

Transcript

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Section 1: "I've had a really awful day "

Ravi: Hello again listeners and welcome back to the Learn English Elementary podcast. This is number seven in series two. My name's Ravi ...

Tess: And my name's Tess. We're your presenters with lots of interesting things for you to listen to today. But first of all, listeners, I have to tell you, Ravi is sitting here with a very long face – you look really upset, Ravi. Do you want to tell the listeners what's up?

Ravi: Tess is just teasing me because I don't like the weather today.

Tess: Ravi has been complaining since he arrived at the studio.

Ravi: Well, I know, but really Tess I've had an awful journey here. It's OK for you because you come in the car but I come on the underground and it is just *awful* when it's raining. I got wet walking to the station and then everybody was on the train with their wet coats and wet umbrellas...I hate it.

Tess: Oh come on, you can't complain about a little bit of rain. Honestly, you complain when it's too hot, you complain when it's too cold...

Ravi: I don't complain that much. ... Well, I do a bit, but, honestly, my trousers are wet and I've got to wear them all day and my feet are wet, so now they're freezing cold. I only bought these shoes last week and now look at them - ruined. I look ridiculous.

Tess: You're such a fashion victim, Ravi. It's a podcast. No-one can see your shoes. Anyway, at least it isn't cold. I'd rather have rain than be freezing cold.

Ravi: I wouldn't. And I'm cold now! I'd rather be cold and dry than cold and wet.

Tess: Well it's bad news for you then. The weather forecast says it's going to be like this for the next week.

Ravi: Really? Nightmare. You know, I don't mind rain when I'm at home. I quite like seeing it out of the window. But when I have to go to work ... no. Anyway, that journey *was* really stressful – but I feel better now. Seeing you always cheers me up Tess.

Tess: Awww.

Ravi: Shall we get on with it? What have we got today?

Tess: Well, there's Rita, talking about Bath

Ravi: The bath?

Tess: *Bath* – the city

Ravi: Ah. OK.

Tess: And there's Darryl for the quiz. The 'Your Turn' today is a big one – 'What's the biggest problem facing humanity today - and why?' - and there's Carolina, too.

Ravi: Don't forget my joke.

Tess: I wish I could.

Ravi: I know you enjoy them really.

Tess: Mmm.

Ravi: Hey Tess. A horse goes into a bar and says "An orange juice please" And the barman says "Certainly sir. But why the long face". Ha! Geddit? Long face! He's a horse!

Tess: Is that it? Is that the joke?

Ravi: Oh no, you just wait for the big one!

Section 2: I'd like to talk about...

Tess: Shall we move on to 'I'd like to talk about'?

Ravi: OK.

Tess: I'd like to Talk About, listeners, is the part of the podcast when someone tells us about something – something that they're interested in or something that's important to them – a person, a place, a hobby - anything really.

Ravi: Yes, absolutely anything. And today we've got Rita with us in the studio. Rita's twenty-one years old - that's right isn't it Rita?

Rita: Yep, that's right.

Ravi: And what do you do?

Rita: I've got a shop – a small shop. I sell second hand clothes. You know, old clothes – mostly from the 1940s and 50s.

Tess: Great. I love the dress you're wearing. Is that from your shop?

Rita: Yeah. This is a dress from the 50s – 1956 to be exact. I love it.

Tess: It's beautiful. I love the colour.

Ravi: Yeah, it's lovely

Rita: Thank you

Ravi: And you're going to talk to us about Bath, right?

Rita: That's right. It's my home town.

Tess: Cool. It's a great place.

Rita: Yeah, um, I was born in Bath, and, ... I don't know, I've never wanted to live anywhere else.

Ravi: Remember we've got listeners from all over the world – perhaps it's a good idea to explain where Bath is.

Rita: Yes, of course. Bath is in the south west of England, about a hundred miles from London I guess – a couple of hours on the train. It's near Bristol – that's the biggest city in the south west. Bath is a city, but it's quite small. I think the population's about, oh I don't know – about ninety thousand people probably.

Ravi: OK. Good. And I guess you think it's a great place to live....?

Rita: It's a fantastic place to live. Great restaurants, theatres, shops, lovely old pubs, beautiful buildings, music festivals. And a fantastic nightlife – but it's quite quiet at the same time, if you know what I mean. It's a *safe* city. And the countryside around is beautiful – lots of great places to go at the weekend.

Tess: Tell us a bit about the history.

Rita: Well I don't know a lot... but it was a Roman city, um about two thousand years ago. The Romans liked it because of the hot springs – hot water that comes up from the ground. It's the only place in Britain with hot springs. The city is actually built on top of an old volcano – not active of course. So they built baths there, you know, public baths, using the hot water. That's where the name 'Bath' comes from of course. The Roman baths are still there – you can visit them. You can't swim, but you can drink the water.

Ravi: *{a little appalled}* Drink it?

Rita: Yes. Drink it. It's good for you – it's got loads of minerals and stuff in it.

Ravi: What does it taste like?

Rita: Absolutely disgusting. Anyway, then in the eighteenth century Bath became really popular. People went there for holidays. And then later Jane Austen wrote about it – she lived there for a while - if you've ever read any Jane Austen?

Tess: Oh yes. 'Pride and Prejudice' is one of my favourite books.

Rita: It's interesting - as I said, the Romans built Bath, so there's loads of Roman houses and stuff, all under the city. But the archaeologists can't really explore it because they don't want to destroy the beautiful eighteenth century buildings on the top. It's a World Heritage site – and I think it's the most beautiful city in Britain. I love it. I even love the tourists – we get loads of tourists, and you know, it makes me feel proud. I live in a city that people come miles and miles to see.

Ravi: Well - is there anything you *don't* like about Bath?

Rita: No. ... Well, I suppose the only thing is that it's really, really difficult to park in the centre and the traffic can be terrible. But that really isn't the end of the world, is it?

Tess: Certainly not. Thanks Rita. You've made me want to go to Bath again. I haven't been there for years.

Ravi: Yeah, me too. Thanks Rita

Rita: Thank *you*. I enjoyed talking about it.

Ravi: What about it then Tess? A weekend away together in Bath?

Tess: Hmm. Let me think about it. ... That was a really good idea for I'd Like to Talk About, wasn't it? It would be really interesting to hear about other people's home towns. If you're listening and you want to write – or record – on audio or video - something about your home town you can send it to us at British Council dot org, that's learnenglishpodcast - all one word – at - britishcouncil – all one word DOT org, that's o-r-g. If we like it, we'll put it up on the site.

Ravi: Can we put some pictures of Bath up too?

Tess: Definitely.

Ravi: Will you do that?

Tess: OK. I'm going to have to teach you how to do it, Ravi.

Ravi: I know.

Section 3 – Quiz

Ravi: Right – speaking of computers – it's time for the quiz. We've got Darryl waiting to play. Hello Darryl.

Darryl: Hello Ravi

Ravi: Where are you today, Darryl?

Darryl: I'm in Skipton. In North Yorkshire.

Ravi: I know it. I've got an uncle who lives in Skipton. Is it raining there as much as it is here today?

Darryl: It is pretty wet, yeah. But I don't mind the rain. I'm going to go for a walk later with my dogs.

Ravi: Lucky you. Are you not working today?

Darryl: Not today, no.

Ravi: What do you do?

Darryl: I work at a golf course. I'm a groundsman.

Ravi: OK. So what does a groundsman do?

Darryl: We look after the golf course – make sure the grass is OK and all of that. It's like being a gardener.

Ravi: I see. Do you know anything about computers?

Darryl: Erm ...

Tess: Ravi! You're not supposed to tell people what the quiz is about before we start. That's the *second* time you've said it.

Ravi: Oops. Well, let's get on with it. We're going to play Hot Seat, Darryl. I've got these cards with some words on them and I'm going to give them to Tess and she has to explain the words to you and you have to guess what the words are. OK?

Darryl: OK.

Ravi: And all the words are on the same topic.

Tess: And I think we all know what that is, Ravi.

Ravi: And the topic today is computers and computing. ... Computers and computing. You've got one minute starting from *now*

Tess: OK. This one is the thing you hold to move around the screen. Small thing. It's an animal as well.

Darryl: Mouse.

Tess: Yes. Next one. The thing you type on.

Darryl: Keyboard.

Tess: Yes. Well done. Oh gosh. The thing with the picture on it. Erm – the screen!

Darryl: Monitor?

Tess: Yes. Erm. This is something on the computer that does something. ... Sorry – that's a terrible clue. Erm you have these on your computer and they make it do things. You might have one for editing photos one for sending email erm ..

Darryl: I don't know

Tess: You have them on TV too.

Darryl: Oh. Programme!

Tess: OK. Right. OK, the computer and the monitor and everything are all ... Programs and

things are *software* but the other things are ...

Darryl: Hardware.

Tess: That's right. Ah. OK. The little thing you move around the screen.

Darryl: Mouse?

Tess: No, you use the mouse to move it – the little arrow or whatever, you know?

Darryl: Oh, the ... erm ... I know itwhat do you call it ... cursor!

Tess: Right. This one's a bad thing. You don't want your computer to get one of these, it makes everything go ...

Darryl: A Trojan? A virus!

Tess: Virus, yes. Erm ..

{*buzzer sounds*}

Ravi: Time's up. Well done you two. How many was that? Hang on. Mouse, keyboard, monitor, programme, hardware, cursor, virus. One two three four five six *seven*.

Tess: Well done Darryl – sorry – I wasn't very good at that.

Darryl: That's OK Tess, thank you.

Ravi: OK Darryl, thanks for playing. We'll send you some bits and pieces. Enjoy your walk!

Darryl: Thanks Ravi. Bye.

Tess & Ravi: Bye.

Tess: OK. Still to come we've got Your Turn and we've got Carolina.

Ravi: And the joke.

Tess: And the joke – after this...

Section 4: Your turn

Ravi: Your Turn is the part of the podcast when we ask people what they think about a topic – sometimes serious, sometimes not so serious. It's quite a serious one today because we asked people, 'What's the biggest problem facing humanity today - and why?' So let's hear what they said.

Voice 1: I think the biggest problem facing humanity today is ... um ... selfishness. Um, everybody sits around and talks about environmental issues and problems but very few people as individuals are actually prepared to give up ... ah ... their cars or their way of life to do anything about it.

Voice 2: I think the biggest problem is th... the divide between the western world ... those of us that have money, have wealth, have resources, and the poor people that don't have enough to live and are starving and they have ... drink dirty water and things like that. I think we should spread the wealth more.

Voice 3: I think the biggest problem facing humanity today is that people don't listen to each other and they don't get to know each other and to understand each other's opinions. All the people that I have met from all the different countries I've been to all want more or less the same things – they want to be happy and healthy and to be able to look after their families and get a good education for their children and I think that war and political problems and disagreements are all because we don't listen to each other and we don't try and understand each other.

Voice 4: The biggest problem facing humanity today is climate change. It's a massive problem because I don't think people understand the effects completely and therefore will not act.

Voice 5: That's such a big question ... um ... probably the biggest thing for our future's I think is the environment and protecting what we have ... um ... I think that everybody needs to look around them and see what they can do on a very small scale to stop wasting things and to try and protect the nature we have around us ... before it's too late.

Tess: Interesting answers. I agree with the people who talked about climate change. I think that's the biggest problem today.

Ravi: What about you, listeners? Write in and tell us what you think.

Section 5: Carolina

Ravi: But now it's time to find out what's happening to Carolina. Carolina is from Venezuela and she's studying at Newcastle University in Britain.

Tess: Yes. If you listened to the first series, you'll remember that Carolina and her boyfriend Jamie are members of a society at the university – the Conservation Society.

Ravi: Jamie's the society president isn't he?

Tess: Yeah, that's right. He's really into saving the environment – we should have asked him what he thought in Your Turn.

Ravi

Last time, when Carolina was at the hairdresser's, remember? – she said she was a bit worried about Jamie. Things weren't going very well between them. What do you think's happening?

Tess: I don't know. Let's see what happens this time. Carolina and Jamie are going on a Conservation Society weekend away together.

Ravi: I can't imagine what they do on Conservation Society trips.

Tess: Well let's listen and find out Ravi.

Ravi: OK.

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Carolina: Good morning Henry! What a nice car!

Henry: Hi Carolina. Thanks. Right - in you get.

Carolina: Hello.

Jamie: Hi. Move over Layla, make room for Carolina. I'll stay in the middle.

Jamie: Carolina, this is Layla.

Layla: Hi

Carolina: Hello

Jamie: And that's lucky old Ivan in the *front* – he's got long legs.

Ivan: Hello

Carolina: Hi Ivan.

Henry: Right. Let's get going. Have you got the map Ivan?

Ivan: Yep.

Henry: Right. Here we go. Put some music on Ivan. There are some CDs in the ...

...

Jamie: I can't wait to see the black grouse.

Carolina: The black grouse? The whiskey? With a bird on the front?

Layla: {*laughs*} No, that's called *Famous Grouse* – The black grouse is a bird, but it's black.

Jamie: Yeah. The black grouse is disappearing in England. There aren't very many of them left. That's what they're trying to do at the nature reserve – save the black grouse.

Carolina: But what exactly are we going to do?

Layla: Plant hedges

Carolina: Hedges?

Jamie: Hedges are the lines of plants and trees that divide the fields. You know, you can have wooden or metal fences – or you can have hedges. And the black grouse prefers hedges. So we're going to take away some of the old fences and plant new hedges.

Layla: Yeah, it's really cool. We went there last year didn't we Jamie? Had a great time.

Carolina: Oh.

...

Henry: Ivan, there's a sign saying Brampton two miles. Don't we need to turn left before Brampton?

Ivan: Um, yeah, um, Just a minute. Um, I'm not quite sure where we are. Have we passed Denton?

Layla: Ages ago. Ivan - you've got the map

upside down.

Ivan: It isn't upside down, I've just turned it round a bit – I can't follow a map if I don't turn it round.

Carolina: Why don't we stop and ask someone?

Jamie: Look, there's a petrol station. Pull over.

...

Jamie: You ask Carolina. You're next to the window. Ask for Hallbankgate.

Carolina: Oh. Um, excuse me. Can you tell us the way to Hallbankgate please?

Man: Hallbankgate. You're miles away.

Carolina: Yes, but are we on the right road?

Man: No, it's not this road.

Ivan: So which road should we take?

Man: Go back the way you came, about five miles, then take a right. Follow the signs to Milton.

Carolina: Thank you very much.

...

Layla: I'm hungry.

Carolina: Me too

Jamie: Me too. Where did you put the sandwiches Henry?

Henry: They're in the plastic bag – in the back somewhere.

Jamie: Henry, this is a bag of rubbish.

Henry: What?

Jamie: This bag is full of rubbish. ... Don't tell me. You put the bag of sandwiches in the rubbish and put the bag of rubbish in the car.

Carolina and Layla: Oh no.

Henry: Well I'm sorry. It's an easy mistake to make.

Carolina: Are we nearly there Henry?

Henry: Ivan?

Ivan: Well, - I'm not quite sure where we are to be honest. If we're on this road here, look, this yellow one, well, - we should be there by now.

{chorus of complaint}

Layla: Stop and ask someone Henry.

Henry: Excuse me.

Woman: Yes?

Henry: We're trying to get to Hallbankgate. Is this the right way?

Woman: Hallbankgate? No dear, this is the road to Farlam. Hallbankgate's in the other direction.

Henry: Oh no. How far is it?

Woman: Not far. Go back the way you came, for about two miles, then turn right – there's a pub on the corner called the Old Duke. Then go straight on till you come to the main road, then turn right again. You'll see the sign to Hallbankgate – you can't miss it.

Henry: Thank you very much. ... Won't be long now.

Jamie: Hmmm. I just hope the black grouse appreciates what we're doing for it. That's all I can say.

...

Tess: Oh dear. Not a very good start to the Conservation Society weekend away. I hope they find it.

Ravi.: Hmm. What a nightmare. It's funny though – imagine throwing away the sandwiches and bringing a bag of rubbish instead. ... I hate asking for directions though.

Tess: Men *always* hate asking for directions. Anyway, we'll have to wait for next time to find out how the rest of the weekend goes. Hope things get better.

Section 6: The Joke

Ravi: Yeah. OK. I'm going to tell my joke, then, I think, that's it for today.

Tess: Come on then, let's hear it.

Ravi: Right. There's this baby polar bear, sitting on an iceberg with his mum.

Tess: Ah. I love polar bears.

Ravi: Anyway, the baby polar bear says to his mum, "Mum, are you sure I'm a polar bear?" So his mum says, "Yes, darling, of course you are".

And then "Mum, are you sure I'm not a brown bear?"

"No dear, you're not a brown bear".

"Well, what about a black bear then? Maybe I'm a black bear."

"No dear. You're not a black bear either. Look at your fur – it's white."

"Well, what about a grizzly bear, Mum? Perhaps I'm a grizzly bear, then?"

"No, dear, you're not a grizzly bear. Look - your dad's a polar bear, I'm a polar bear, your sister's a polar bear. Of course you're a polar bear."

"Mum, but am I a *real* polar bear?"

"Look. I keep telling you, you're a polar bear. We're all polar bears. We all live here together in the snow. Why do you keep on asking these stupid questions?"

"Mum - I'm *freezing*"

Tess: Polar bears are so cute. Did you see that programme about them?

Ravi: Yeah, they are cool, aren't they? Right everyone. That's all we've got time for but Tom the Teacher will be here in a moment so don't go away. Remember that you can write to us at learnenglishpodcast@britishcouncil.org. We'll see you next time. Bye!

Tess: Bye!

Tom the teacher

Tom: Hi, I'm Tom. I'm here at the end of every podcast to talk about some of the language you heard in the programme, and to talk about ways to help you learn English. Today I want to talk about the phrase 'I'd rather'. At the beginning of

the podcast Ravi is unhappy because it's raining and his shoes are wet. Listen to what Tess says to him. Listen for 'I'd rather'. What does it mean?

Tess: You're such a fashion victim, Ravi. It's a podcast. No-one can see your shoes. Anyway, at least it isn't cold. I'd rather have rain than be freezing cold.

Tom: 'I'd rather' means the same as 'I prefer'. Tess is saying that rain is better than cold – she prefers rainy weather to cold weather. She says "I'd rather have rain than be freezing cold".

...

'I'd rather' – can you hear the 'd'? 'I'd rather'. The 'd' is a contraction of 'would'. Instead of 'I would' we say 'I'd'. Listen again to Tess and Ravi. Listen for 'I'd' and then listen for 'would'.

Tess: You're such a fashion victim, Ravi. It's a podcast. No-one can see your shoes. Anyway, at least it isn't cold. I'd rather have rain than be freezing cold.

Ravi: I wouldn't. And I'm cold now! I'd rather be cold and dry than cold and wet.

Tom: Did you hear it? Tess said "I'd rather have rain than be freezing cold" and Ravi disagreed with her and said "I wouldn't".

Now, I want you to listen to Tess and Ravi one more time. But this time I want you to notice the form of the verb that comes after 'I'd rather'. Is it the infinitive or the 'ing' form? Listen.

Tess: Anyway, at least it isn't cold. I'd rather have rain than be freezing cold.

Ravi: I wouldn't. And I'm cold now! I'd rather be cold and dry than cold and wet.

Tom: Yes, 'I'd rather' is always followed by a verb, and it's always the infinitive form of the verb, but without 'to' - 'I'd rather have rain' and 'I'd rather be cold'.

'I'd rather' is a more complicated phrase than 'I prefer' isn't it? But you know, as a learner, it isn't always a good idea to worry about all of the separate words in a phrase – 'what does 'rather' mean? Why is it the verb without 'to'? Why is it 'would'? Well, sometimes it's better to learn things as a *phrase* and not worry about all of the questions. Make a note of the phrase, and a note of what it means and how to use it in a sentence.

So for 'I'd rather' you could write:

- *"'I'd rather' means the same as 'I prefer', but it is used differently.*
- *It always has a verb after it,*
- *and the verb is the infinitive without 'to'.*

Then you can write some examples, maybe –

- *'I'd rather have rain than cold'*
- *'I'd rather stay up late than go to bed early'*
- *'I'd rather eat fish than meat'.*

And add more examples every time you see or hear the new phrase. Now that you know the phrase, you'll hear it a lot in the English that you read and listen to this week. Make a list if all of the examples that you find.

Now for something different. At the beginning of the quiz, Tess was a bit angry with Ravi because he told Darryl what the quiz was going to be about – computers. Listen to what Ravi says after Tess is angry with him.

Ravi: I see. Do you know anything about computers?

Darryl: Erm ...

Tess: Ravi! You're not supposed to tell people what the quiz is about before we start. That's the second time you've said it.

Ravi: Oops. Well, let's get on with it.

Tom: Did you hear it? 'Oops'. Ravi didn't *intend* to say the word 'computers', he didn't *want* to say it – he made a mistake. So he said 'oops'. This word is very, very common in English. It means 'Oh dear, what a silly thing to do!'. 'Oops' is informal – we only use it with people that we know well. We use 'oops' when we make a mistake, or when we have a small accident – when we drop something for example. We can use 'oops' when we're sorry we did something, or when we're not sorry at all – like Ravi.

We also use it in informal emails. If you send someone an email, but you forget to attach the document that you wanted them to see (that's something that I do all the time!) you can send another email just saying 'Oops', with the document that you wanted to send. Everyone will understand what 'Oops' means – 'Silly me – I forgot to attach the document the first time!'.
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Now let's look at another very common word in English – 'about'. 'You will hear the word 'about' all the time because we use it in lots of different ways. Listen to Tess asking Rita about her home city, Bath.

Tess: Tell us a bit about the history.

Tom: Yes, Tess uses 'about' as a preposition. We tell people 'about' something, or we talk 'about' something. Now listen to Rita's answer. She uses 'about' – but not in the same way. Listen.

Tess: Tell us a bit about the history.

Rita: Well I don't know a lot .. but it was a

Roman city, um about two thousand years ago.

Tom: Rita doesn't know *exactly* when Bath was a Roman city, but she has an idea – she knows it was more or less two thousand years ago. So she says "*about* two thousand years ago". In this situation 'about' means 'more or less' or 'approximately'.

Listen to another example, Rita isn't sure exactly how far Bath is from London and she isn't sure what the population is either. Can you guess what she says? Listen.

Rita: Bath is in the south west of England, about a hundred miles from London I guess – a couple of hours on the train. It's near Bristol – that's the biggest city in the south west.

Bath is a city, but it's quite small. I think the population's about, oh I don't know – about ninety thousand people probably.

Tom: Did you hear the 'abouts'? She says Bath is "about a hundred miles from London" and she says the population is "about ninety thousand people probably". Because she isn't sure. 'About' is a very useful word! People use it a lot when they're giving directions. Remember Carolina and her friends on the way to the nature reserve? They got lost and had to ask for directions. Listen.

Ivan: So which road should we take?

Man: Go back the way you came, about five miles, then take a right. Follow the signs to Milton.

Tom: The man says "Go back the way you came, about five miles, then take a right".

Why don't you try and use 'about' to mean 'more or less' this week?

OK. I think that's enough for this week, so I'll stop now. I'll talk to you all again next time. Remember you can write to me about any language that *you* noticed in this podcast. The address is learnenglishpodcast@britishcouncil.org. In a moment you'll hear the address for the website where you can read everything you've heard in this podcast. You can also find some practice exercises to do online and a support pack that you can print.

Right. That's all for this time. Bye for now! See you next time.

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