

Transcript

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Section 1 – “I've had a *nightmare journey*” – arriving late

Tess: Hello again and welcome to LearnEnglish Elementary podcast number six. I'm Tess – from London. And he's Ravi, from Manchester.

Ravi: Hello.

Tess: And I have to say to the listeners, Ravi has *just* arrived. What happened Ravi? Oversleep?

Ravi: Oh, I've had a *nightmare* journey. The underground was closed for some reason so I had to get a bus and of course the bus was absolutely packed because the underground was closed and the traffic was awful. What a nightmare. Still, I got here. Just in time. What about you? Was your journey OK?

Tess: Well, I came in the car this morning. It was busy, but not too bad, you know.

Ravi: Ah well, you see. I was nearly late but you know – I use public transport because I care about the planet and the environment, but if you want to take your car ..

Tess: You use public transport because you haven't got a driving licence. You won't want a lift home then in my terrible car, will you?

Ravi: Oh, very kind, thanks – that'll be lovely. Hey – I know what I wanted to ask you – your cat – has it got a name yet?

Tess: Yes. Yes, he has. He's called Oscar.

Ravi: Oscar? Hmm. I quite like that. Why Oscar?

Tess: I don't know, to be honest. He just looks like an Oscar. He's so cute Ravi.

Ravi: Hmm. I still think you should have called him Gordon. How are you today Gordon?

Gordon: Fine, thanks Ravi.

Ravi: Gordon's our producer - and king of the terrible jokes. We'll hear from him again later. But now, on with the show. Tess, what have we got?

Tess: We've got all sorts. We've got the quiz, we've got Kazakhstan, we've got Carolina's new flatmates and we've got I'd Like to Meet. Do you want to tell us about it?

Section 2 – I'd like to meet

Ravi: OK. In this part of the podcast we ask people a simple question – which famous person, dead or alive would you like to meet? And we ask

them to explain why. So let's say hello to this week's guest, Vanessa, from Cambridge.

Tess and Ravi: Hi Vanessa.

Vanessa: Hello. It's great to meet you both.

Tess: It's nice to meet you too. And what do you do Vanessa?

Vanessa: I'm a student. I study law.

Ravi: Law? So you're going to be a lawyer – that's a good job to have.

Vanessa: Well, yes, I hope so.

Tess: Were you born in Cambridge or do you study there?

Vanessa: Both actually. I've lived there all my life, - and now I study there too.

Ravi: So you live at home with your parents right?

Vanessa: No, I live in university accommodation – I think it's better.

Tess: Well, you probably have a lot more fun.

Vanessa: Yes, it's good.

Tess: Now it's time to answer the question. So Vanessa, which famous person, dead or alive would you like to meet?

Vanessa: Frida Kahlo, the painter.

Ravi: OK. I've heard the name – there was a film wasn't there? But I don't know anything about her.

Vanessa: Yeah, It was a good film – with Salma Hayek – she was Frida.

Tess: Yeah, great film. Loved it.

Vanessa: Frida Kahlo was Mexican, she was born at the beginning of the century and she died in the 1950s. When she was nineteen she was in a horrible bus accident. She had terrible injuries – I won't describe them all, but she had to have a lot of operations, and she was in bed for a long time. She liked painting, so her mother bought a mirror and put it over her bed. So she started painting pictures of herself – self portraits. And she never stopped painting after that.

Tess: The pictures are a bit strange though aren't they. I'm not sure I'd like one in my living room.

Vanessa: Well yes ... and no. Some people think that she was a surrealist, like Salvador Dali – that she painted dreams – but that isn't true. She painted her life – all the things that happened to her. And her life was a bit strange – or let's say 'unusual' – so the pictures are 'unusual' too.

They're her life – her paintings tell her story.

Because of the accident she couldn't have children – and you see that in her pictures too. I love her. Madonna collects her paintings – she once said that she couldn't be friends with anyone who doesn't like Frida Kahlo. She's incredibly famous now – one of her paintings – 'Roots' I think it was – was sold in 2006 for five and a half million dollars.

Ravi: Five and a half million dollars! I wouldn't mind that in *my* living room.

Vanessa: Well yes – I think Frida would be very surprised too. That's what I'd like to tell her if I could meet her – how famous she is now, and how much people – especially women – love her work.

Tess: She'd probably like to see the film too.

Vanessa: Yes – that's true. It would be really interesting to hear what she thinks of it.

Ravi: I think I'm going to look at some of her pictures on the internet. You've got me interested now.

Vanessa: And try and see the film if you get the chance – it's called "Frida".

Ravi: I will. Thanks a lot for that Vanessa – and good luck with your law course.

Vanessa: It was a pleasure. Thanks a lot.

Tess: Yes, thanks Vanessa. That was great. And don't forget that we'd like to hear from you. Why not write and tell us about who you'd like to meet? You can send your own or you can look at what other people have sent in by checking out our website.

Section 3 – Quiz

Ravi: So, as usual, it's quiz time next. Tess? What have we got?

Tess: We're going to play 'Beginning With' again. And, I hope, we've got our two players ready on the telephone. Hello? Will?

Will: (*on phone*) Hi Tess.

Tess: ...and Jodie.

Jodie: (*on phone*) Hello

Tess: Let's start with you Jodie. Where are you calling from?

Jodie: From Cardiff.

Tess: In Wales. Do you like it?

Jodie: Yeah, it's great. It's a capital city, you know, so there's quite a lot to do.

Tess: And what do you do Jodie?

Jodie: I'm still at school. I'm 16 so I'm doing my GCSE exams this year.

Tess: OK. Well good luck with them and good luck with the game today. Now, Will. Where are you?

Will: In Peterborough.

Tess: Ah, OK. I know where that is. And what's it like?

Will: Erm, it's a bit boring really. Like, there isn't really anything to do for people my age.

Tess: Oh dear. I'm sure it's not that bad. How old are you?

Will: I'm 16 as well. I'm at school, like Jodie.

Tess: OK. Well, good luck to you too Will. I know you both know what to do but I'll quickly remind

you. I'll ask the questions and to answer you press any button on your phone and we'll hear a buzzer.

Let's hear your buzzers. Will. (*sound of Will's buzzer*). OK. Jodie. (*sound of Jodie's buzzer*). OK.

The questions tell you what letter the answer starts with. So, I might say 'A form of transport beginning with 'T' – and you can say 'train' or 'tram' or another transport that begins with 'T'. OK? Ready?

Will / Jodie: Yep.

Tess: Then let's go. Remember it's first one to three. Fingers on buzzers. Can you name a fruit beginning with 'P'.

(*Jodie's buzzer*)

Tess: Jodie.

Jodie: Pear

Tess: Yes. One nil to Jodie. A colour beginning with 'P'

(*Will's buzzer*)

Tess: Will.

Will: Purple.

Tess: Yes. One one. An animal beginning with 'W'.

(*Will's buzzer*)

Tess: Will again.

Will: Wolf.

Tess: Right. Two one to Will. A country beginning with 'A'.

(*Will's buzzer*)

Tess: Will.

Will: Africa. No. Sorry.

Tess: No. A country, not a continent. Jodie?

Jodie: Argentina.

Tess: Yes. Two two. So the next one is the decider. Ready? A sport beginning with 'B'

(*Jodie's buzzer*)

Tess: Jodie!

Jodie: Badminton

Tess: Yes! Well done Jodie. And bad luck Will.

Jodie wins this week's LearnEnglish book token to buy any book you want. What kind of book are you going to buy Jodie?

Jodie: Oh, I don't know. I'll have to think. Probably like, a novel or something.

Tess: OK, well enjoy it, whatever it is – the book token will be in the post on its way to you today.

Thank you both for playing and remember, if you're listening, we'd like to hear your ideas for games we can play. Send them to us at learnenglishpodcast@britishcouncil.org.

Ravi: You know we'd love to hear them.

Section 4 – Our person in

Ravi: Right. It's time for Our Person In. I'm looking forward to this. In this part of the podcast we hear

from different people around the world and this time, Rebecca Dalton is ... Our Woman in Kazakhstan.

Rebecca: On a cold winter's morning, with thick snow on the ground around us, I watched the magnificent golden eagle fly high into the sky above us before returning to the arm of the *berkutchy* and sit on his thick leather glove.

I had travelled for over 6 hours on difficult roads to meet this man – the name *berkutchy* means 'the eagle king'. The journey gave me an idea of just how big – and how empty – Kazakhstan is. It is the ninth biggest country in the world, bigger than all of western Europe, yet it has a population of only fifteen million so most of the country is almost empty. And this empty countryside has everything; a major mountain range on the border with China, great lakes and rivers, deserts and plains. Most importantly for Kazakhstan, it also has oil – perhaps twenty per cent of the world's supply – and many valuable metals can be found here.

Over ten years ago, Kazakhstan moved its capital city. The new capital, Astana, is full of new buildings designed by famous international architects – a thoroughly modern city. Yet it is out here on the empty plains watching the golden eagle fly that you get a true feeling of this little known country.

The oil and valuable metals will bring changes to Kazakhstan in the years to come but you feel – and hope – that the *berkutchy* will continue to fly his eagles in this wonderful, lonely space.

Tess: It's amazing isn't it? Kazakhstan is absolutely huge but most of us don't know anything at all about it.

Ravi: Yeah. It sounds fantastic though, doesn't it?

Tess: You say that about everywhere – New Zealand, South Africa ...

Ravi: It's true, I know. I'd love to travel round the world one day and see all of these places.

Tess: By public transport?

Ravi: OK. But I really do want to travel. But the next best thing, listeners, is hearing about your countries so do remember that you can send your texts to us at

learnenglishpodcast@britishcouncil.org. Tell us something interesting about your city or your country.

Tess: That would be great.

Section 5 – Your turn

Tess: Now it's time for Your Turn. Your Turn is when we go out in the street to find out what people think. This time the question was "How green are you?"

Ravi: Nice one. "How green are you?" – what do you do to help save the planet? Like use public transport.

Tess: OK. Let's hear what people said.

Voice 1: What do I do to help save the planet? Not enough. I hate to say it, but it's true, I mean, I always try to remember not to use plastic bags or recycle or whatever but I always forget. I really have to try to do more.

Voice 2: Well, we recycle pretty much everything we can, you know, bottles, cans, newspapers and all that but to be honest we don't do much else.

Voice 3: I do as much as I can. You have to, you know? We all have to. I don't take short-haul flights anymore – I used to fly down to London quite a lot – and of course I recycle and everything else I can.

Voice 4: I know I'm not going to make myself popular saying this but I don't really do very much. Look – there are factories all over the world putting out loads and loads of pollution every single day and I don't see how saving your old newspapers is going to help apart from making people feel good about themselves.

Voice 5: I'll tell you the greenest thing I do – I grow almost all my own vegetables. I've really started thinking about where my food comes from and the food miles and that – you know, like I won't buy food that's been flown here from Australia or something.

Tess: They make me feel a bit guilty. Some people do so much. I feel like the first woman who said she didn't do enough. I don't think I do enough. I *do* recycle things though.

Ravi: Me too. It's difficult though, isn't it? Anyway, remember, listeners, that we'd love to know what you think. How green are you? What do you do to help save the planet? You can write and tell us at learnenglishpodcast@britishcouncil.org.

Section 6 – Carolina

Tess: Right. Now it's time to join Carolina again in Newcastle. Carolina is from Venezuela and she's

come to Britain to live, study and have fun. She's at Newcastle University in the north east of England, studying Environmental Science. Last time we listened Carolina had just arrived and met her new flatmates at the university. Let's see where she is this time.

Carolina: ... and it starts on Friday afternoon. Anyway, thank you Emily – that would have been really difficult without you.

Emily: No problem. Are you coming to the Societies Bazaar?

Carolina: The what?

Emily: Oh, sorry, the Societies Bazaar. The meeting for all the different student clubs at the university.

Carolina: Oh, yes, I know. I read about it. It's a bit different from universities at home but I think I understand. All the different clubs come to this – 'bazaar' – is that right? – and all the first year students join the clubs they want to.

Emily: But remember that the first year students are called 'freshers' – all of this is important Carolina!

Carolina: Freshers! That's right. Because we're fresh, I suppose. Can you join as many clubs as you like?

Emily: Yeah, as many as you want. But you have to pay, remember. It's in there – over there. It looks quite crowded. Shall we go in?

Emily: ... I don't know really – it's a bit too crowded for me. Listen, I'm going to go and join the queue for the basketball club. Do you want to meet back here in about 20 minutes?

Carolina: OK. I want to join the International Students Society but the queue is too big. I'm going to have a look round and wait for the queue to get smaller.

Emily: OK. I'll see you back here, yeah? In about 20 minutes?

Carolina: OK. See you later.

Student: ... Conservation Society – just five pounds membership. Come and join us.

Carolina: Erm, hi. Erm. I'm not quite sure what the Conservation Society is. Can you tell me a bit about it?

Student: Definitely. We go out into the countryside and we do things to help the environment – sort of countryside management – you know, erm ... looking after forests erm .. making the countryside better for animals and birds and things ... erm.. it's quite hard to explain really. Ah, look, here comes the society president. I'm sure he can tell you about it better than me.

Carolina: Jamie. Hi. We met on the train, remember?

Jamie: Carolina! Hi. How are you? Did you find your room OK and everything?

Carolina: Yes. Thank you. And you're the president of the Conservation Society? Your friend was telling me about it.

Jamie: Yes. Are you going to join? Remember I was telling you about the countryside in Northumbria? North of Newcastle. It's really beautiful. You should join and come and see it with us. I'm sure it's a bit different from Venezuela.

Carolina: OK. You've persuaded me. What do I have to do to join?

Jamie: Excellent. You just have to fill in this form. I'll fill it in for you. Carolina. What's your surname?

Carolina: Del Barco Do you want me to spell it?

Jamie: Yeah, please. Is it one word or two words?

Carolina: Two words. d-e-l .. small 'd' , then capital B, a-r-c-o

Jamie: And have you got your email address yet?

Carolina: My university email? No, not yet. But you can use another address. It's caro del b eighty eight @ ready net .V-Z.

Jamie: Can you spell that for me?

Carolina: OK. It's Caro del B – c-a-r-o-d-e-l-b – all one word. Eighty eight. At. Ready Net – r-e-a-d-y-n-e-t dot v-z.

Jamie: ... net dot v z. OK, great. And have you got a mobile number yet?

Carolina: Yes. Oh, just a moment, I'll have to look at my phone. I haven't learnt it yet. Here it is. Oh double three four seven four six one oh three seven.

Jamie: Oh double three...

Carolina: Oh double three four seven four six one oh three seven.

Jamie: ...four seven four six one oh three seven.

Right. Thanks. What department are you in

Carolina? I can send you our booklet. I haven't finished writing it yet.

Carolina: Environmental Science. In the Daish building. Can you send it there?

Jamie: Yeah. No problem. The booklet's got all the information in it. We usually meet on Sundays and talk about what we're going to do and things.

We're all going out to the pub this Thursday, if you want to come. I'll give you a ring and let you know where we're going, if that's OK?

Carolina: Yeah. Great.

Jamie: Right. That's everything. Actually, there's one more thing. I seem to remember that you said you'd take me to lunch. Do you want to go and get a sandwich somewhere?

Carolina: Yes, I did, didn't I? OK. Erm ... I just need to talk to my friend...

Ravi: Were you in any societies at university Tess?

Tess: Loads. Well, I joined lots of societies in my first year but I didn't really do a lot. I was in the cycling society. And I used to play volleyball. Anyway, what about Jamie and Carolina going out for lunch, eh?

Ravi: What about it? Oh, I see what you mean. Hmm.

Section 7 – The Joke

Ravi: Well, that's almost everything for today but a podcast wouldn't be a podcast without a joke from Gordon. Are you ready Gordon?

Gordon: I am, Ravi. Another special one for you today.

Ravi: I'm sure it is Gordon. All of your jokes are 'special'. In their own way. Let's hear it.

Gordon: Anyway, a rabbit walks into a butcher's shop and says "Have you got any carrots?". And the butcher says "No. This is a butcher's shop – we don't sell carrots," and the rabbit says "OK" and goes out of the shop.

An hour later, the rabbit comes back. "Have you got any carrots?" And the butcher says "No, I told you, this is a butcher's shop – we haven't got any carrots".

An hour later – it happens again, and an hour after that, it happens again. Well, the butcher's getting really annoyed. Next time the rabbit comes in – "Have you got any carrots?" the butcher says "Look, I've told you – we don't have any carrots here. If you come back to this shop one more time I'm going to take a hammer, take some nails and I'm going to nail your ears to the floor! OK?"

So, the rabbit goes away. But, guess what, an hour later, the rabbit comes back and walks into the shop. "Have you got any nails?" "No" says the butcher. "Have you got any carrots?"

Ravi: Actually Gordon, I think that's the best one so far. You're getting better. Right. We have to go now but don't go away. After this little break you're going to hear Tom, our English teacher. After every show, Tom talks about the language you heard and gives you ideas to help you learn. So, don't go away, but I'll say goodbye now. See you next time.

Tess: Bye! Don't forget to send us your emails! Here's that address one more time. It's learnenglishpodcast@britishcouncil.org.

Tom the teacher

Tom: Hi, my name's Tom. At the end of every podcast, I talk about some of the language that you heard, and some ways to help you learn English. The first thing I want to talk about today is the word 'like'. 'Like' can be used in lots of different ways in English. Listen to Tess talking to Jodie at the beginning of the quiz. Listen for the word 'like'.

Tess: Let's start with you Jodie. Where are you calling from?

Jodie: (on phone) From Cardiff.

Tess: In Wales. Do you like it?

Jodie: Yeah, it's great. It's a capital city, you know, so there's quite a lot to do.

Tom: This is the use of 'like' that I'm sure you already know. It's being used as a verb. Tess asks Jodie if she enjoys living in Cardiff. Now listen to Tess again, talking to Will this time. Listen for the word 'like'. Is it a verb here?

Tess: Now, Will. Where are you?

Will: (on phone) In Peterborough.

Tess: Ah, OK. I know where that is. And what's it like?

Will: Erm, it's a bit boring really.

Tom: Tess asks Will "What is it like?". She's asking him to *describe* Peterborough. Will could say "It's very big" or "It's very quiet" or "It's got a lot of shops". In the question "What's it like?", 'like' is a preposition, not a verb. The meaning isn't connected to the meaning of 'like' as a verb. It's a very common question in English – when we want someone to describe something to us, we often use "What's it like?". A good example is "What's the weather like in London?". We want the person to tell us if it's raining or sunny, if the weather's good or bad. Or "What's your teacher like?". We want you to describe your teacher. Maybe "She's young" or "She's blonde with blue eyes" or "She's very friendly" or even "She's terrible!" – any answer that *describes* her in some way.

Now listen to Tess and Jodie again. Listen to how Jodie uses 'like'.

Tess: Yes! Well done Jodie. And bad luck Will. Jodie wins this week's Learn English book token to buy any book you want. What kind of book are you going to buy Jodie?
Jodie: Oh, I don't know. I'll have to think. Probably like, a novel or something.

Tom: Hmm. Jodie's going to buy "probably like, a novel or something". She isn't using 'like' as a verb or a preposition here. She's using it as a 'filler'.

A 'filler' is something that we say to give us more time to think, for example 'erm' or 'uh', or 'I don't know'. You will hear young native English speakers use 'like' a lot in this way. You'll hear for example "Yeah, it's like, really cool". Remember that this is a very *informal* way to speak. If you want to use 'like' in this way, then only do it with groups of young friends – and not in more formal situations, with your teacher for example. Next time you watch a 'teenage' film in English, listen for 'like' used in this way. I'm sure you'll notice it a lot.

It can be difficult to know which words and phrases are informal in English. You may hear a new phrase in a film or a song and want to use it. But can you be sure that you'll use it in the right situations with the right people? A good learners' dictionary can help you with this. It will tell you when a word is informal. Most dictionaries use the letters *infml*, next to the word. This means 'informal', so then you can make a note in your vocabulary notebook so that you won't forget.

Let me give you an example. The word 'children' isn't formal or informal. You can use 'children' in any situation, with your friends or even if you are talking to the Queen!. It's never wrong. It's what we call a '*neutral*' word. But the word 'kids' – which can mean exactly the same as children – is a lot more informal. It would sound strange to talk about 'kids' at a formal party for example. Check the word 'kids' in your dictionary now and see if it tells you that it's an informal word.

Now let's talk about something different. When someone tells you their phone number or address, it can be difficult to remember it and write it down at the same time. It can be difficult for native speakers, but may be more difficult if English isn't your first language. Of course, you can say "I'm sorry – could you say that again?" or "Could you repeat that please?". But listen to what Jamie does when Carolina tells him *her* phone number.

Carolina: Here it is. Oh double three four seven four six one oh three seven.

Jamie: Oh double three...

Carolina: Oh double three four seven four six one oh three seven.

Jamie: ...four seven four six one oh three seven. Right. Thanks.

Tom: Jamie can only remember the first three numbers. So he repeats them "Oh double three" and then he *pauses*. He stops and waits. This shows Carolina that he wants her to repeat the rest of the numbers for him. He doesn't need to ask. We do this a lot in English – maybe you do it in your language too - or maybe not. We do it with telephone numbers, addresses and even names if someone is spelling them out for us. If your English teacher says, "The homework is workbook, page 65, exercises 1, 3 and 7" – and you can't remember and write it down at the same time, you can say "Workbook page 65.." and stop. Your teacher will then repeat "Exercises 1, 3 and 7".

Here's another thing that I noticed in this podcast. Listen to Will and Jodie introducing themselves at the beginning of the quiz. They're both sixteen years old, so listen to what Jodie says.

Will: I'm still at school. I'm 16 so I'm doing my GCSE exams this year.

...

Jodie: I'm 16 as well.

Tom: Yes, she says "I'm sixteen *as well*". 'As well' means the same as 'too' in this phrase. You can say "I'm sixteen too" or you can say "I'm sixteen as well".

But be careful. You can say "Me too" but we don't say "Me as well". If your friend says "I'm going to Ana's party tomorrow", you can say, "Me too" or you can say "I'm going too" or you can say "I'm going as well". Try to use 'as well' when you're speaking English this week.

OK. That's all from me today. I'll talk to you all again on the next podcast. Remember you can send your questions to me at learnenglishpodcast@britishcouncil.org. I'll be happy to answer your questions! In a moment you'll hear the address for the website where you can read everything you've heard in this podcast. So bye for now! See you next time.