



EINFACH BESSER ENGLISCH



AUDIO

Spotlight

9  
17

# Spotlight



## WAS IST BRITISCH

?

*In these stormy political times, what exactly does it mean to be British?*



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## Introduction

[1] **David:** Welcome to the September 2017 edition of Spotlight Audio. I'm David Creedon from Britain. Join me now for a 60-minute expedition around the English-speaking world — with stories, language tips and exercises.

What does it mean to be British today? Members of the Spotlight team examine the issue in a round-table discussion.

A gold rush in the 19th-century brought Colorado to life, but after years in the wilderness, this US state is enjoying a renaissance.

Imagine a place where you can enjoy a cup of coffee while hanging out with some cute cats. In a Day in My Life, you'll meet the owner of Washington, DC's first cat café.

## In the Spotlight

### [2] Eat your words

**David:** Some see them as online jokers, others simply as cruel bullies. Trolls have been around since the early days of the Internet. Hiding behind their anonymity, they write annoying and insulting things in an effort to provoke others.

The exact origins of the word are uncertain. It may come from a bad-tempered monster from Scandinavian folklore. Or it could be related to a fishing technique that involves pulling a line with bait on it through the water behind a boat. Certainly, both meanings could be applied to Internet trolling. The question of how to deal with trolls has long been discussed in the media and by politicians. The standard online advice is “Don't feed the trolls” — in other words, don't encourage them by responding. However, a baker in New York City has come up with a more tasty way of getting revenge on the trolls that upset you.

Trolling takes the fun out of going online. When someone makes a mean comment

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**bad-tempered**

► übelläufig

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**bait** ► Köder

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**bully** ► Rüpel, Tyrann

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**come up with sth.**

► sich etw. ausdenken

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**cute** ► niedlich

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**hang out with sb. ifml.**

► mit jmdm. herumhängen

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**insulting** ► beleidigend

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**mean** ► hier: gemein

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**revenge** ► Rache

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**troll**

► Verfasser(in) provokanter Beiträge im Netz

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**trolling**

► Verfassen provokanter Beiträge im Netz

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**upset** ► aufregen, ärgern

— say, on social media — it can leave you feeling sour. A baker in New York City offers sweet revenge: send the comment right back to the troll — on a cake.

“If somebody wants to yell ‘I’m a huge idiot’ [by trolling], ... it’s our duty to let them yell that, and then we should put it on a cake and make them see just how it looks,” Kat Thek of Troll Cakes Bakery and Detective Agency told WPIX TV.

To use the bakery’s services, people contact Thek at [www.trollcakes.com](http://www.trollcakes.com). She bakes a cake and decorates it with sugar letters that spell out the text. The cake is then sent to the troll with a sticker that displays a screen grab of the original comment.

Prices are reasonable: \$35 for the cake and postage, or \$60 if you use Thek’s detective services to find the identity and address of the troll. Thek, who has called the Internet a “bottomless pit of mean things,” says she’s not trying to put an end to trolling. She’s just looking for a humorous way of making trolls eat their words.

Source: Spotlight 9/2017, page 10

## A Day in My Life

### [3] Kanchan Singh, cat-café owner

**David:** Have you ever been to a cat café? If you’re wondering what that is, let me explain. In these theme cafés, customers can watch and play with a variety of cats, as well as order food and drink. Though now popular around the world, the craze for cat cafés began in Taiwan in 1998. It really took off when the first cat cafés opened in Japan in the early 2000s. In *A Day in My Life*, we meet Kanchan Singh. The 26-year-old American is the owner of two cat cafés — one in Washington, DC, and the other in Los Angeles. She first explains why she thinks so many people are fascinated by cats.

Honestly, I think we all relate to cats on a certain level. Dogs always have so much energy and are so happy, and are just like “Oh, my God!” Nobody relates to that! Nobody wakes

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**bottomless pit**

► Abgrund

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**craze** ► Welle, Wahn

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**eat: ~ one’s words** ► seine Äußerungen zurücknehmen

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**relate to sth.** ► sich mit etw. identifizieren

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**screen grab**

► Bildschirmfoto

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**yell** ► schreien, brüllen

up going, “Oh, my God, this is amazing! Yay! Human, let’s play!” We wake up like cats, I feel like. We wake up like, “OK, this person, get out of my face. I’m going to do what I want today. No, thank you.” And they’re just entertaining. They’re funny. And I think that there’s a huge thing to be said about just being entertained. And so, when you combine relating with an animal to also being entertained by that animal, you create a phenomenon, in my opinion.

**David:** Singh’s cafés are called Crumbs & Whiskers. She opened her first café in Washington in 2015 and the one in LA a year later. Right from the start, Crumbs & Whiskers was a success. However, for some customers it wasn’t immediately clear that you can’t just walk into the café; you have to make a reservation.

Oh, my God! There was this one customer... When we first opened in DC, a lot of people just read about us and didn’t know you had to make a reservation and showed up, which I get. This one lady, though, she literally almost broke our door down. So we close our front door between reservation periods because we don’t want cats getting out. And then, until we show up, we don’t open the doors, so it’s locked. And she kept trying to open it. And there’s a huge line, and everyone’s telling her

that it’s closed, and she’s like, “No, they’re not. I see people and cats in there.” From the inside, we could see our doors coming off the hinges, and I’m like, “Oh, my God! She’s going to break our door, and all the cats are going to be outside.” And she broke our door. Like, I’m not kidding. We had to take a hammer and hammer the door and call our handyman guy. And she was like, “Why are you not letting people in? I want to just get it.” And we’re like, “What the heck?” It was day one of business, and this customer just broke our front door.

See Spotlight 9/2017, pages 18–19

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### handyman

► Handwerker

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### hinge

► Scharnier

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### kidding: not be ~ ifml.

► kein Witz, im Ernst

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### like

► hier: (sagen) so

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### line

► hier: Warteschlange

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### literally

► buchstäblich

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### show up

► aufkreuzen

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### what the heck? ifml.

► was zum Kuckuck?

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### whisker

► Schnurrhaar

## Britain Today

### [4] You can't always get what you want

**David:** Ordering coffee used to be simple — you could have it black, or with milk or cream. Nowadays, things are a lot more complicated. Do you want regular or espresso? How about a latte, mocha, cappuccino or Americano? Milk? Well, you can have whole milk, non-fat, soy, coconut or almond. It can all get quite confusing. But it's not just the types of coffee that have changed. As *Spotlight's* British columnist, Colin Beaven, has discovered, if he wants his coffee, he'll need to change the way he asks for it, too.

I need to relearn how to order a cup of coffee. If I were to follow the national trend, I would go to a coffee shop (there are now millions to choose from), and when it's my turn to order, I would say: "Can I get a large Americano?"

It's not the Italian that's difficult. Americano, cappuccino, Montepulciano: like many other things in life, they all end in "no". That's something I'm used to. It's the English that's a struggle. "Get" seems wrong. Shouldn't you say "have"? Asking if you can "get a cup of coffee" sounds as if you want to fetch one, which seems silly when you're standing in a coffee shop. They already have plenty.

Generally in coffee shops, you order your

coffee at the counter, unlike abroad, where you sit at a table and wait for someone to notice you. But in places where you do sit down, the phrase "Can I get...?" sounds even stranger. "No, I'll bring it to you. That's my job." That's how I'd expect waiters and waitresses to answer.

Shouldn't we save "Can I get...?" for other questions, like "Can I get food poisoning from eating one of your panini?" It may all seem trivial — just one more change in the language. But it may be another example of the way that American English is taking over. That's what Matthew Engel fears is happening. He calls it "the American conquest of English". His recent book, called *That's the Way It Crumbles*, explains that we're using so many American phrases that British English is on the way out.

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**almond** ▶ Mandel

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**conquest** ▶ Eroberung, Unterwerfung

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**counter** ▶ Tresen

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**crumble**  
▶ zerfallen, bröckeln

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**fetch**  
▶ holen, beschaffen

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**soy** ▶ Soja

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**turn: be one's**  
▶ an der Reihe sein

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**unlike** ▶ anders als

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**whole milk** ▶ Vollmilch

Change in the language always raises eyebrows. In the old days, the word “can” would’ve been just as questionable. At school, I was taught to avoid “Can I...?”. We had to say “May I...?” if we were asking permission.

Today, the phrase “May I...?” sounds overformal. And “may” means other things anyway. It means possibility, in sentences like “British English may completely disappear”. It can also be a name: Theresa May, for example. As British prime minister, Theresa May called a general election earlier this year. She thought she’d win a big majority. After all, it worked for Margaret Thatcher in 1983 and 1987.

May was presented as a strong leader, as someone who can be “a bloody difficult woman” — as if she thought that being a difficult woman made her a cult figure. Margaret Thatcher used that strategy — at least for a while. There were even fears that Theresa May would become such a cult figure that we’d get a new Soviet-style holiday — another May Day.

We all thought she’d win. In fact, though, she lost her majority in parliament and soon had to ask politicians from Northern Ireland for help. That’s a different sort of Mayday.

Perhaps the clue was in her name: not Theresa Will or even Theresa Can, but Theresa May. If your name’s a modal verb, you should try to choose the most useful one. Anyway, as The Rolling Stones tell us, “You can’t always get

what you want” — though you have a better chance in coffee shops than in politics.

Source: Spotlight 9/2017, page 14

## Travel

### [5] Gold rush, reloaded

**David:** Welcome to the great outdoors! Colorado is probably the best known of America’s mountain states. Rocky Mountain National Park is the state’s main tourist attraction, but Colorado is also famous for skiing, with big-name resort towns like Aspen, Vail and Telluride. Colorado’s not all about nature, however. Former cow town Denver has been reborn with a revitalized downtown, while Boulder and Fort Collins always rate highly on lists of best places to live. For the September issue of Spotlight, photographer and author Franz Marc Frei travelled to Colorado to learn about

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**bloody** ► verdammt

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**clue**

► Hinweis, Schlüssel

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**Mayday** ► international

er Notruf, SOS

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**questionable**

► fragwürdig

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**resort town**

► Urlaubsort

the state's gold-rush mining history and to witness the start of winter in the Rockies. In the following excerpt from the travel article, we'll hear about a new style of gold rush — the transformation of Denver into one of the most dynamic economies in the country.

“Sustainable development” has become a catchphrase in Colorado, and nowhere in the state is it creating more excitement than in Denver under the charismatic leadership of Democratic mayor Michael B. Hancock. I met him at a press conference to mark the start of direct flights between the state capital and Munich. Hancock, a proud descendant of slaves from Cameroon, is in his second term now. He travels the globe to spread the word about the city he so loves.

Denver's location speaks for itself. As the gateway to the Rocky Mountains, it's a paradise of hiking, skiing, and leaf-peeping. Businesses, however, are attracted by the fact that the workforce of tomorrow is being trained at the city's many institutions of higher learning. Campus tours provide insights into projects that will help society answer the demands of our rapidly changing world.

Denver's longstanding reputation as a “cattle town” is now seen as ancient history. Its prospects as a future-oriented city are helped by a progressive social outlook. That's “thanks

to a real grassroots movement,” says Mayor Hancock — one that has given more rights to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people. LGBT relationships have better protections here than in many other parts of the US. Same-sex marriage has been legal in Colorado, for example, since 2014.

What's more, after the much-publicized gun tragedies in that state — at a high school in Columbine in 1999, and in 2012 at a movie theater in Aurora — there is more public awareness of the need for gun control. Topics such as establishing humane immigration policies, abolishing the death penalty, placing limits on lobbying, as well as how best to regulate controversial mining practices like fracking

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**abolish** ▶ abschaffen

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**catchphrase** ▶ Schlagwort, geflügeltes Wort

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**cattle** ▶ Rinder-

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**demand** ▶ Anforderung

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**descendant**  
▶ Nachfahr(in)

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**excerpt** ▶ Auszug

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**grassroots** ▶ Basis-

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**humane**  
▶ menschenwürdig

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**leaf-peeping** *ifml.*  
▶ Bewundern der Herbstfarben

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**outlook** ▶ Ausrichtung

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**penalty** ▶ Strafe

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**prospect** ▶ Aussicht

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**reputation** ▶ Ruf

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**sustainable** ▶ nachhaltig

are reminiscent less of the conservative West, and more of liberal states in America's Northeast. Many in Washington's political establishment are convinced that "as Colorado goes, so goes the nation," and have been using the state as a proving ground for new ideas.

I had been to Denver before — twice, in fact. On my second visit, almost ten years ago, I didn't recognize the "Mile High City," it had changed so much. This time is no different. The area around the main rail hub, Union Station, pulses with life. I even catch my tour guide, author Rich Grant, staring in disbelief at new construction pits from which apartment blocks will soon rise. He says the buildings that he knew were still there the day before. Of course, there are good things about having more development concentrated downtown, especially as concerns traffic: Denver was one of the first American cities to ditch the formula that said downtown was for business, and urban or suburban sprawl was for homes.

I rent a bike to get a closer look at the city. Denver has a whopping 78 neighborhoods: RiNo is short for River North, LoDo refers to Lower Downtown, and LoHi is Lower Highlands — all popular parts of the city. In them, you'll find empty warehouses that have been transformed into market halls, and hot new restaurants that have popped up in old shipping containers. Many of these use a strategy

called "farm to table" — that is, using produce from local farms on a seasonal basis. There's great food here, and great beer, too: Portland, Oregon, is the only US city with more micro-breweries than Denver's greater metropolitan area.

See Spotlight 9/2017, pages 20–28

## Everyday English

### [6] The trouble with smartphones

**David:** At what age should a child own a smartphone? It's a difficult question that every parent nowadays must face. And unlike with driving and schooling, for example, there are

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**construction pit**

► Baugrube

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**ditch** *ifml.* ► verwerfen

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**microbrewery**

► Kleinbrauerei

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**pop up** ► aus dem

Boden schießen

---

**produce** ► Erzeugnisse

---

**proving ground**

► Testgelände

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**pulse** ► pulsieren

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**rail hub**

► Bahnknotenpunkt

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**reminiscent: be ~ of sth.**

► an etw. erinnern

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**sprawl** ► Ausdehnung,  
Zersiedelung

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**warehouse** ► Lagerhaus



no legal guidelines to help make the decision. In Everyday English, we're looking at words and phrases about families and their smartphone habits. In the first dialogue, Maeve and Ash are talking about getting their son, Aidan, a smartphone. Here is some useful vocabulary to help you understand. A "boundary" is something that shows a limit. To "set a boundary" is to put limitations or rules in place. And if two or more people are "on the same page", they agree about what they want to achieve. As you listen, try to answer this question. Why will Aidan's parents allow him to take his new phone to school with him?

**Maeve:** I know we've already promised to get Aidan a smartphone when he starts secondary school after the summer holidays, but I'm wondering how best we can protect him without giving him the feeling that we don't trust him.

**Ash:** I know what you mean. Basically, I think it's important to set boundaries and make sure we stick to the rules.

**Maeve:** Yeah, but that could be tricky. And we'll both have to be on the same page about when and how long he can have his phone.

**Ash:** Didn't we say he can take it to school so that he has a way of contacting us if he needs to? But he has to give it up when he gets home until after he's done his homework.

**Maeve:** Yes, and he has to hand it back again after an hour.

**David:** Were you able to answer the question? Why will Aidan's parents allow him to take his new phone to school with him? So he has a way of contacting them if he needs to. In the second dialogue, Maeve and Ash are discussing how to keep Aidan's smartphone use safe. Let's look at some vocabulary. If something is "built-in", it's included as part of something and is not separate from it. For example, "The camera has a built-in flash". A film's "rating" is a letter that shows whether or not a film is suitable for children. As you listen, try to answer this question. Why do Maeve and Ash want Aidan's phone to have parental controls?

**Ash:** Didn't we say we would get Aidan a phone with built-in parental controls?

**Maeve:** What does that actually mean, "parental controls"?

**Ash:** Well, you can restrict certain apps and features, and also types of content, such as movies, according to their ratings. We want to

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**feature** ▶ Funktion

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**parental control**  
▶ Kindersicherung

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**restrict** ▶ einschränken

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**tricky**  
▶ verwickelt, knifflig

protect him from inappropriate content and advertising, don't we?

**Maeve:** Yes, of course. And should we get him a contract that enables him to use only a Wi-Fi connection for data use?

**Ash:** You mean so that he can access the Internet only when he's at home and the Wi-Fi is on?

**Maeve:** Yes.

**Ash:** That makes sense. I'll talk to the phone company and see if they have a deal like that.

**David:** Were you able to answer the question? Why do Maeve and Ash want Aidan's phone to have parental controls? They want to protect him from inappropriate, or unsuitable, content and advertising.

Source: *Spotlight* 9/2017, pages 48–49

## Society

### [7] What does it mean to be British?

**David:** What does it mean to be British today? It's not an easy question to answer. With Brexit around the corner, Scottish independence a possibility and an increasingly multicultural society, the idea of Britain and Britishness is being constantly redefined. In a special in the September issue, *Spotlight* examines

the challenges facing the UK and how the nation is responding to them. To discuss the article, and Britishness in general, *Spotlight* editor-in-chief Inez Sharp is joined in the studio by deputy editor Claudine Weber-Hof.

**Inez:** Hallo, this is Inez Sharp, *Spotlight's* editor-in-chief.

**Claudine:** And this is Claudine Weber-Hof, the deputy.

**Inez:** Today, we're going to talk about Britishness. It's the big feature in the September issue of *Spotlight*, and Claudine and I are going to exchange ideas on what exactly is Britishness. The author, Lorraine Mallinder, interviewed different people, a variety of people, in Great Britain, and asked them how they would define Britishness. Topics such as the BBC, the National Health Service came up. We're going to take a more personal approach, and I'm just

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**approach** ➤ Ansatz, Herangehensweise

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**deputy editor**  
➤ stellvertretende(r) Chefredakteur(in)

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**editor-in-chief**  
➤ Chefredakteur(in)

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**inappropriate**  
➤ ungeeignet

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**National Health Service**  
UK ➤ Staatlicher Gesundheitsdienst

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**redefine**  
➤ neu definieren

going to start by asking Claudine, what do you think defines Britishness? First of all, what are your qualifications for defining Britishness?

**Claudine:** Well, one of them, an important one in my life, is that I work with you very closely. You being London, born and bred. I, myself, am an American, so I'm a bit of an outsider. I see Britishness as something foreign and yet very attractive. I hope you sense this when you work with me.

**Inez:** I absolutely do, thank you very much indeed. I hope so.

**Claudine:** Also, I will reveal to our adoring public that I'm married to a Brit. He himself would say he's a Cornishman.

**Inez:** That's an important distinction, of course. But perhaps you can sort of generalize and say as a Cornishman he also has behavioural patterns. He's a Brit, in the end.

**Claudine:** He is. And he's a very good-looking, tall, blond British man. Very attractive, lovely qualities. Fantastic personality. He loves the great outdoors, coming from Cornwall. It's a very rural area. We go hiking together quite often. We drive out in our old Land Rover. And when we come back in the evening, we park up, take the dog out — a little Jack Russell, also a product of Britain — and we'll go in the front door, I'll take off my hiking boots, he'll take off his, and then he'll say, "It'd be lovely to have a cup of tea, wouldn't it?" Could you say that,

maybe, with the correct intonation?

**Inez:** "It would be lovely to have a cup of tea," or "I'm gasping for a cup of tea."

**Claudine:** Exactly. Something like that. And as an American, I stand there for a moment and I think, "I don't know. I'd more like a Coca Cola, perhaps, or a cold beer." But I'm missing the point entirely. Can you guess what that is?

**Inez:** Kind of, kind of. But come on; surprise the listeners here, because they're not going to understand this until you've explained it.

**Claudine:** Well, let me translate. Let me translate word for word what this means when someone from the United Kingdom says, "It'd be lovely to have a cup of tea, wouldn't it?" What it really means is "Go on, woman. Put on the kettle. Let's have a cup of tea!"

**Inez:** That is absolutely true, I have to say. My father, who worked in the City in London, would come home from work, maybe at seven o'clock in the evening, half-past seven, and

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**born and bred** ▶ geboren und aufgewachsen

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**Cornishman** ▶ aus Cornwall stammend

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**gasp for sth.**  
▶ nach etw. lechzen

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**miss the point**  
▶ das Wesentliche nicht begreifen

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**pattern** ▶ Muster

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**reveal** ▶ preisgeben, offen darlegen

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**rural** ▶ ländlich

there would always be a cup of tea waiting for him, with a biscuit, as well. So, yes, I can attest to that being true. A cup of tea is very, very important. There's almost nothing that a cup of tea can't cure in Britain, for sure.

**Claudine:** It's this indirect question. It's sort of the implication of A. "I would like a cup of tea right now," B. "Probably you would, too," [and] C. "I wonder who's going to make this tea." You know? And usually, well, we have gotten rid of many of our less comfortable gender roles, but I have to say, when it comes to making tea, the onus is still on the female of the house.

**Inez:** Yes, indeed. And an important note here for all you tea-makers out there, it's one teaspoon of tea per cup and one for the pot. Important to remember and told to me by my grandmother and, as you see, never forgotten. Yeah, indirectness. That's very British, I have to say. There are lots of "woulds" and "could you possibly"s and "maybe" and "perhaps" and it's absolutely true. When I ask people to do things, sometimes they come away thinking I've just told them a story as opposed to my having actually asked them to do something because we like to be so polite that sometimes it's not actually quite clear what we want them to do. Does this ring a bell with you?

**Claudine:** Absolutely. I mean, there's that tea anecdote I just explained, but then there's the use of the royal "we". I don't know if you're

aware of one's own use of this word, but there's the kind of statement: "We should get this done." If you have three other people standing in the room, say a German person, an American and, who knows, maybe someone from Ireland, only the Irish person will understand that they've been given a directive. Everyone else will leave going, "Well, someone's going to do it."

**Inez:** Yeah, that's absolutely true. The other thing, the thing I think is very British, is a sense of humour. And I look at this in two ways. It's wonderful. It takes the sting out of a lot of things in life. I was recently at Heathrow Airport having the body check that you need to have when you go through immigration. And due to a shoulder injury, I can't raise my arm. And the woman who was supposed to be doing this check, she had me in hysterics, sort of

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**as opposed to** ▶ anstatt

**directive** ▶ Anweisung

**gender role**

▶ Geschlechterrolle

**get rid of sth.** ▶ sich von

etw. befreien

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**hysterics: have sb. in**

~ ▶ sich totlachen

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**onus** ▶ Pflicht

**ring a bell with sb.**

▶ jmdm. bekannt vorkommen

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**take the sting out of sth.**

▶ Muster

teasing me about this injury. It was really very funny. I couldn't imagine that happening in Germany. Is your husband a humorous person? I know him a little bit.

**Claudine:** Oh, very, very much so. Very, very funny. But I'm asking myself now as you relate this tale, what did she say exactly to you that was so funny?

**Inez:** She just sort of looked at me and she inclined her head, and said, "Oh, my lovely!" I'd never met this woman before. "You have frozen shoulder, don't you? Well, let's see what we can do." And she almost ticked me. And I was laughing so hard, that I really couldn't concentrate on what she was saying because she was joking around with me, and it just didn't feel like an encounter with somebody who's responsible for airport security, in any way, shape or form.

**Claudine:** I like that, though. Well, it takes the tension out of the situation, doesn't it? I have to say, in our editorial group, also with *Business Spotlight* nearby, there's a lot of laughing on our end of the hallway here at Spotlight Verlag, a lot of jokes being told, a lot of word play. And I think it's central to British culture, and it was very gracious of you to have passed this on to the colonies. We in the United States of America still thank you for this part of our cultural heritage.

**Inez:** I mean, I think I have to say, there is a

downside to it that I can't... Maybe it's present in the United States, as well. Humour is a way of not taking things seriously that perhaps sometimes one should take seriously. And I look at some of our politicians and think that maybe some of these rather comic characters would not have been able to make a career for themselves in other European countries. That I find sometimes a little bit disturbing or I would question how important humour is when you're talking about very serious topics. So, for me, humour on a personal level is lovely. In some arenas, it doesn't really have any space or shouldn't be given too much space.

**Claudine:** I think comedy and tragedy are close cousins.

**Inez:** That's true!

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**arena** ▶ hier: Bereich

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**cultural heritage**

▶ Kulturerbe

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**downside** ▶ Kehrseite

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**encounter** ▶ Begegnung

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**frozen shoulder**

▶ steife Schulter

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**gracious** ▶ freundlich

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**hallway** ▶ Gang, Flur

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**in any way, shape or**

**form** ▶ in irgendeiner Form

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**incline** ▶ (zur Seite neigen) neigen

---

**relate** ▶ erzählen

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**tease**

▶ necken, veralbern

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**tension**

▶ (An)Spannung

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**tickle** ▶ kitzeln

**Claudine:** Sometimes the inappropriate use of comedy draws out the essential truth of something. In these times, I think we'll have to live with a greater dose of that kind of comedy than we're perhaps used to.

**Inez:** Right, and let's just finish off with an anecdote or with a situation that you, Claudine, I'm sure, will be aware of. A Brit, standing somewhere, is pushed around by somebody else and that person steps on their foot. And every British person will apologize for the fact that somebody else has stood on their foot, elbowed them in the ribs... I don't know why we do this really. Do you find this to be true?

**Claudine:** Oh yes, oh yes. We've learned this from our British friends, as well. For the most part. There are exceptions, regionally speaking, in the States where someone will become aggressive. But what we admire about the Brits is this very subtle and sweet way of taking a step back and saying "This situation doesn't really matter to me. I'm just going to apologize." On the one hand, to draw attention to the fact that it's even happened. Like, "Oh, sorry," is one way of saying, "Hey, you! You stepped on my foot, you jerk!" And then on the other hand, it simply, as I said, takes tension out of the situation. You've apologized, forcing the other person to acknowledge the wrong done and to apologize twice as much because actually, you know, they're the ones who did it.

**Inez:** Absolutely. OK, right, well, that's Britishness in a few nutshells, I hope. Thank you very much indeed.

**Claudine:** Thank you.

See Spotlight 9/2017, pages 30–37

## Replay

### [8] A look at recent news events

**Inez:** Welcome to Replay, the listening exercise in which we look at a recent news story, its background and language. I'm Inez Sharp. In this edition:

The new space race is not between nations, but rather between billionaire businessmen, and the goal is to start a human colony on Mars.

---

#### billionaire

► Milliardär(in)

---

#### inappropriate

► unangemessen

---

#### jerk US. *ifml.*

► Trottel

---

#### nutshells: in a few ~

► zusammenfassend

---

#### subtle

► subtil, feinsinnig

## [9] On Mars missions: escape velocity

**Inez:** Is colonizing space the only way to save mankind? That seems to be what entrepreneurs Elon Musk and Jeff Bezos think. With this purpose in mind, the two tech billionaires have been running competing projects to bring humans to Mars and beyond. Most famous for the electric-car producers Tesla, Musk is also the owner and CEO of the space transport company SpaceX. Musk recently spoke of “some doomsday event” that will one day wipe out the human race. He says that, “the alternative is to become a space-bearing civilization and a multiplanetary species.” This year, he outlined plans for a huge spacecraft, designed to carry 100 passengers to the Red Planet.

Jeff Bezos, the founder and boss of Amazon.com, also has a space transport company. Like SpaceX, Blue Origin is privately funded and develops technologies to lower the costs and increase the reliability of space travel. The company was the first to successfully land a rocket after launch and has been able to reuse one of its rocket boosters four times. Bezos' argument for space colonisation is slightly different to that of Musk. To protect earth, he says, the best policy would be to bring heavy industry, like energy production, into space. “Earth will be zoned residential and light industrial,” he has said.

In an editorial from Britain's *Guardian* newspaper, the writers argue that this new space race is simply a distraction from the far more relevant and serious issues facing humanity today. In a moment, you can listen to the first part of the editorial. Before that, let's look at some of the language used. An activity that can continue without more help or money from outside can be described as “self-sustaining”. Also, the noun “exploration” describes the act of travelling through a place in order to find out about it or find something in it. Now let's listen to the first section of the editorial.

For science fiction writers ranged across the astronomical distance that separates Edgar Rice Burroughs and Kim Stanley Robinson, Mars has been a theatre of dreams, variously realistic. Now the tech billionaires Elon Musk and Jeff Bezos are competing to see who will make it first there in reality.

**distraction** ▶ Ablenkung

**doomsday**

▶ Weltuntergang

**entrepreneur**

▶ Unternehmer(in)

**launch** ▶ Start

**outline** ▶ entwerfen

**reliability** ▶ Seriosität,  
Betriebssicherheit

**residential**

▶ als Wohngebiet

**rocket booster**

▶ Starttriebwerk

**zone**

▶ in Zonen einteilen

Bezos is spending a billion dollars a year out of his Amazon stock to keep his project going; Musk has announced he wants the first manned private flights to set off by 2026. He hopes that the price can be brought down from around \$10bn to \$200,000 and that reusable spaceships will ferry a million people to Mars over a period of decades until they can start a self-sustaining civilisation there. This, of course, is only the beginning: once the technology of reusable spacecraft fuelled by methane made from raw materials found at their destination has been mastered, Musk foresees no limit to their explorations.

Source: © *Guardian News & Media* 2017

**Inez:** Musk has a track record of turning his dreams into reality, yet even he acknowledges the enormous challenges in establishing a human colony on Mars. However, say the *Guardian* writers, there may be a more important question than whether Musk or Bezos can succeed. Is such a quest really something that can benefit humanity and should we support it? Here is some of the vocabulary you'll encounter in section two of the editorial. When we "buy into something", we accept that it is right and allow it to influence us. The expression is often used in a disapproving way. For example, "I never bought into all his nonsense." The writers call Elon Musk's publicity

for his Mars project "boosterism". The word can be used to describe the enthusiastic promotion of a person, organization or cause. Of course, here it's a play on words, as a "booster" is also a rocket that gives a spacecraft extra power when it leaves the earth.

He acknowledges a variety of technological challenges and immense financial hurdles. Although he is already so rich that he can see no point to getting even richer except to fund this project, not all his resources would see it through. The question, though, is whether this is a dream that the rest of us should buy into. There are technical and ethical challenges unmentioned in his boosterism.

Source: © *Guardian News & Media* 2017

**Inez:** In the final section, the *Guardian* writers talk about what they see as the major problems

---

**acknowledge** ► einräumen, anerkennen

---

**benefit**  
► von Nutzen sein

---

**ferry** ► befördern

---

**foresee** ► vorhersehen

---

**hurdle**  
► Hürde, Hindernis

---

**quest** ► Suche, Streben nach etw.

---

**track record**  
► Erfolgsgeschichte



with these plans to colonize space, and Mars in particular. Could such proposals be just another example of the technology industry's obsession with overcoming the restrictions of being human and maybe even conquering death? Here is some of the vocabulary you'll encounter in section three of the editorial. "Mortality" describes the way that people do not live forever and must finally die. "Immortality" is the opposite of this — the ability to live forever. The adjective "vast" describes something extremely large in area, size or amount.

The first is that we don't know whether Mars has already got any primitive life on it. The second is the temperature when we get there. Living at -120C is not an attractive prospect. But the real problem is very simply put: the whole project is a fantasy of escape from mortality, just as much as the other great Silicon Valley fantasies of freezing bodies and uploading minds into computer programs to attain a disembodied and omnipotent immortality. It is science in the service of a comforting fiction. The universe is vast, but nowhere in it can we live without death and necessity.

Source: © Guardian News & Media 2017

## [10] Replay: Words and phrases

**Inez:** Let's see if you can remember the meanings of some of the words and phrases from the text. I'm going to give you a definition. Do you know the word or phrase that fits? Ready?

What noun describes the act of travelling through a place in order to find out about it or find something in it? Exploration

If an activity can continue without more help or money from outside, it can be called... "self-sustaining".

When we accept that something is right and allow it to influence us, we... buy into it.

What word describes the way that people do not live forever and must finally die? Mortality

---

### attain

► erreichen, erzielen

---

### comforting

► beruhigend, tröstlich

---

### disembodied

► körperlos

---

### necessity

► hier: Not, Elend

---

### obsession with sth.

► Fixierung auf etw.

---

### omnipotent

► allmächtig

---

### overcome

► überwinden

---

### prospect

► Aussicht, Perspektive

This adjective describes something extremely large in area, size or amount. Vast

The enthusiastic promotion of a person, organization or a cause can be called... boosterism.

With that, we end Replay for this month. We hope you've found our explanations useful. Till next month: goodbye.

See *Spotlight* 9/2017, page 73

## Language

### [11] Welcome to our life! Exercise 1

**David:** What's daily life like for a normal British family? Language author Vanessa Clark opens the door of her Oxfordshire home to *Spotlight* readers in the September issue. For *Spotlight* Audio, Vanessa has written some exercises to test you on excerpts from the story. First, listen to the following recording, in which Vanessa writes about her typical Tuesday.

Tuesday

10 a.m. I go to my school. I teach 12 hours a week in a boys' private school. Oxfordshire is an affluent area and has a lot of private schools. My husband and I chose the local state

comprehensive school for our children, partly out of principle, partly because we wanted our children to be in mixed-sex schools (most private schools are single-sex); but to be honest, we didn't have the option of a private school because the fees are about £20,000 per year for a day pupil (and double that for a boarder). I give one-to-one English-language support to the pupils who come from overseas. Most private schools in the UK are finding that there aren't enough British families who want, or can afford, to send their children to boarding schools these days, so they are filling the empty spaces with pupils from overseas. I work with boys aged 13 to 18 from Hong Kong, mainland China, Russia and Thailand.

**David:** You're going to hear some pairs of statements about education in the UK, based on the extract you've just listened to. In each pair, one statement is true and the other is false. Each time, listen and repeat the true statement.

Private schools are in rich, affluent areas.

---

**affluent**

► wohlhabend, reich

---

**boarder**

► Internatsschüler(in)

---

**comprehensive school**

UK ► Gesamtschule

---

**excerpt** ► Auszug

Or: Private schools are in poor areas. Private schools are in rich, affluent areas.

A comprehensive school is a private school.  
Or: A comprehensive school is a state school.  
A comprehensive school is a state school.

Most private schools are single-sex. Or: Most private schools are mixed-sex. Most private schools are single-sex.

Most state schools are single-sex. Or: Most state schools are mixed-sex. Most state schools are mixed-sex.

The costs of private education are called “school money”. Or: The costs of private education are called “school fees”. The costs of private education are called “school fees”.

Day fees are twice as much as boarding fees. Or: Boarding fees are twice as much as day fees. Boarding fees are twice as expensive as day fees.

Boarding is becoming less popular for British families. Or: Boarding is becoming more popular for British families. Boarding is becoming less popular for British families.

Pupils from overseas speak no English.

Or: Pupils from overseas get English-language support. Pupils from overseas get English-language support.

See Spotlight 9/2017, pages 40–45

## [12] Welcome to our life! Exercise 2

**David:** Now listen to two short extracts where we find out about two different supermarkets: firstly Waitrose and secondly the discount supermarkets like Aldi and Lidl. Afterwards there will be an exercise to compare the shops. So firstly, just listen.

Tuesday

5 p.m. I go to the supermarket. On my way home, I call at Waitrose, which is known in the UK as the posh supermarket because it's more expensive than the other stores. I like the quality of the fish and meat and also the company's high ethical values. I cycle past it on my way home from work. I have a customer account card, which allows me to get a free newspaper and a free coffee every day, so it's tempting just to “pop in” for one thing — and then I end up buying more than I intended. I am also able to scan my own shopping as I go around the

**posh** *ifml.*

• nobel, vornehm

**tempting** • verlockend

store, using a handheld scanner, so the shopping is quick and easy — another advantage of this more expensive store.

Thursday

8 p.m. We drive to the discount supermarket. Once every few weeks, we save money by stocking up on everyday products at lower prices. Sometimes we have a supermarket delivery: I order online, and the delivery is free for orders over £100. At other times, we drive to one of the cheaper supermarkets on the outskirts of Oxford and stock up on everyday food products. The German discount stores Aldi and Lidl are big names in the UK grocery market now. They may not be as luxurious as Waitrose, but we get a large trolley full of family shopping for about half the price.

**David:** Now listen to some statements. For each one, just decide if it's Waitrose or Aldi. Then repeat the whole statement with the name of the supermarket. Listen to the example first.

This shop is a German discount store. Aldi is a German discount store.

So, let's start with the example. This shop is a German discount store. Aldi is a German discount store.

This shop has lower prices. Aldi has lower prices.

This shop gives customers free coffee and newspapers. Waitrose gives customers free coffee and newspapers.

This shop is often on the outskirts of town. Aldi is often on the outskirts of town.

This shop allows you to scan your own shopping. Waitrose allows you to scan your own shopping.

This shop is a good place to stock up. Aldi is a good place to stock up.

This shop is known as a posh shop. Waitrose is known as a posh shop.

See Spotlight 9/2017, pages 40–45

---

**grocery**

→ Lebensmittel-

---

**outskirts**

→ Stadtrand, Vororte

---

**pop in** → auf einen

Sprung vorbeikommen

---

**stock up on sth.**

→ sich mit etw. eindecken

## Peggy's Place

### [13] One sleazeball coming up!

**David:** The chaos continues at Peggy's Place, our favourite London pub. Here's the story so far: Peggy's daughter, Jane, is pregnant, but the father of the child, Alan, isn't interested in her. Instead, he was last seen flirting with Peggy, who seems to have forgotten she's still married to Phil. Could this be the end of Peggy's Place as we know it? Listen now for the latest news from the pub.

**Sean:** What'll it be, George?

**George:** Actually, I just want to have a word with Phil. Is he around?

**Sean:** Well, I'm afraid he's ... umm ... incapacitated at the moment.

**George:** Incapacitated? What's that supposed to mean? Well, then I'll talk to Peggy.

**Sean:** Now she really is incapacitated.

**George:** What on earth is going on?

**Sean:** So you haven't heard yet?

**George:** Heard what?

**Sean:** Peggy's left Phil. It seems to be final.

**George:** What? How? Why?

**Sean:** According to the letter she wrote to Phil, she's fallen madly in love with Alan and wants to start a new life with him.

**George:** Alan? The sleazeball who got Jane

pregnant?

**Sean:** The very one.

**George:** Do you think she really means it? I mean she's had crushes before. Remember that German TV director?

**Sean:** The letter was quite clear. She's selling the pub and moving to Majorca with Alan.

**George:** Give me a whisky! How has Phil taken it?

**Sean:** Badly, as you can imagine. He's catatonic with misery.

**George:** Do we know where the lovers are hiding out?

**Sean:** No. Maybe at Alan's flat — somewhere in Finsbury Park, as far as I know.

**George:** Has Phil tried talking to her?

**Sean:** She's not answering her phone. She's sent a couple of text messages to say she's OK, but that's all.

**George:** I'd contact the police. For all we know,

---

**crush:** have a ~ ifml.

► verknallt sein

---

**incapacitated**

► arbeitsunfähig

---

**misery** ► Kummer, Elend

---

**pregnant** ► schwanger

---

**sleazeball** Am. ifml.

► Widerling, schmieriger Typ

---

**supposed:** be ~ to do sth.

► etw. tun sollen

---

**text message** ► SMS

this Alan guy might be an axe murderer or something.

**Sean:** Peggy has spoken to Jane.

**George:** I hadn't thought about that. Jane must be really upset.

**Sean:** She's in drama queen mode, which makes it hard to be sympathetic. She was in here yesterday. It was a full-on tirade — three customers left while she was ranting — but what can I do?

**George:** When is the baby due?

**Sean:** I don't know, and I didn't dare ask.

**George:** Here comes Alan. He's got a nerve.

**Sean:** Hello! How can I help you?

**Alan:** Oh, don't mind me. I'm just here to meet some prospective buyers.

**Sean:** Prospective buyers for the pub?

**Alan:** Don't worry. With your reputation as a chef, the new owners will probably want to keep you on.

**George:** Why isn't Peggy here to meet the buyers?

**Alan:** And who are you, if you don't mind my asking?

**George:** George is the name. I'm one of the regulars...

**Alan:** You know what, I will have a drink. Give me a gin and tonic. And while you're at it, why don't you get George another whisky. The buyers should be here any minute now.

**Sean:** Here you go. That'll be £8.20.

**Alan:** No, it's on the house.

**Sean:** I'm afraid neither Peggy nor Phil are here, and I'm not authorized to hand out free drinks.

**George:** I'll pay for my drink...

**Sean:** Thanks, George. So that leaves £4.50 for the gin and tonic.

**Alan:** Look, sonny boy, don't take that tone with me, otherwise I'll make sure you are the first to lose your job when the new owners come on board.

Source: Spotlight 9/2017, page 16

---

**dare** ▶ sich trauen

---

**due: be -**

▶ hier: zur Welt kommen

---

**mind sb.** ▶ sich um jmdn. kümmern

---

**mind sth.**

▶ etw. dagegen haben

---

**prospective buyer**

▶ Kaufinteressent(in)

---

**rant** ▶ toben, zetern

---

**reputation** ▶ Ruf

---

**sonny boy** *ifml.*

▶ Söhnchen

---

**sympathetic**

▶ verständnisvoll

---

**upset** ▶ mitgenommen

## English at Work

### [14] Useful business phrases

**David:** Each month, business communication expert Ken Taylor joins us in the studio with tips on using English at work. This time Ken gives examples of useful phrases to use in a business context.

**Ken:** Hello. This is Ken Taylor from London. Anna is the executive assistant to the managing director. She'd been working closely with her boss for ten years until his recent retirement. Now she has a new boss, Adam. Listen to this conversation between Anna and Adam. They're discussing how they should work together.

**Anna:** Now that you've had some time to settle in, I thought we should have a chat about how you see my role.

**Adam:** I agree. You worked with John for quite a while, didn't you?

**Anna:** Ten years. So I knew his work routines extremely well. And I knew exactly what he expected of me.

**Adam:** I'm sure you did. He told me as much when we overlapped our work. So how would you describe your duties and tasks?

**Anna:** I organized his diary and appointments.

I acted as his gatekeeper. I did all his travel arrangements. I sat in the board meetings and wrote the minutes.

**Adam:** And I'd like you to continue doing that. Anything else?

**Anna:** He used a dictation machine, so I sent out most of his mails.

**Adam:** Hmm. I think I can do that myself in future. Actually, I was wondering if you could do something else instead — a small project, if you like.

**Anna:** And what would that be?

**Adam:** Each department has one or two executive assistants like you. I'd like you to co-ordinate their work. Set up meetings to exchange ideas on how to work more closely together and to align your approaches to presentation materials, for example.

**Anna:** Sounds interesting. I like that idea.

**Ken:** It sounds as though Anna and Adam will get on well together. In their discussion, they used some useful business phrases. Let's

---

**align** ▶ angleichen

---

**approach** ▶ Methode, Vorgehensweise

---

**board** ▶ Vorstands-

---

**executive assistant**

▶ Assistent(in) der Geschäftsleitung

---

**gatekeeper**

▶ Türhüter(in)

---

**minutes** ▶ Protokoll

practise some of them now. I'll give you a phrase. Then you'll hear two explanations: A and B. In the pause, decide which explanation matches that phrase. Then you'll hear the correct answer. OK? We'll start.

To settle in. Is that...?

A. to come to an agreement

Or

B. to become used to a situation

B is correct. Adam has settled in to his new job as managing director.

Work routines. Are they...?

A. ways in which to organize the work efficiently

Or

B. instructions on how to do the work

A is correct. Anna talks about knowing John's work routines extremely well.

To overlap the work. Does this mean...?

A. to work side by side

Or

B. to complete the job

A is correct. Adam and John overlapped their work for a short time before John retired.

To act as a gatekeeper. Is this...?

A. to check who can have access to the boss

Or

B. to deal with guests to the company

A is correct. Anna acted as John's gatekeeper. She made sure only the appropriate people could get directly in touch with him.

To co-ordinate the work. Does this mean...?

A. to agree willingly when someone asks for your help with the work

Or

B. to make sure everyone taking part works together properly

B is correct. Adam asks Anna to be in charge of getting all the executive assistants in the company to work together on a project.

To align your approaches. Does this mean...?

A. to measure how effective your ways of working are

Or

B. to make sure everyone works in similar ways and towards the same goals

B is correct. Adam wants Anna to get the executive assistants in the company to work in similar ways.

How did you get on? These are useful business phrases. If there were any you didn't know, go back and learn them.



**David:** If you have a question for Ken, send it by e-mail to [language@spotlight-verlag.de](mailto:language@spotlight-verlag.de). If Ken chooses your question to print in *Spotlight* magazine, you'll receive a free copy of his book, *Dear Ken... 101 answers to your questions about business English*.

See *Spotlight* 9/2017, page 55

## Around Oz

### [15] Water, water, everywhere

**David:** The Australian city of Perth is a green oasis on the edge of the world's driest inhabited continent. But all those lawns and gardens need water and naturally, Perth wouldn't have enough rainfall. So where does it all come from? Perth resident Peter Flynn has the answer in this month's Around Oz.

Visitors who fly into Perth during the day are surprised by two things: the first is that the urban sprawl on the edge of the Indian Ocean is 150 kilometres long; the second, more amazing fact is that the place is lush green. How Perth can be an oasis, while the surrounding land is typically brown, is even more remarkable after decades of rising temperatures and decreasing rainfall.

These days, dams are rarely more than a

quarter full, as rainfall run-off continues to plummet. This year's warm, dry winter has meant that almost no water has flowed into dams — a sort of new normal state in this part of the world. Indeed, the water in the dams covers not much more than five per cent of Perth's household needs. The rest gets pumped to inland communities as far away as the historic and still booming gold-mining city of Kalgoorlie, more than 500 kilometres to the east.

The architect and chief engineer of that ambitious pipeline was the famous C. Y. O'Connor, who in 1902 rode his horse into the ocean off Perth and shot himself dead. His suicide just 12 months before the water flowed is blamed on relentless personal criticism of O'Connor from parliament and the press.

The irony, though, is that he died surrounded by today's primary supply source: ocean water. A little over 100 years later, and not far from where O'Connor took his own life, the

---

**copy** ▶ Exemplar

---

**lawn** ▶ Rasen

---

**lush** ▶ saftig, üppig

---

**plummet** ▶ stark zurückgehen, sinken

---

**relentless** ▶ unablässig, schonungslos

---

**run-off** ▶ Abfluss

---

**urban sprawl**  
▶ Ballungsraum

government built the first of two desalination plants to secure Perth's water supply; the second is 150 kilometres to the south. Together, they provide 47 per cent of the city's water.

So Perth continues to love its gardens, lawns and trees on the back of treated salt water. This allows plant species to survive that would otherwise never have grown here. Based on the last digit of one's house number, citizens are allowed to use sprinklers for two days of the week during the summer. In winter, there's a total ban.

Many homes in the older parts of Perth, like mine, have their own bores and pumps that tap into underground supplies as little as 15 metres below the surface. These are what they call "superficial aquifers"; the water is often stained brown and can even stink a little. Far beneath this water, however, is a massive network of confined aquifers that supply almost as much high-quality drinking water as the desal plants. They are partly filled again by rain, while the local water authority has created a system to top up the deep wells with wetland overflows that normally run into the sea.

Oh, the other thing they do is pump treated sewage into the underground supplies. Yes, it is properly brought to a drinking water standard, and that has caused absolutely no controversy here, because the good folk of Perth know they live on the edge of the driest

continent on the planet. I just wanted to let you know all this before I write my personal visitors' guide to Perth, appearing in *Spotlight* shortly.

Source: *Spotlight* 9/2017, page 71

## Conclusion

**[16] David:** Thanks for joining us for *Spotlight Audio*. You'll find more information about becoming a regular subscriber to either our CD or download at [www.spotlight-online.de/hoeren](http://www.spotlight-online.de/hoeren). Join us again next month, won't you? Until then: goodbye.

---

**aquifer** ▶ wasserführende Schicht

---

**bore** ▶ Bohrung, hier: Brunnen

---

**confined aquifer**  
▶ Grundwasserleiter

---

**deep well** ▶ Tiefbrunnen

---

**desal(ination) plant**  
▶ Meerwasserentsalzungsanlage

---

**digit** ▶ Ziffer

---

**overflow**  
▶ Überschwemmung

---

**sewage** ▶ Abwasser

---

**stained brown**  
▶ braun gefärbt

---

**subscriber**  
▶ Abonnent(in)

---

**superficial**  
▶ oberflächlich

---

**tap into sth.**  
▶ etw. anzapfen

---

**wetland** ▶ Sumpfgebiet

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1. <b>Introduction</b>	1:18	9. On Mars missions: escape velocity	6:55
2. <b>In the Spotlight</b> Eat your words	2:18	10. Words and phrases	1:46
3. <b>A Day in My Life</b> Kanchan Singh, cat-café owner	2:47	11. <b>Language</b> Welcome to our life! Exercise 1	4:03
4. <b>Britain Today</b> You can't always get what you want	5:09	12. Welcome to our life! Exercise 2	3:50
5. <b>Travel</b> Gold rush, reloaded	4:56	13. <b>Peggy's Place</b> One sleazeball coming up!	3:40
6. <b>Everyday English</b> The trouble with smartphones	3:31	14. <b>English at Work</b> Useful business phrases	6:14
7. <b>Society</b> What does it mean to be British?	9:38	15. <b>Around Oz</b> Water, water, everywhere	4:08
8. <b>Replay: Recent news events</b> Introduction	0:34	16. <b>Conclusion</b>	0:33
		<b>Total playing time</b>	<b>61:26</b>