

MY TOAST IS  
BURNT. WHAT A  
DISASTER!

**Objective** To improve your reading and listening skills.

**Think about it** Do you use Twitter? What for? Who do you follow on Twitter? Why? What are the pros and cons of Twitter? Which other social networks do you use? Why? What things do you post on it?

**Exams** This reading and listening activity will help prepare you for English exams such as KET and TOEFL.

# BAD DAY TWEETS!

**M**ore than 3 billion people live on less than \$2.50 a day. About 1.3 billion live in extreme **poverty**. And over 850 million people worldwide don't eat enough food to live a healthy life. However, in many developed countries, even the most **trivial incident** can soon become a disaster... as some of these **Twitter** messages clearly show.

## GLOSSARY

**poverty** *n*  
the state of being poor and having no money for food, etc.

**a trivial incident** *n*  
something that happens to you that isn't important

**Twitter** *n*  
a social network that you can use to send messages to your friends / contacts. The messages must have a maximum of 140 characters

**to stuff yourself** *exp*  
if you "stuff yourself", you eat a lot of food (more than you need to eat)

**a wallet** *n*  
a small, leather object men use to carry money / credit cards, etc.

**divine** *adj*  
wonderful / amazing / incredible / excellent

**tailor-made** *adj*  
"tailor-made" clothing is made especially for you, with your exact sizes

**silk** *n*  
a substance produced by insect larvae which is made into a smooth, fine cloth

**awful** *adj*  
terrible / very bad

**ashamed** *adj*  
if you're "ashamed" to do something, you don't want to do it because it makes you feel shy / timid / bad

**a pool cover** *n*  
a large piece of material that you put over a swimming pool to protect it

**what a drag!** *exp*  
how terrible! / how annoying!

**hemp seed oil** *n*  
an oil that comes from pressing hemp seeds (which come from cannabis plants)

**a laxative** *n*  
food or medicine that you take to make you go to the toilet.

**a paper cut** *n*  
a cut that you get from paper, often when you move the paper over your finger

**agony** *adj*  
if something is "agony", it hurts a lot and causes you a lot of pain

**a buggy** *n*  
a golf "buggy" is a small electric vehicle that you can use to move around a golf course

**milk foam** *n*  
a mass of small bubbles that is formed when air and milk are mixed together

**a latte** *n*  
a strong coffee made with hot milk. The word comes from the Italian phrase "caff  latte", which means "milk coffee"

**a bagel** *n*  
a small piece of bread in the shape of a circle. It has a hole in the middle

Answers on page 44

## 1 Pre-reading

What annoying, irritating or "bad" things have happened to you this week or month? What did you do about them?

## 2 Reading I

You're going to read some Tweets by people who are complaining about things. Read or listen to them once. Which ones have happened to you? Which one is the worst?














## 3 Reading II

Read the article again. Then, answer the questions. What did one of the tweeters...

- ...not have for their cereal?
- ...stuff him/herself on?
- ...drink too many of that prevented him/her from sleeping?
- ...order three months ago?
- ...get a cut from?
- ...get too much of in the coffee shop?
- ...put too much of on his/her salad?

## 4 Language focus The Past Simple

Look through the article and find the past tenses of the following verbs: *stuff, get, have, can, order, post, use, know, break down, put*

-  There was NO milk in the fridge for my tea or cereal this morning. What a way to start the day!
-  I've just **stuffed myself** on three packets of chocolate biscuits and now I can't move!
-  The **wallet** my wife got me for my birthday is just too small. Any takers?
-  I had far too many Nespressos last night and couldn't sleep. Those "volluto" capsules are simply **divine**!
-  The **tailor-made silk** suit I ordered THREE MONTHS AGO won't be ready for the wedding. What a tragedy!
-  My "best friend" posted an absolutely **awful** picture of me on Facebook! I'm just too **ASHAMED** to go out!
-  **Pool cover** wouldn't open this morning. **What a drag!**
-  I used some **hemp seed oil** on my salad last night. Nice, but I never knew it was such a powerful **laxative**!
-  I got a really nasty **paper cut** this morning. Every Tweet is **AGONY**!
-  The **buggy** broke down on the golf course this morning so we had to walk. **OUTRAGEOUS!**
-  The new guy in the coffee shop put far too much **milk foam** in my **latte**! Where do they get these idiots from?
-  The **toaster** my friend got me as a wedding present has NO **BAGEL SETTING**!!!!!! How stupid is that?
-  Too much balsamic vinegar in my salad. **RUINED**!!!!!!

It's good to put a bit of perspective on your life sometimes. \*

# 12 USEFUL EXPRESSION WITH MAKE



**FREE Audio files!**

Download the MP3 audio files for this month's magazine from here:  
[www.learnhotenglish.com/mp3s](http://www.learnhotenglish.com/mp3s)

We generally use *make* to refer to the process of producing, constructing, creating or building something:

- I made a cake.
- They made a new version of the car.
- They made the house in just three months.

There are several business/work expressions with make: ***make a call, make money, make a decision, make an appointment, make a complaint, make progress...***

## Make a noise



The band were making a terrible noise.

## Make someone happy



She makes me really happy.

## Make food



I'll make dinner if you do the washing up.

## Make a list



You should make a list of all the things we need to buy.

## Make a mistake



I think I've made a terrible mistake.

## Make a reservation



Hi, I'd like to make a reservation for the Mediterranean cruise ship trip, please.

## Make a suggestion



Do you mind if I just make a suggestion?

## Make an effort



You've got to make more of an effort.

## Make fun of someone



Stop making fun of me!

## Make a bed



I'm making my bed!

## Make excuses



He's always making excuses for the poor quality of his work.

## Make an impression



I think you made quite a good impression on them.

## Learning expressions

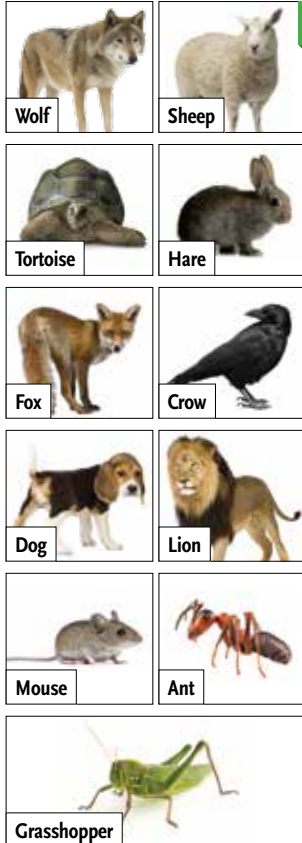
The best way to learn any words or expressions is by seeing or hearing them in context when you're reading or listening to English. Make a note of any words or expressions that you like (or want to learn) and write these down in sentences. Remember, always record language in phrases or sentences – never as individual words. You should also practise using the words or expressions as often as you can: in conversation, on the phone, in e-mails, etc.



Answers on page 44

## 1 Pre-reading

You're going to read some stories involving the following animals. What do you think the stories are about?



## 2 Reading I

Read the article once to compare your ideas from the Pre-reading activity. Which stories do you like the most? Why?

## 3 Reading II

Read the article again. Then, answer the questions.

- How many times does the boy "cry wolf"?
- What did the hare do at the start of the race?
- What does the crow have in its mouth?
- Who wins the competition between the wind and the Sun?
- Whose reflection does the dog see in the stream?
- What does the lion do with the mouse?
- What does the grasshopper do during the summer?

# 7 LIFE LESSONS FROM AESOP

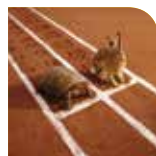
By Olivia Spector

Aesop wrote his famous stories almost two and a half thousand years ago. But they're still as **relevant** today as they were back then. Here are seven of his most famous **fables** with a **moral** for all of us.



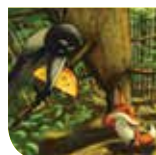
### 1 The Boy Who Cried Wolf

A bored shepherd twice shouts for help, claiming that a wolf is attacking his **flock of sheep**. Both times the **townsfolk** come to help only to find that the boy is **lying**. However, when a wolf does really appear, nobody believes him. The moral? No one believes a **liar**, even when they're telling the truth



### 2 The Tortoise and the Hare

A tortoise **challenges** a hare to a race. Confident that he'll win, the hare decides to take a **nap**. However, he sleeps too long and wakes up to see the tortoise crossing the **finish line**. The moral? Slow and steady wins the race.



### 3 The Fox and the Crow

A hungry fox sees a crow with a piece of cheese in its mouth. Desperate for the food, the clever fox says that he's sure the crow has a beautiful voice. **Flattered**, the crow opens her mouth to sing, and the cheese falls out. The moral? Beware of flattery.



### 4 The North Wind and the Sun

The sun and the wind have a competition to see who can make a man take off his coat. The wind believes he can do it through force, and starts to blow as hard as he can. But this only makes the man **hold onto** his coat even more **tightly**. However, when the sun shines brightly, the man takes off his coat. The moral? Persuasion is better than force.



### 5 The Dog and his Reflection

A dog with a **bone** in his mouth is about to cross a **stream**. When he looks down into the water, he sees another dog carrying an even bigger bone. Opening his mouth to get the other dog's bone, he drops his own bone into the stream, before realising that the other dog was just his own **reflection**. The moral? Don't be greedy!



### 6 The Lion and the Mouse

A sleeping lion is woken up by a noisy mouse. Furious, the lion catches the mouse and is about to eat him, but eventually decides to **set him free**. A few days later, the lion gets trapped in a hunter's net. The mouse helps the lion escape by using its teeth to cut a hole in the net. The moral? No act of kindness is ever wasted!



### 7 The Ant and the Grasshopper

An ant spends the summer storing food to prepare for the colder months, while the grasshopper relaxes and enjoys life. When winter comes around the ant has more than enough food, but the grasshopper is **starving** and has to **beg** the ant for food. The moral? Always plan for the future! ☺

## CRY WOLF

If someone "cries wolf", they raise a false alarm, often as a way of getting attention.

## GLOSSARY

- relevant** *adj*  
if something is still "relevant" today, it's still important/appropriate today
- a fable** *n*  
a story that teaches you a lesson
- a moral** *n*  
the "moral" of a story is what you learn from it in terms of how you should behave
- a flock of sheep** *n*  
a large group of sheep
- the townsfolk** *n*  
the people who live in a town
- to lie** *vb*  
if you "lie", you don't tell the truth
- a liar** *n*  
someone who doesn't tell the truth
- to challenge** *vb*  
if you "challenge" someone to a race, you ask them if they want a race with you
- a nap** *n*  
a short sleep, often in the afternoon
- the finish line** *n*  
the area at the end of a race where there's a line that you have to cross to finish
- to flatter** *vb*  
if you feel "flattered", you're happy because someone has said nice things about you
- to hold onto something tightly** *exp*  
if you "hold onto something tightly", you use your hands to keep that thing close to you
- a bone** *n*  
the hard objects in a body that form the skeleton
- a stream** *n*  
a small, narrow river
- a reflection** *n*  
your "reflection", is an image that you can see of yourself in a mirror / water, etc.
- to set free** *exp*  
if you "set something free", you let it escape and stop holding it
- starving** *adj*  
if you're "starving", you're very hungry
- to beg** *vb*  
if you "beg" for something, you ask for it desperately because you really need it

# Diana

the film the British hate!



Princess Diana died in August 1997, but she's often in the news. A recent film about her, *Diana*, has just come out. However, it's had some pretty bad **reviews**.

**D**iana is a 2013 biographical **drama** about the last two years of Diana's life. The movie is based on Kate Snell's 2001 book *Diana: Her Last Love*, and stars British-Australian actress Naomi Watts (who plays the part of the princess).

The film deals with the period from 1995-1997. This is around the time of Diana's divorce from Prince Charles, and her secret love affair with Pakistani heart surgeon Dr Hasnat Khan (played by actor Naveen Andrews).

Unfortunately, the film hasn't been received very well. *The Telegraph* said the film was "a special class of **awful**", while *The Mirror* labelled it "cheap and **cheerless**". David Edwards of *The Mirror* awarded the film one star out of five, as did Peter Bradshaw of *The Guardian*, who called the movie "car crash cinema". *The Hollywood Reporter* described the UK reaction as "some of the worst reviews for a British film in recent memory". And *Rotten Tomatoes* gave the film a score of just 2%, based on reviews from 41 critics.

So, why do people feel so strongly about it? Many see the film as **sensationalist** – deliberately **cashing in on** the anniversary of Diana's death. Others say it's just a bad movie with a poor **script**. Real life heart surgeon Hasnat Khan said the film was a **betrayal** of his relationship with Diana. "Only I and my closest friends knew what really went on," he added. The Pakistan-born medic invited the moviemakers to "**make amends**" by **donating** some of the **proceeds** to his Chain of Hope charity, which provides heart surgery to children in Ethiopia.

Director Oliver Hirschbiegel has said that he's "**devastated**". "In all the other places where it's opened – in Poland, the Czech Republic, Turkey and Slovakia – it's been very strong," he said. "I think for the British, Diana is still a **trauma** they haven't **come to terms with**," he added.

Maybe he's right! ☆

## DIANA

Directed by Oliver Hirschbiegel. Starring Naomi Watts and Naveen Andrews. Based on the book *Diana: Her Last Love* by Kate Snell.



## DIANA, PRINCESS OF WALES

Diana, Princess of Wales (Diana Frances, née Spencer) was born on 1st July 1961. She was the first wife of Charles, Prince of Wales (who is the eldest child of Queen Elizabeth II). Diana's wedding to the Prince of Wales was on 29th July 1981. It was held in St Paul's Cathedral and seen by over 750 million from around the world. Diana was well known for her **fund-raising** work and support of the International Campaign to **Ban Landmines**. From 1989, she was the president of Great Ormond Street Hospital for children. Her marriage ended in divorce on 28th August 1996. She died in a car crash in Paris on 31st August 1997.



## GLOSSARY

- a review** *n*  
an article in a magazine, etc. about a film, with the writer's opinion of it
- a drama** *n*  
a serious film about a character and his/her problems in life, etc.
- awful** *adj*  
terrible; very bad
- cheerless** *adj*  
boring, depressing, etc.
- sensationalist** *adj*  
"sensationalist" news reports or films make things seem worse or more shocking than they really are
- to cash in on** *exp*  
if someone "cashes in on" a situation, they benefit from it
- a script** *n*  
a book with the words that actors must learn and say in a film
- a betrayal** *n*  
an action that makes you feel disappointed / hurt / sad, etc.
- to make amends** *exp*  
if you "make amends", you do something nice to someone as a way of saying sorry
- to donate** *vb*  
if you "donate" money to a charity (for example), you give the money to that charity
- proceeds** *n*  
the money a company receives from a film / an event, etc.
- devastated** *adj*  
very sad and shocked
- a trauma** *n*  
a very bad experience that you have to deal with psychologically
- to come to terms with** *exp*  
to accept
- fund-raising** *n*  
collecting money for a charity (an organisation that helps the poor)
- to ban** *vb*  
to prohibit
- a landmine** *n*  
a bomb that is hidden under the ground. It explodes when someone walks on it



**Objective** To improve your reading and listening skills.

**Think about it** Do you prefer speaking directly or being more indirect when communicating? Can lying? ever be justified? When? Do you prefer people to speak their mind or to be a bit more tactful? Why?

**Exams** This reading and listening activity will help prepare you for English exams such as FCE, IELTS and TOEFL.

© TRACK 20: ENGLISHWOMAN & ENGLISHMAN

# HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE BRITISH

The British often use indirect language in an attempt to be **polite**. As a result, it can be hard to understand the true meaning behind the words. In order to help, a Dutch company has drawn up a guide to help translate some typical British English phrases.

	What a British person might say	What a foreigner will probably understand	What the British person really means
1.	It isn't too bad.	She likes it!	It's <b>awful</b> !
2.	That was very brave of you!	She thinks I'm very <b>courageous</b> !	You're <b>insane</b> !
3.	Not bad for a first attempt!	She thinks it's quite good.	I hate it.
4.	Very interesting!	She seems to like the idea.	How boring!
5.	OK. I'll <b>bear it in mind</b> .	She'll probably do it.	I've forgotten it already.
6.	I'm sure it's all my fault.	She's accepting responsibility.	It's definitely your fault.
7.	You must come over for dinner sometime.	I've been invited to dinner.	This is not an invitation.
8.	Oh, and <b>by the way</b> , did you finish the work?	This isn't important.	This is very important.
9.	I was a bit <b>disappointed</b> with the results.	It doesn't really matter.	I'm very angry.
10.	We'll probably need to think it over.	She's still thinking about it.	I'm never buying it.
11.	I hear what you're saying.	She accepts my point of view!	I disagree and do not want to discuss it further
12.	Ah huh [accompanied by a nodding head]	She agrees with me!	I'm listening, but I don't agree.
13.	With the greatest respect, I'm not sure it's quite what we were looking for.	She really respects me!	You are an idiot!

Understanding the words is only half the problem! ☆



WHOOPS! I FORGOT TO BE POLITE!



## GLOSSARY

**awful** *adj*  
very bad; terrible

**courageous** *adj*  
someone who is "courageous" does things that people consider dangerous

**insane** *adj*  
if you say that someone is "insane", you're saying that they're crazy/stupid/not normal

**to bear in mind** *exp*  
if you say that you'll "bear something in mind", you promise to remember that thing because it's important

**by the way** *exp*  
this expression is used to add new information or to introduce a new topic in conversation

**disappointed** *adj*  
if you're "disappointed", you're sad and angry about the results of something

Answers on page 44

### 1 Pre-reading

Look at the phrases / comments in the left-hand column of the table. What do you think they really mean when a British person says them? Make notes.

### 2 Reading I

Read or listen to the article once to compare your ideas from the Pre-reading activity. How many did you get right?

### 3 Reading II

Read the article again. Then, answer the questions. *What would a British person say if they...*

- ...thought something was awful?
- ...thought something was boring?
- ...were very angry?
- ...disagreed with you and didn't want to discuss it any further?
- ...wanted to show they were listening, even though they didn't agree with you?

## CLOTHES

**Dressing gown**

A long type of soft jacket you wear over your pyjamas to keep warm at home.

**"I wore my dressing gown and pyjamas all day yesterday!"**

**Sleeve**

The "sleeves" of a shirt/coat, etc. are the parts that cover your arms.

**"He rolled up his sleeves."**

**Cuff**

The "cuffs" of a shirt are the parts at the end of the sleeves.

**"He did up the cuffs with some silver cufflinks that his mother-in-law had bought for him."**

**Zip**

A metal device that's used to open or close clothes/bags, etc. It consists of two rows of metal "teeth" which separate or join as you pull a small tag along them. "Zipper" in US English. The verb is "to zip (up)".

**"You should zip up your jacket – it's cold out there."**

**Collar**

The "collar" of a shirt or coat is the part which fits round your neck.

**"She's wearing a white, striped shirt with a fairly large collar."**

**Heel**

The "heel" of a shoe is the high part on the bottom at the back. "High-heeled" shoes have very high heels.

**"She was wearing some high-heeled shoes."**

**Trendy**

Someone who is "trendy" wears fashionable and modern clothes.

**"She looks really trendy in those sunglasses."**

**Tight**

If clothes are "tight", they fit very closely to your body.

**"Those trousers are a bit tight for you, aren't they?"**

**Baggy**

Baggy clothing is loose and a bit big for you.

**"Those baggy jeans look really good on you."**

**Match**

If A "matches" B, A and B go well together because they're the same colour/pattern, etc.

**"Those socks match your bow tie."**

**Suit**

If something "suits" you, it looks good on you.

**"That blue tie really suits you – it goes with your eyes."**

**Fit**

If clothes "fit" you, they're the right size for you.

**"This jacket doesn't fit me – it's too small!"**





**Objective** To improve your listening skills.

**Think about it** Have you ever called the emergency services? What for? Have there been any emergency situations in your street / city / office, ec.? How effective are the emergency services in your country?

**Exams** This listening activity will help prepare you for English exams such as FCE, IELTS and TOEFL.

Answers on page 44

## 1 Pre-listening

You're going to listen to some extracts of "emergency" calls involving the following things:

- A film on Sky TV
- A radio-controlled helicopter
- Some cat food
- A hamster
- Breakfast
- Some builders
- A man on a bench

What do you think the emergencies were about?

## 2 Listening I

Listen once to compare your ideas from the Pre-listening activity.

## 3 Listening II

Listen again. Then, answer the questions.

1. What was the first caller looking for?
2. What had crashed onto a neighbour's roof?
3. What did the cat owner want to know about?
4. Which animal had another caller lost?
5. How old was the person who refused to eat his breakfast?
6. How big was the rock that the builder's left?

## 4 Language focus Perfect tenses

Look at this extract from the audio script of the recording on this page: "...it's crashed on a nearby roof..." The speaker has used the Present Perfect: **it has crashed**.

Read through the audio script again and find some more examples of perfect tenses.

## 5 Listening III

Complete the audio script with the correct words.

THIS IS AN  
EMERGENCY!  
I CAN'T FIND  
MY GLASSES!



### Note!

Don't read the audio script until you've completed the exercises and activities.

### Audio script

# Help! Ridiculous emergency calls

If you need the police, ambulance or fire service in the UK, you can dial the 999 emergency number. However, not everyone seems to understand the true meaning of the word "emergency", as these examples of real-life calls clearly show.

Yeah, well, a few days ago, I saw this film (1) \_\_\_\_\_ Sky TV, but I can't find it. Is there anyone there who could tell me what channel it's on, and what time it's on, please?

Well, it's my son's radio-controlled helicopter – it's (2) \_\_\_\_\_ a nearby roof. Now, I know the owners are away, so I was just wondering whether you could give us permission to go and get it.

Yes, well, as I was saying, I've spent all my money and I've got nothing left for the taxi home. So, I was wondering whether you could send someone round to (3) \_\_\_\_\_, or whether someone could lend me the money.

Well, the thing is, my cat died and now I've got all this unused cat food from the supermarket and I was wondering whether I could (4) \_\_\_\_\_. Do you know what my consumer rights are?

Erm, yeah, well, it's my daughter – she can't find her hamster. It might sound like a trivial matter, but she's in tears. She says she's heard it (5) \_\_\_\_\_ under the floorboards. Could someone pop over to help us look for it?

Yeah, it's my son – he hasn't eaten his breakfast and he's about to go to work. He's just refusing to eat it. Could someone (6) \_\_\_\_\_ and sort of order him to eat it? [How old is your son?] He's 45. No, I tell a lie, he's 46 now – he's just had his birthday.

Well, I contracted these builders and they did some work in my back garden, but before they left, they didn't (7) \_\_\_\_\_ properly and they've left this rock in the middle of the lawn. [How big is the rock?] Well, it's about as big as my head... I mean, hand... my hand, more or less.

I know this is going to sound a bit strange, but there's this man on the bench, and he hasn't moved for at least 10 minutes, and I think that perhaps he might be dead. Well, my question is that if I report him dead does that make me, like, (8) \_\_\_\_\_ the funeral costs and stuff?

Complete the sentences (1 to 8) with the words from below.

news

anger

help

incident

shouted

work

meeting

appearance

Learn more! Get a phrasal verbs booklet! Over 150 useful phrasal verbs + audio files. For more information, visit: [www.hotenglishmagazine.com/phrasal-verbs](http://www.hotenglishmagazine.com/phrasal-verbs)

1

## Stress out

If something is "stressing you out", it's making you feel very tense and stressed.

"All these changes at \_\_\_\_\_ are really stressing me out!"



2

## Get someone down

If something "gets you down", it makes you feel sad and depressed.

"All this bad \_\_\_\_\_ is really starting to get me down."



3

## Let someone down

If you "let someone down", you make them feel sad/disappointed because you don't do what you promised to do.

"You really let me down by not turning up to support me at that \_\_\_\_\_."



4

## Depend on someone

If you "depend on" someone, you need that person emotionally / psychologically.

"I'm depending on you to \_\_\_\_\_ me with this, so don't let me down."



5

## Obsess over

If you "obsess over" something, you worry about it a lot, and keep thinking about it.

"He's always obsessing over his \_\_\_\_\_. He won't go out until he looks perfect!"



6

## Mess someone up

If something "messes someone up", it makes them confused or worried, and could cause them to have psychological problems.

"The kidnapping \_\_\_\_\_ really messed them up."



7

## Bottle things up

If you "bottle up" feelings or anger (for example), you repress it and don't express it. "You shouldn't bottle up your \_\_\_\_\_. You need to talk about it."



8

## Let off (steam)

To release your feelings of anger / emotion, etc. by talking about it.

"I'm sorry I \_\_\_\_\_ at you like that. I think I just needed to let off some steam."

