sure. It's not just the weather and the accent. I'm writing because there's a kind of embarrassing situation that freak..." I feel my eyes are getting old, I can hardly read this, ohh my gosh.

Michelle: It is small. I should have made that bigger.

Lindsay: That's okay. "I'm writing because there's a frequent situation that frequently happens to me at work and maybe to other students as well. Many times when I start a conversation, or even when I'm explaining a simple idea to someone in my office, I suddenly lose the words and I get stuck trying unsuccessfully to find the best words to describe the idea. Then I go mute for some seconds, I take a deep breath, and I try to start the sentence again, stammering because I get nervous, which makes me finish speaking even before conveying the whole message. I guess the



problem is that the person often looks at me and frowns, which makes me feel even worse, and then I lose my line of thinking completely. Is it normal? I was wondering if you guys have a suggestion to approach the situation by making it funny." I love this. "Or at least lighter, rather than embarrassing. What kind of expressions could a native speaker use, such as an ice breaker, to avoid getting nervous when there are blackouts that happen? Thanks so much, girls." And this is from Lorraine Morro. Okay. Awesome.

Michelle: Okay. I love this question. Thank you, Lorraine, and thank you for this question. So yeah (yes), I mean, guys, we've done episodes about kind of what to do when you have this awkward situation when you can't remember what you were going to say. So, for example, go and head on over to Episode 408, which talks about how to fill the space, like, if your mind goes blank. Right?

Lindsay: Yes.

Michelle: And then what other episodes did we do, Lindsay?

Lindsay: Well Episode 964 is how to get back on track in your English conversation. So, we've done a few background episodes on this already. So, this will build your knowledge, guys, in this area. If you are listening inside the app, remember now there's a search bar. So, go get the iOS app at AllEarsEnglish.com/bonuses and type those numbers into the search bar. Cool.

Michelle: Okay, great. So, I mean, what I thought about, what was interesting about this question, was that she's asking how to make it lighthearted. Right? So, I like that she's not taking herself too seriously.

Lindsay: I know, I know. I think, it sounds like Lorraine is probably a creative person. My guess is that she's quite creative because I love that she thought about 'How can I just make a joke out of it? Just make it fun?' You know what I mean?

Michelle: Right, right, right. Without getting, like, too bogged down in, like, "Ohh no, they're frowning, ohh no." Yeah (yes). It's okay. I mean, people, like



when you make a joke. It breaks the ice, like she said, and I think that it can even build the connection. Right?

Lindsay: Exactly, Michelle. And everyone has these moments. I feel like I'm having more and more these days.

Michelle: [laughter]

Lindsay: Right? Where I forget my train of thought or I go to the fridge and forget what I was going there for.

Michelle: Ohh yeah (yes), of course, of course.

Lindsay: So, like you said, Michelle, it's a moment of connection because the native speakers around you, Lorraina, will also understand. Right? They will share that moment with you, be able to laugh with you. So, so cool.

Michelle: Definitely, definitely, yeah (yes). So, let's go through some things you could say. And not all of these I would say at work. Some of them you might be able to, but we'll talk about that. So, especially the first one.
[laughter]

Lindsay: [laughter]

Michelle: This one's a really funny one, Lindsay. What is it?

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), so "brain fart", "a brain fart". Okay.

Michelle: Have you heard this, Lindsay?

Lindsay: Ohh, absolutely. Yeah (yes), I've heard it so many times. This is so common. I mean, everyone says this. Yeah (yes), you might not say it in front of your boss or in a big meeting, but we say it. It's fine.

Michelle: Yeah (yes), yeah (yes), exactly. It just basically means your brain...

Lindsay: Your brain, like, missed a step. I don't know, your brain messed up.

Michelle: Yeah (yes), yeah (yes). There was a mess up in your brain and you didn't say the right thing. But this is funny, I think. Like, this is definitely lighthearted.



Lindsay: Especially with the right intonation.

Michelle: Yeah (yes). So, like, for example, you could say, so, "So, I was saying before my brain fart..." What also could you say, Lindsay?

Lindsay: I think the more common way is to say it this way. You lose your train of thought and then you say, "Ohh, sorry, brain fart."

Michelle: Exactly, and that's it, and then you just keep going.

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), that's the most common way, guys. And again, this is not, it's not like, this is not a curse word. Of course, this word is kind of, like, pointing to bodily functions. So, it's not the best word to use in, you know, normal everyday company. But when it's in the context of this expression, it's okay. Okay?

Michelle: Yeah (yes), yeah (yes), it's very, very common, yeah (yes).

[Instrumental]

Announcer: It's your last chance. Today is the webinar and we'll do a second one tomorrow afternoon. When it comes to IELTS, there's one mistake that so many candidates are making on speaking part three. But you won't be one of those students who loses points here if you attend the webinars. Go to AllEarsEnglish.com/mistakes to sign up before the spots fill up. See you at the webinar, AllEarsEnglish.com/mistakes.

[Instrumental]

Michelle: So, another thing you could say is, "Sorry, my brain was working faster than my tongue." Right?

Lindsay: Yeah (yes).

Michelle: So, this idea that, like, your brain is just, like, your brain knows what to say but your tongue is somehow behind. Right?

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), I like that, I like that.

Michelle: So, how could you say that, Lindsay?



- Lindsay:** So okay, here we go. "So I think... Sorry, my brain is working faster than my tongue." Right? So, the ideas are coming, but I can't articulate them because they're coming so fast.
- Michelle:** Exactly, exactly. So, I like that one. Alright. What's the next one, Lindsay? I think this one's pretty common.
- Lindsay:** Yeah (yes), just saying, "Sorry, I'm a bit tongue-tied." or "I got tongue-tied there."
- Michelle:** Right, right, right. Yes, so, a lot of things with the tongue.
- Lindsay:** Yeah (yes), because the tongue is how you articulate things. It's how we speak. Right? So, how would that look, Michelle, in a sentence?
- Michelle:** You might say something like, "So, that's why... Sorry. I'm a bit tongue-tied." Something like that.
- Lindsay:** Yeah (yes). I would tend to use this more, like I said, in the past tense. Like, just for the moment before. "Sorry, I just got a little tongue-tied, let me try that again."
- Michelle:** Okay, yeah (yes), you could definitely do that too, yeah (yes), for sure.
- Lindsay:** Yeah (yes).
- Michelle:** And then this one, I just thought it could be something like, this one is very big with intonation and stress. So, I'm going to say it, "Apparently, I'm at a loss for words." Okay? This is not, like, a typical phrase like "brain fart", but it's just something that I was thinking what's something that I might say in this situation.
- Lindsay:** Yeah (yes), so, you're kind of making fun of yourself a little bit here. Right?
- Michelle:** Maybe a little bit.
- Lindsay:** Yeah (yes).
- Michelle:** Something that I might naturally jump to say. Right?
- Lindsay:** Okay.



Michelle: It's not necessarily, I mean, "at a loss for words" is a real, you know, chunk. Right?

Lindsay: That's a good one.

Michelle: Yeah (yes).

Lindsay: Yeah (yes).

Michelle: What could you say with this?

Lindsay: Okay. So, "It's unreasonable to think that this work can't... Apparently, I'm at a loss for words." Right, I'm trying to think of what comes next in my statement there, and I just, I lose it. Like, I just I can't come up with the word. I can't come up with the phrase.

Michelle: Right, right, right. Okay, good. And then we have just two more, the last one just real quick, but before we get to that you could say, "Sorry, I can't get this thought out for some reason." Okay?

Lindsay: Yeah (yes). So, do we have a role play with this one?

Michelle: Yeah (yes). So, I could say something like, "Well, my thoughts coincide with the thinking of this company. Wait. Sorry, I can't get this thought out for some reason." You got to say it with feeling. Like, you know, like you're being lighthearted about it rather than too serious. Because if you just say, like, "Sorry, I can't get this thought out for some reason." Right? It's going to sound like you're thinking way too seriously. So, guys, this is a lot about how you say it.

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), and you guys could choose just a few of these and take the simple ones and start with them then work your way up. I mean, the next one I like too, just very simply, just saying "blah". Right? "Blah".

Michelle: [laughter] "Blah" or "ahh". Right? So, what could you say, Lindsay?

Lindsay: You just say, "Ohh, blah, sorry." It's, you know, where you get tongue-twisted. Right? And then you just make some kind of weird verbal expression that indicates that you are stuck.



- Michelle:** Right, right. And that's lighthearted too, and I think people do that very, very frequently.
- Lindsay:** Yeah (yes). It's so much easier to recognize this than it is to recreate it ourselves here today, right? It's hard to kind of recreate it because it's so natural, guys, but you should really just be listening. The way to take this episode is recognize these phrases and then start listening for them when natives speak to each other, or on TV, for example. Yeah (yes).
- Michelle:** Right, yeah (yes), absolutely. I mean, do you think somebody might say "blah" at work?
- Lindsay:** Yeah (yes), for sure.
- Michelle:** It shows that you're human, right?
- Lindsay:** Yeah (yes), I mean, corporations are still just human, like, made up of human beings, people, so yeah (yes), of course. I think so, I think so.
- Michelle:** I think so too. I mean, I think, of course, it's good to try and avoid it if you can say something a little bit more eloquent. But I think that this is kind of, everybody's been there. You know? We share this experience.
- Lindsay:** Exactly. I think your question about work is relevant because no, I wouldn't say it in a presentation. Right? No, I would say, "Excuse me, let me say that again." Right?
- Michelle:** Right, right, right.
- Lindsay:** Right, I wouldn't be... But just everyday conversation with colleagues, sure, I could say "blah". Right? "Blah", "blah".
- Michelle:** So, guys, so, these phrases are more lighthearted and silly, right? And that's what our listeners want to know about. So, in this moment, it's kind of good to use this self-deprecating humor, I think. But one thing that I wanted to say is that I think there's nothing wrong with taking a deep breath and being comfortable with the silence. Right?
- Lindsay:** Yeah (yes).



- Michelle:** Because it happens and people will wait and they'll forget about it. They're not going to all day be like, "Ohh my gosh, remember when that person forgot what she was going to say?" Right?
- Lindsay:** Yeah (yes), absolutely, Michelle. I think you're right. It's okay. I think this is something that we should all be striving for, to take more space, take more time, and like you said, get comfortable with silence. We are so fast in our culture here. We are so, we can't handle even a moment of silence. And to take more space shows confidence.
- Michelle:** Exactly, exactly, yeah (yes). Because there's nothing wrong with that happening. We've all been there, and yeah (yes), it shows, like, you're comfortable with the situation. Even though you forgot what you were going to say, you're still comfortable and that's fine and you're comfortable because you're confident. Right? And the other thing is, I think it's a bigger deal to you in your head, even if they're frowning, I mean, people just make faces for no reason. Right?
- Lindsay:** Yeah (yes).
- Michelle:** But they're not necessarily thinking about it. But you know, you can show you're confident while you search for the words. Right?
- Lindsay:** Yeah (yes), I mean, I think often I assume someone is frowning but they may not be. That might just be, like, a resting face. You know?
- Michelle:** Right, right, right.
- Lindsay:** Everyone has their resting face, and some of them are more pleasant than others.
- Michelle:** Right, right.
- Lindsay:** We imagine a lot more than is usually there, I think.
- Michelle:** Ohh, for sure. And guys, you know, like I said, remember to have a little bit of fun with this, with your voice. Or else it's going to sound too serious and these are about, like, kind of being more lighthearted.



Lindsay: Yeah (yes), that's why going out and looking for this, like, recognizing it, is the way to kind of bring it into your repertoire, guys.

Michelle: Yeah (yes).

Lindsay: Love it. So, Michelle, do we have a role play? Should we do a little role play for our listeners?

Michelle: Let's do it. So, guys, we can't do all of the phrases in this, but this is one scenario where we could use it. Okay?

Lindsay: Okay.

Michelle: So, alright, so, I'm giving a little presentation here. Okay. "So anyway..." Well, maybe not a presentation. Anyway, okay, here we go. "So anyway, the third quarter was the most valuable because... Apparently I'm at a loss for words."

Lindsay: "That's okay. So, the third quarter?"

Michelle: "Sorry, my brain was working faster than my tongue. As I was saying..."

Lindsay: Okay. This reminds me of the importance of meditation. We just all need to meditate. Right? Just, like, breathe and, like you said, not just in the moment, but also in our daily practice, just as a way to just get more space in our mind and just that sense of calm. I think can help so much to avoid these situations. But yeah (yes).

Michelle: Right, right, right, exactly. So, here I said, "Apparently, I'm at a loss for words." and I just want to say if I said something like, let's say I'm always a talkative person, this could be even funnier. Because if I say it and I stress "I'm", "Apparently I'm at a loss for words."

Lindsay: Yeah (yes).

Michelle: Because everybody knows that I'm usually very talkative, you might get a laugh there.

Lindsay: Yeah (yes). I mean, Michelle, you're, you have a history in stand-up comedy here. So that's a really good point. I mean, you probably have an



eye for this or how to kind of make fun of yourself a little bit. Right? Self-deprecating humor, like you mentioned.

Michelle: Right, right, right, definitely. Yeah (yes). So, you could do something like that. And then finally said, I said, "Sorry, my brain was working faster than my tongue." and then I closed it with, "As I was saying..." in that funny way to get back into it.

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), just playing around with the tone of voice a bit here, guys. That's the way to do it.

Michelle: For sure.

Lindsay: Love it.

Michelle: Okay, Lindsay, so, what's the takeaway for today?

Lindsay: Well, guys, the takeaway is I love how a listener here asked the question, Lorraina, on how to be creative, how to kind of make a joke out of it instead of just taking yourself so serious. Right? Make a joke. I love that idea. And you know, we've given you guys some phrases that you can try. And like I said before, listen for these out in the world, and then start to implement one or two of them. You won't use them all today, but try. This will take you to that next level of fluency and connection if you do it right. Yeah (yes)?

Michelle: Excellent. Yes, I love it. So, thank you so much to our listener, that was a great question and good luck. Let us know how it goes.

Lindsay: I know. Michelle, talk to you soon. Take care.

Michelle: Bye, Lindsay.

Lindsay: Bye.

[Instrumental]

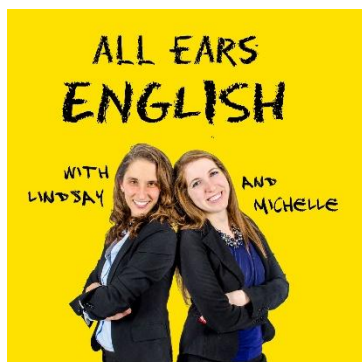
Announcer: Thanks so much for listening to All Ears English. And if you need a seven or higher on your IELTS exam to achieve your life vision, then our "Insider Method" can get you there. Start with our free video series master class.



Get video one now at AllEarsEnglish.com/INSIDER. And if you believe in Connection NOT Perfection™, then subscribe to our show on your phone or on your computer. See you next time.



AEE Episode 1040: That's So Random. What to Say in English When You See Something Weird.



Announcer: This is an All Ears English podcast Episode 1040: “That’s So Random. What to Say in English When You See Something Weird.”

[Instrumental]

Announcer: Welcome to the All Ears English Podcast, downloaded more than 50 million times. We believe in Connection NOT Perfection™, with your American hosts Lindsay McMahon, the ‘English Adventurer’, and Michelle Kaplan, the ‘New York Radio Girl,’ coming to you from Boston and New York City, U.S.A.

[Instrumental]

Announcer: And to get your transcripts delivered by email every week, go to AllEarsEnglish.com/subscribe.

[Instrumental]

Announcer: Today, learn one of the top ten most natural phrases that has ever been taught on this podcast. Find out a fun way to express that something is unexpected, strange or out of place.

[Instrumental]



Michelle: Hey (hi) Lindsay, how's it going?

Lindsay: Ohh man, Michelle, the other day I saw an adorable dog walking on the street dressed in the same outfit as its owner.

Michelle: Ohh my gosh, really? That's so random.

Lindsay: I know. It was so crazy.

Michelle: Ohh my gosh. Did you really see that, Lindsay:?

Lindsay: I didn't see that, but actually I have another example of something that was super random that I used to see when I lived in New York. I used to see this guy, and he would walk around with his cat on his head.

Michelle: Really?

Lindsay: In Union Square. Have you ever seen that guy?

Michelle: That sounds really familiar.

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), he's just kind of a normally dressed guy. He used to wear, like, hooded sweatshirts. But he would carry his cat, it would be, like, on his head, just kind of bouncing around, looking around the street. Like, I don't know, so random.

Michelle: That's so funny. Ohh my gosh. Well, in New York you can see a lot of stuff like that, and it would make sense that if, like, I've never noticed it. It's possible that I've seen this guy a million times, but in New York there's so many random things. Right?

Lindsay: Ohh my gosh, New York is the center of randomness. I love that.
[laughter]

Michelle: [laughter] That's a good way to put. Yeah (yes). So, Lindsay, we're using this phrase, this word. What is it?

Lindsay: Ohh, I love that we're teaching this today. This is so fun. We're saying "that's so random".

Michelle: Yeah (yes). So, what in the world does that mean?



Lindsay: Well, I mean, that the thing was unusual. It was odd. It was weird. It was out of place. It was unexpected. It was strange.

Michelle: Yeah (yes), yeah (yes). Because "random" can definitely just, like, I think of, like, a random order. Like things were, like, randomly out of order or things were, groups were assigned randomly. It's like without thinking about it, without a specific reason to it.

Lindsay: Yeah (yes).

Michelle: So, we use "that's so random" as, like, "that's so unusual or strange". Right?

Lindsay: Yeah (yes). I mean, we don't have the technical definition of it, but the word "random" is probably with no predictable order.

Michelle: Right.

Lindsay: Something like that. But then we take it and we put it into this pop culture phrase that, I love to say this, because it's usually when you're commenting on something that's kind of fun because it's so bizarre. You know? And saying, "That's so random."

Michelle: Right, right. So, I think this is really a natural sounding phrase. I mean, you said that you say it. I know that I would say it to a friend.

Lindsay: Exactly.

Michelle: And it's a really good, like, way to kind of share something maybe funny with your friend or something like that, or comment on it.

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), yeah (yes), I love it. Okay, cool.

Michelle: Right, right, definitely. So yeah (yes), so, like we said, so, "random" can mean, you know, like, unorganized. So, like, the teachers put students into random groups or, like, she randomly decided to go to Spain for the weekend, something like that.

Lindsay: Right. Yeah (yes).



Michelle: Right? But as we said, it can also be strange or surprising or something like that. So, I also think of it to describe something unique, right? Like a guy with a cat on his head, something out of the ordinary. So, like, if I see a person on the subway in a Halloween costume in the middle of May, I might say to the person next to me, like, "That's so random." Right?

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), yeah (yes). I mean, another example that happened to me this weekend when I probably said, "Ohh, that's super random." was we were, on Saturday morning we were in Union Square in Somerville. We went to get coffee, and there was, like, a zombie festival. I guess it's not that random now because Halloween is coming, but there are people, like, walking around the farmers market acting like zombies. And there is this girl that came by, I thought she was drunk or something, but she was acting like a zombie. [laughter]

Michelle: Ohh my gosh.

Lindsay: I know. Like, that's so random and weird. You know?

Michelle: Were they, like, scary-looking zombies or just, like, kind of funny?

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), those guys were kind of scary.

Michelle: I don't like that.

Lindsay: But then there was this whole organized zombie day, like a zombie hunt. Where normal people who weren't dressing like zombies were on a zombie hunt, like a scavenger hunt, around Somerville. And I was just thinking, "Wow, random." People are just... Everyone's different. [laughter]

Michelle: That is random, Lindsay. That is definitely a good example.

Lindsay: Yeah (yes).

Michelle: Yeah (yes). So, you can say "that's so random" or, like, if something just, like, maybe somebody walks past you when they were, you know, dressed that they had a cat on their head or whatever, you could also say, like, "That was random." Something like that, right?



Lindsay: Yeah (yes), yeah (yes), for sure. Or it could be something less, you know, more unexpected and less weird. Like if I get a bill for something I didn't buy. Like,, it shows up on my credit card. You could say, "Ohh, that's weird. There's a charge on my card for a visit to a restaurant I didn't go to. That's so random."

Michelle: Right.

Lindsay: Just means it's unexpected.

Michelle: Right, right, right, definitely. So, you can definitely use it, I think. I mean, my first thought is, to think about the guy with the cat on his head. That's the example I keep on going back to.

Lindsay: It's such a good example.

Michelle: But it can just be for something that's out of the ordinary, right? I mean, it's usually used in a lighthearted way. And I think it's also good to connect with someone, and I think because you can support the speaker. Like, if you tell me something that happened to you and I say, "Ohh really? That's so random." Or if we're sitting and we both see the same thing, if we say it to each other, right? The thing I can connect to you.

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), that's a good point. This is a connection scale, guys, right here. Because it's about listening to what the person's saying and recognizing what they're sharing was weird to them.

Michelle: Right.

Lindsay: Yeah (yes). I mean, I want to say about the cat on the head, only in New York, Michelle, only in New York.

Michelle: That's a common phrase. Yeah (yes), usually if you're in New York. I think it could be in another place, I guess, but mostly in New York. If you see something you might say, "Only in New York."

Lindsay: Yeah (yes). That kind of thing, though, honestly Michelle, that's what I love about New York, is just the random things you come across. You



would not see that in Boston. People don't walk around with cats on their heads in Boston.

Michelle: I mean, no one else does other than this one guy. But that's one thing that I always kind of admired about New York City, that it's so unique. Like, so many unique people live there, and they're just doing their thing. They're doing whatever they want. It's totally random.

Lindsay: I love it. I love it. Yeah (yes). So, like, if you're telling me something and I say, "Ohh, that's so random." to comment on your story, you know, it shows I'm listening, I'm interested and I'm commenting on it. Right? And sharing your thoughts. Right? So, that's a really good thing.

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), love it, love it.

[Instrumental]

Announcer: Guys, don't forget to hit subscribe on your podcast player if you listen a lot. Then you don't want to miss any of our bonus episodes and you'll miss them if you're not subscribed. So, hit subscribe. And if you want to see bonus videos and more fun content, listen inside the iOS app at AllEarsEnglish.com/bonuses.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: What else can we say that's kind of, would be similar, like, if we get tired of saying "that's so random"? what else could we say?

Michelle: I might say "that's bizarre" or "how bizarre". Right?

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), "that's bizarre" or "that's wild". And that one's a little stronger, I think. Maybe a little stronger. Yeah (yes).

Michelle: I think it's kind of... I don't know that I say this one that much, but I hear it and I think it sounds fun, "that's wild".

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), yeah (yes). You can say it, for sure.

Michelle: Yeah (yes). What else, Lindsay?



Lindsay: "That's so strange". I think this one is a little less interesting, but it's certainly common, right? Or "how strange".

Michelle: Yeah (yes), yeah (yes). Or "what are the chances".

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), "what are the chances", right? When you run into a famous celebrity in New York or something, right? "Wow, what are the chances?"

Michelle: Right, right, definitely. So, that is a fun thing that you could say. Yeah (yes), "What are the chances I met Brad Pitt on the street today." or whatever.

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), that's a common... We could do another episode on that one, I think.

Michelle: Yeah (yes), yeah (yes), that would be good, that would be really good. So, guys, also, we have an episode, it's Episode 463, way back, and it's how to hook people with your riveting stories in English. And here it was, you know, some phrases that you could use to introduce your story that I thought that would be a good one to listen to along with this episode. Because it tells you how to, like, kind of catch people's attention with storytelling. So, go on, head over to listen to that one.

Lindsay: Yeah (yes) guys, and type it into the search bar if you're using the iOS app as well. Okay, cool. So, Michelle, before we go into our role play today, I want to remind you guys, you know, today, this phrase is, it's so good, it is so natural. And phrases like these are, you know, especially in speaking part one, for example, in the IELTS exam, if you're taking the IELTS, they can really push your score higher. And we're going to show you all the phrases that you guys need to get that seven or higher over on our podcast. If you type in IELTS Energy podcast from All Ears English and you hit subscribe, you're going to get three days a week of expert IELTS tips. So, guys, go on over there right now and subscribe.

Michelle: Okay. Alright. So, Lindsay, let's do the role play, but I am having a very random moment here. Can you read the first line just to yourself of the role played before we start?



- Lindsay:** Yeah (yes). Ohh my gosh, that's so funny.
- Michelle:** That's so random.
- Lindsay:** That is so random. Okay.
- Michelle:** Did I just make that up?
- Lindsay:** Our listeners will discover this as they hear what we're going to share. That's so funny. Okay, something about cats today. I don't know.
- Michelle:** Yeah (yes), cats and heads, I don't know. Okay, here we go. So, in this role play, Lindsay is telling me a crazy story about her weekend.
- Lindsay:** "Michelle, over the weekend, I can't believe this happened. Do you want to hear what happened?"
- Michelle:** "What happened?"
- Lindsay:** "Okay. So, I was sitting in the corner of the park and this guy came over to me, but he was wearing this crazy striped outfit and he had a cat on his head." [laughter]
- Michelle:** "What? That's so random."
- Lindsay:** "I know. So, he started asking me questions and there's a cameraman behind the tree."
- Michelle:** "How strange."
- Lindsay:** "Yeah (yes), and I asked him what it was, and he said nothing, and he didn't know the man with the camera."
- Michelle:** "Okay, that's bizarre. So, what happened?"
- Lindsay:** "Well, turns out he said I was smart and ruined their prank show. But it was okay, and that I won 300 bucks. So, I'll be on TV next week."
- Michelle:** "Ohh my gosh, that's wild. What are the chances?"
- Lindsay:** "Yeah (yes). So, watch prank guy with the cat next Monday at 12."



- Michelle:** "I will."
- Lindsay:** Ohh my gosh. You didn't know that I was going to share that with the cat.
- Michelle:** No, I didn't know that you were going to share anything about a cat on the head and I don't recall ever seeing this guy.
- Lindsay:** That's so funny. So, it must be a New York thing because you live in New York.
- Michelle:** Maybe I have seen one with a cat on his head because, I mean... That's random.
- Lindsay:** That's random. That's a perfect example of a real life situation that is random, guys. So, I shared the story about the cat on the head in New York and Michelle didn't know I was going to share that story because it was spontaneous. And she had prepared this role play ahead of time and she had talked about a man with a cat on his head. So, I don't know, I feel like I'm going to walk out of my house today and see a man with a cat on his head.
- Michelle:** Yeah (yes), really. Apparently, today's a big day for that. Ohh my gosh. Okay, well, that was really funny. Okay, so, let's go through it. So, you said this guy was wearing a cat on his head and I said, "What? That's so random." And then what happened?
- Lindsay:** And then you said, and I gave you more details, and you said, "How strange." And then?
- Michelle:** Yeah (yes), you gave me more details and I said, "Okay, that's bizarre." which is, like, almost, like, a little bit more weird, right?
- Lindsay:** Yeah (yes), "that's bizarre."
- Michelle:** Yeah (yes).
- Lindsay:** Love that tone of voice right there. And then you said, "Ohh my gosh, that's wild." And now you're expressing a bit more enthusiasm, a bit more surprise.



Michelle: Right. And then I said, "What are the chances?"

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), yeah (yes), okay, love that. I think we are going to have to make another episode about that phrase, "what are the chances". But guys, this gives you a variety of ways to express that something is, again, unpredictable, unexpected, strange. So, try a few of these. Especially try the phrase "that's so random". I mean, Michelle, what should we leave our listeners with today for a takeaway? What do you think?

Michelle: Well, I think that these phrases, I mean, you can see I was supporting Lindsay and connecting with her. Because I was showing her I was interested in her story and I was contributing with my own opinion, like, just agreeing that things were crazy and strange or whatever. Of course, you could also use this just if you're sitting with, like, if we are sitting together and we see the guy with the cat on his head and we say "that's so random". You know, commenting to each other. So, it can be used in multiple different ways, not just with storytelling, but just also with what you see.

Lindsay: Yeah (yes).

Michelle: And it can be used in, it's a very dynamic phrase, very native sounding, and yeah (yes), definitely try and use it.

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), so native. This might be one of the top ten most native phrases we've taught ever.

Michelle: Yeah (yes), really, yeah (yes). This was a good one, Lindsay. You thought of this one, that was a great idea.

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), I think because I was thinking it one day and I said, "Ohh, we have to teach this on the podcast." So, I'm glad we did it, and thanks for hanging out today, Michelle. Guys, remember, if you want to get the transcript emailed to you, go to AllEarsEnglish.com/subscribe and you'll get them on Mondays. Okay.

Michelle: Perfect. Alright. Well, this has been fun, guys, and look out for a man with a cat on his head.



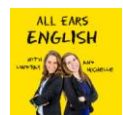
Lindsay: Coming to your city soon.

Michelle: That's right, apparently so. Okay. Bye, Lindsay.

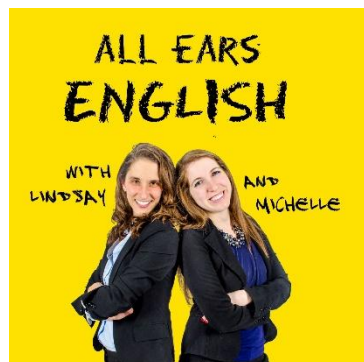
Lindsay: Bye. Take care.

[Instrumental]

Announcer: Thanks so much for listening to All Ears English. And if you need a seven or higher on your IELTS exam to achieve your life vision, then our “Insider Method” can get you there. Start with our free video series master class. Get video one now at AllEarsEnglish.com/INSIDER. And if you believe in Connection NOT Perfection™, then subscribe to our show on your phone or on your computer. See you next time.



AEE Episode 1041: Three Types of English Learners. Which Are You?



Announcer: This is an All Ears English podcast Episode 1041: “Three Types of English Learners. Which Are You?”

[Instrumental]

Announcer: Welcome to the All Ears English Podcast, downloaded more than 50 million times. We believe in Connection NOT Perfection™, with your American hosts Lindsay McMahon, the ‘English Adventurer’, and Michelle Kaplan, the ‘New York Radio Girl,’ coming to you from Boston and New York City, U.S.A.

[Instrumental]

Announcer: And to get your transcripts delivered by email every week, go to AllEarsEnglish.com/subscribe.

[Instrumental]

Announcer: Not every type of learner is the same. Today, we give you a chance to figure out which type you are and what you need to do to reach your English goals.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: Hey (hi) Jessica, how you doing today?



Jessica: I'm doing fantastic. I had a touch of the flu over the weekend and you had that the week before.

Lindsay: I know. It's so funny we both got sick this week. It's so crazy when you get, like, a 24-hour bug or a bit of the flu. Because it just takes over your body. And, you know, you think you're so strong, but then all of a sudden, you're in bed and you can't keep your head up straight.

Jessica: You know, I think that is, I think you hit the nail on the head there. That's the reason I hate that feeling so much. Because just the feeling of weakness and uselessness, that, I can't handle it. Like, I'm not a good sick person. I think I just, like, make it worse because I get dramatic with it in my mind, like, "What is wrong with me?" Right? Like, "Why do I feel so tired and I can't run?" It feels like the end of the world until I get a good night's sleep. And I wake up the next day, I was like, "Ohh. I'm fine now. Okay."

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), I know, I know. It's only one day and it makes no difference in the end, but it does feel so much bigger than we think it does. So, hopefully, none of our listeners, hopefully you guys did not get sick this past week. There's definitely something going around, at least on the East Coast and the West Coast.

Jessica: Yeah (yes).

Lindsay: But hopefully not in your country. [laughter]

Jessica: Hopefully not. Hopefully, we'll just keep it here and it'll be gone soon. Okay. So, guys, we have some super cool stories and advice for you today. We're going to talk about three types of listeners, English learners. And you know what? They're very different, and we are sure that you guys will find yourself in at least one of these situations.

Lindsay: Exactly. So, we know that, guys, all these listener types are different. And at the same time, you guys, so, we're going to give you guys advice for each listener type. And at the same time, many of us need a very similar thing. We need to focus our energies on a system and a study plan in the



end. But let's go through each one of them, Jessica, to see if our listeners can identify themselves in one of these listener types. What do you think?

Jessica: Perfect. Okay. So, we have had so many amazing students join our course, The Connected Communicator, lately. And they have been super active in the Facebook group. So, it got us thinking. Like, who are you wonderful people? Who is learning English with us? So we can sort of narrow it down to three different categories. So, the first one, I'll read a little bit from the post, and then we could discuss that. Alright?

Lindsay: Okay.

Jessica: Let's see. She says, "Hello everyone, I am back because my problem is still speaking. I don't know why I'm still blocked and cannot speak properly, and I don't know what to say. Even if I understand what they say to me, suddenly I stop. I stop listening also because I get so nervous."

Lindsay: Ohh man. I bet a lot of our listeners can resonate with this. You know?

Jessica: Ohh man. It's painful. Like, it hurts my heart just to read this. And you know what? So, the thing is, guys, with this type of student, maybe you are this type of student, it's not so much about the English level. It's not about the words themselves. It's about the anxiety.

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), it's like English creates this instant anxiety, and I think part of this is the buildup over the years. The ironic thing about this type of listener, I think, is that I have a feeling this type of student has actually spent more time with English than everyone else. Like, they've worked harder than many other listener types because you guys really want this, right?

Jessica: Totally.

Lindsay: You want to connect in English, but something in your mind is kind of stopping you. It's putting up that block. We talked about the effective filter. Right?

Jessica: Yeah (yes).



Lindsay: We talked about that wall, that block to understanding, and that may be part of it. Yeah (yes).

Jessica: Exactly. That's exactly it. And it's, exactly. So, guys, like, who is this person? Are you this person? You've studied a lot. You feel like you've studied so much that you should be doing better than you are. Right? Like, you should be understanding and talking more than you are. So, it's not about the English, guys, it's about the anxiety. So, the best advice for this type of learner would be to start creating positive associations with English. Focus on the positive experiences with English. Because it's those negative associations, like Lindsay said. As soon as you are in that conversation, as soon as you open your mouth or somebody else opens their mouth, that effective filter comes up and you get so nervous you just take yourself completely out of the situation.

Lindsay: Exactly. I mean, I shared on our webinar my experiences with my ninth grade French class and how scary that was. And I have a feeling that some of our listeners, if you guys are this type, your original experiences learning to speak English are probably coming up and they're probably not good memories. Right?

Jessica: Ohh my gosh, yeah (yes). If I could just put a little of my own story in here, just short, short, short, guys. I experienced this as well. I remember, so, I went to Spain when I was 18 and I thought, "I studied Spanish in high school, no problem." And I expected so much of myself because I was always, like, a straight A student. So I was, like, "This means I must also be good at Spanish." and I was not. I could not understand anything and I felt so embarrassed and just so... And then when I went to Mexico a few years later to study, then the associations were positive. I started fresh. Right? I was living with a family, and I got to be really good friends with my host brother, and we hung out and talked about movies. And it's the approach. Right? Not language level, but the approach.

Lindsay: Ohh, it's so true. It's all about your mindset; it's all about your association. So, what we need here is that pattern interrupt. You were



able to interrupt your pattern, maybe, by going to a different place or a different country.

Jessica: Sure, yeah (yes).

Lindsay: Maybe, I don't know, just different places, different people. If you guys are a student like this, maybe you have those old associations of maybe of the classroom, of tests, like I had with French, and we need something new. That's why in our course, The Connected Communicator, we take you on a road trip. Right? That is the coolest part of it. We take you across the United States by car.

Jessica: You get to meet, what is it, like, fifty or seventy native speakers. I mean, it's so amazing, you guys. And so, even if you don't, like, get into the course, the point is that you have to look at how you've been speaking and listening in English and you need to change it. Because that's not working. So, it's about changing the perspective, changing the connections to create new ones. Right? So, like, getting into our course, going on a road trip in English, meeting native speakers in English, whatever you do to change the way you're approaching English. That's the important thing, is the change.

Lindsay: Exactly. So, that's our advice for that type of student. If you guys feel like you're working so hard at English but when you get into real situations you freeze, then that's what you need to do. I love it.

Jessica: Exactly, exactly.

Lindsay: Okay.

Jessica: Alright. So, what's the next kind of learner?

Lindsay: Okay. So, the next kind of learner or listener for this podcast is the listener who is in the U.S. You are already living here. You are probably working here. You're struggling every day. You're trying to build relationships at work. You're trying to move up in your job. Maybe you're raising a family in the United States.



Jessica: Yeah (yes). You know, I've had some really interesting conversations with listeners like this. Who are in the States and being, like, a stay-at-home mom, or maybe even having just a part time job, not having the community connection that is easier in your first language, in your own country. So, trying to create the community connection, really feeling connected to your life here, immersed in English, and just not being able to do that.

Lindsay: For sure. I mean, that's the first part of it, right, is the community connection. And then I think the other piece of it is that I think a lot of our listeners who maybe move to the U.S., they might come into the States with the English that they learned at home, like, the textbook English. Right?

Jessica: Right.

Lindsay: And they find out really quickly that that doesn't really work. It makes them sound irrelevant, and it doesn't help them connect.

Jessica: Exactly. So yeah (yes), so, that's an important difference between the first category and this category. The level of English, it might be quite advanced, or it might be that you just studied English in a class in your home country and you thought, "I studied it, let's go speak it in America." And that's not how it works. And that becomes, it is really hard to break through that level. Like, how do you go from one situation to another?

Lindsay: Yeah (yes). I mean, I think what it is here, guys, if you are in this category it's making English real. So, it's learning based on situations. Right?

Jessica: Exactly.

Lindsay: I mean, that reminds me of this Facebook introduction that our student Nellie from the course, who just joined the course.. Can I read? I'm going to go ahead and read Nellie's message to our group, guys, and let's see if you can see yourself in this student. So, Nellie says, "I'm from the Ukraine. I've been living in the U.S. for a while." and she's living in Buffalo, New York. That is a cold place, Nellie.



Jessica: Yeah (yes), I automatically shiver when I hear that. [laughter]

Lindsay: [laughter] But it is beautiful in the fall. I'll tell you that, that's for sure. She must know that. She says, "I've just listened to the first class and I think it's exactly what I need. This class showed me the very situations that happened to me here." That's the key right there. "Hopefully, this course will give me the confidence to communicate. By the way, really nice to meet all of you guys." So, now Nellie is inside of our community, right, for the Connected Communicator, and she's learning from real conversation situations. That's the key right there.

Jessica: Yeah (yes), exactly, exactly. So, this is the gap. This is how you fill it, is that you go from, like, textbooks and blah, blah, blah, but you need some sort of intermediate step between going from the classroom and really participating in your life in English. And so that gap, that's what the Connected Communicator is for. It's, we can guide you through these situations and point out the vocab, the listening skills, the speaking skills that are needed so you learn from the situations before you actually put yourself into them. Right? So, that would be tough to do if you're not in our course. But I guess the closest thing to that would just be to think about what situations make you uncomfortable and do some research. No matter what path you take, you have to put the time into focusing on the situations that you need English in. So, if it's a farmers market, make yourself go to that farmers market. Make yourself ask questions to people that are selling stuff.

Lindsay: Exactly. Start to understand the context. Because that's part of what we do work on in the course. We give you guys our three-step method, the Bridge to Connection method, for how to get your bearings. Especially when it comes to listening. How to settle into a context and be prepared so that your listening will be sharper. Right?

Jessica: Exactly.

Lindsay: Part of that is, like, knowing that, what are the words that are used typically at a farmers market, what do people do, what can I expect here. Yeah (yes).



Jessica: Creating that schema, as we say in linguistics.

Lindsay: Schema.

Jessica: Yeah (yes). Guys, I think that's a necessary first step. Right? And this goes towards the anxiety as well, and this is a huge thing. Like, this first step of our system is that you have to take a step back. You have to pause and allow yourself to adjust to the situation. Don't just have this expectation of, like, "Okay, I'm here. Let's do it. Let's talk."

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), yeah (yes).

Jessica: Native speakers don't do that. Right?

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), it's so true. And, I mean, another really key part of this person, this listener, is this listener needs real English. Not just in the sense of vocabulary and real situations, but they need, like, not doctored-up English. You know what I mean? They need, like, real listening. Like, in our course, for example, I interviewed people in the streets, in bars, there's background music, there's... You know, not everything is clear, but that's what you guys need at that level. Because that's what you're going to face on the street. It's not a perfect recording in a super quiet room. Because that's never what we get in real English.

Jessica: Never. No, never. You know, this calls to mind that one dude in Colorado talking about guns. He was, like, a hippie in a tie-dye T-shirt. I think he had a couple beers. Guys, like, that's real English. You know?

Lindsay: Yeah (yes). For sure, for sure. Ohh, it's so true. There are so many contacts where, I know. In the very first lesson, we put you guys in a diner in Chicago with my friend Ki and there's background music there. There's background talking. You're talking to a waitress. All kinds of things that you're going to face the day you move here. Right? If you guys are living in this country. Okay? Love that.

Jessica: Exactly. Okay.

[Instrumental]



Announcer: It's the end of the week and it's time to let us know what you think about All Ears English if you haven't yet. So, please go and leave us a review in the App Store, if you listen inside the iOS app, or in your podcast player. Tell us what you think of the show and ask us a specific question that we could feature on an episode. We can't wait to read your reviews. Thanks, guys.

[Instrumental]

Jessica: So, let's go on to that third type of learner. So, this third type, guys, this is another post that was shared by a new student. So, she says, "My name is Sophia and I'm from France. I live close to Paris. In 2014, I visited L.A. and San Francisco. It was awesome. Unfortunately, my English level was close to zero. So I didn't enjoy my travel 100%. I've studied English on my own since February. My goal is to be able to understand native conversation and speak with no fear." So, this is, like, a whole different category. Right? It's sort of a combination between the first two. So, maybe you realize that your level could be higher. Like, you need some more skills. You need some listening skills, vocab, some speaking skills. And that is also combined with that anxiety. Of course it is. I think anxiety's a part of all of this. So, how do we get beyond that?

Lindsay: Yeah (yes). I mean, the biggest challenge here for this type of listener, this type of learner, is not being immersed. Right?

Jessica: Right.

Lindsay: This person lives in their home country, and maybe they visit the U.S. or the U.K., but generally they're studying from home. So, what this student needs is actual, like, they need to manufacture immersion. Right? Need to find a way to make yourself immersed through the materials, but immersed in the right way. Because you're so distant from the language. Right?

Jessica: Exactly. So, this is really where it's so important to challenge yourself, guys, to experience native speaker English. Even if you are not living in an English-speaking country, you can do this. You need to replace some of



these easy student activities. Don't visit those websites anymore with, like, the vocab lists and the grammar worksheets. Let's stop this. Stop doing that. We need to immerse ourselves. So, go on this road trip with Lindsay and I. Go to all of these places to talk to real people. Look at what you do in English now, or even what you're doing in your first language, and replace those activities with English. Right? Like podcasts, movies, TV, whatever you're doing in your first language, try to replace at least half of that with real English that's made for native speakers.

Lindsay: Exactly. I think the key underlying all of these types of students, what we need, guys, is a system that delivers a clear result. So, it's great to, you know, go around the internet, and find free resources. But if you're not dedicating yourself to a system with a clear outcome, you know, for example, after 30 days, after 60 days, where am I going to be? That's demotivating; it's very demotivating to just be jumping around and not knowing where you're headed.

Jessica: Exactly. I mean, if you think about a lot of the sites that are for learners, right, like, what do you get there? You get some random vocab videos. You get stuff like, I don't know, like, nothing is organized in a study plan. So, you could be doing, you're just repeating the same habits week after week and not seeing improvement. Because you don't know what your goal is. You're not clear about where you're headed and how you're going to get there. Right? So, like we mentioned for that first learner, it's about changing your perspective. Approach this as if it were your job, as if it is something that you have a clear goal, and now how am I going to this? Step it up. Right? Have a clear system that's there so you're working towards improving and you're clear as an adult about why you're learning English.

Lindsay: Exactly, step it up. I love that, Jessica. This is a whole other level, a whole new way to approach learning that you probably haven't done in the past. But it's what you need to do if you want to get that result. Right? I love that. I love that.

Jessica: Exactly.



Lindsay: And it's so cool. You know, we had a webinar last week. We saw so many motivated students getting into this course. Now we're all in here, in Facebook together, multiple times a day, having conversations, sharing our culture. We just learned a new recipe from someone in, I think, where was that person from? Russia, I think. So cool.

Jessica: Ukraine, talking about borscht.

Lindsay: Yeah (yes).

Jessica: Yeah (yes). Man, I love culture. I've had so many, like, follow-up questions for our students' posts. Like, everything from, you know, traditional tattoos to, like, what are gender expectations in Thailand. Like, these are very fascinating conversations, you guys, and this is the safe place to have them. This is the place to practice, where you're talking to Lindsay and I, we're guiding you through these conversations, and so you can then have them spontaneously in real life.

Lindsay: Exactly, I love it. And so, guys, if you want to jump on this wave of motivation and connection right here that we're experiencing inside this Facebook group. You know, these students are dedicating themselves to their brand-new study plans and they're going to have a result at the end of two months. Right? By the time we get to November, they're going to be at a different level.

Jessica: Ohh my gosh, yeah (yes).

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), yeah (yes), totally, totally. I mean, it's so inspiring. I can't wait. I mean, you said last time that one student had started the first lesson in the course and, yes, it was challenging. But when they came around the second time, after completing the course and seeing that lesson with new eyes, new ears and a new love, it was so motivating for that student.

Jessica: Yes. You will feel and see the real results of how much you can improve. Right? It's not like you're jumping around and just learning a couple words and not using them here and there, right? That's not a system. It doesn't work. In this case, you're going to be challenged, first of all, but that's the



only way to improve. And then you go back and listen again a month later and you're, like, "I don't even need the transcripts. I can understand this whole thing." That feeling is amazing.

Lindsay: That's so cool, that's so cool. So, if you guys want a hint of that feeling, if you want to get started, go to AllEarsEnglish.com/connection to enroll today and we'll see you in there. We can't wait.

Jessica: Awesome, sounds good. Yay, so many more people to talk to.

Lindsay: Alright. Very cool. Jessica, thanks for hanging out today. It's been a very useful lesson today.

Jessica: Yes, this was super fun. You have a wonderful rest of the day, Lindsay.

Lindsay: Yeah (yes), you too. Enjoy. Bye.

Jessica: Bye.

[Instrumental]

Announcer: Thanks so much for listening to All Ears English. And if you need a seven or higher on your IELTS exam to achieve your life vision, then our "Insider Method" can get you there. Start with our free video series master class. Get video one now at AllEarsEnglish.com/INSIDER. And if you believe in Connection NOT Perfection™, then subscribe to our show on your phone or on your computer. See you next time.

