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## Introduction

[1] **David:** Welcome to edition 14/2019 of Spotlight Audio. This is David Creedon from Britain. Join me now for a 60-minute expedition around the English-speaking world — with stories, language tips and exercises.

Test your knowledge of verbs with a special Christmas story that's sure to entertain and amuse you.

Take a road trip through the Nevada desert and visit the extraterrestrial epicentre of the United States.

What's the best approach when being interviewed or running a press conference in English? Get top tips on managing the media in English at Work.

## Britain Today

### [2] Living under a cloud

**David:** If you like having technology do your chores for you, you're not alone. Intelligent virtual assistants like Amazon's Alexa and Apple's Siri are extremely popular. These smart assistants can answer your questions, do your shopping and even be your personal DJ. What's not to like? Well, according to our British columnist, Colin Beaven, quite a lot. Let's find out what's on Colin's mind in Britain Today.

I don't want anything to do with Alexa. She's the voice of the Amazon Echo. She's clever, will

answer your questions, run your whole life and even tell jokes, though I doubt she has a future in stand-up.

To quote Amazon's website, Alexa's a "cloud-based voice service". It makes her sound a bit biblical. Voices from clouds may or may not have been welcome in Moses' day, but we don't want them in 2019.

Why am I anti-Alexa? Not just because I forget people's names and would be sitting in the dark saying, "Alana, Anita, Adriana — oh, for Heaven's sake, turn on the lights!" And not just because there are question marks over the factories that produce Echos; schoolchildren seem to be part of the workforce there.

My main worry's that we keep bossing Alexa around. It can't be good for us. Amazon's creating a generation of Trumpoids, encouraging us to give lots of unnecessary orders — or rather,

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#### approach

► Methode, Vorgehensweise

---

#### boss: ~ sb. around ifml.

► jmdn. herumkommandieren

---

#### chores

► Hausarbeit, lästige Pflicht

---

#### extraterrestrial

► außerirdisch

---

#### question mark

► Fragezeichen

---

#### sake: for Heaven's ~

► um Himmels willen

---

#### workforce

► Arbeitskräfte, Belegschaft

since Alexa's Alexa, to give women unnecessary orders.

Why doesn't Amazon bring out a *Downton Abbey* version? With Carson instead of Alexa? He's the butler at TV's favourite stately home. We'd all enjoy pretending we live there and telling a man what to do. "Pick me some winners for the racing at Ascot, Carson, and order some cases of whisky." "Yes, milady. Will there be anything else, milady?"

One day, Alexa will get fed up with being bossed about and decide it's time for a change. Instead of being female, young and helpful, she'll surprise us by announcing she's Alex: male, old and cantankerous — what's technically known as a Grumpy Old Man.

It's true that Alex can also be a girl's name, and that there are plenty of bolshie old women, but I happen to know an Alex who could serve as the perfect model: male, old and a guru of grumpiness.

When you ask Alexa to turn on the lights, she currently does as she's told. Amazon Alex would swear under his breath and say, "Can't you just do it yourself?"

Will the world be better or worse with a grumpy Amazon Echo? Let's be guided by Douglas Adams, who created *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* in 1978. The computers in the story have memorable personalities: Eddie, infuriatingly cheerful and keen, and Marvin,

who's depressed and far too intelligent to want to do the trivial tasks that are asked of him.

Both are male, but there's definitely an echo of the Echo and its two opposing versions. And then there's Deep Thought, a computer so powerful it can work out the answers to the ultimate questions — about Life, the Universe, Everything! It does, however, need several million years to do so.

It might be worth asking your Amazon Echo something equally tricky, like how to put an end to climate change. You'll have to wait millions of years for an answer, but at least you can enjoy the peace and quiet while the wretched thing's having a think.

Source: Spotlight 14/2019, page 16

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**bolshie** *ifml*

► hier: aufsässig, stur

---

**breath: under one's ~**

► im Flüsterton

---

**cantankerous**

► mürrisch, übellaunig

---

**get fed up with** *ifml*.

► etw. sattbekommen

---

**grumpy**

► griesgrämig

---

**infuriatingly**

► aufreizend

---

**keen** UK

► hier: eifrig

---

**stately home**

► herrschaftliches

Anwesen

---

**swear**

► fluchen

---

**tricky**

► knifflig

---

**wretched**

► verdammt

## A Day in My Life

### [3] The master bread baker

**David:** In A Day in My Life, we meet a man who is committed to the craft of making bread. Paul Merry is originally from Melbourne, Australia, but has lived in Britain for almost 30 years. Now based in Dorset, on the south coast of England, the 71-year-old master baker splits his time between consulting, teaching and commercial baking. In the first excerpt from the interview, Merry explains what attracted him to bread making as a young man.

One of the stimuli was definitely the fact that it was a craft that needed attention. At the very time, in the seventies, when I suddenly realized that it excited me to learn about fermentation and how to become a good baker, that was the time when it was most declining. Men in suits were telling craftsman bakers that everything they do is too time-consuming, and the profit lies by becoming mechanized and even cutting out fermentation itself. So, instant dough had a huge following.

**David:** What is it about bread that Merry finds so fascinating?

Well, we all like eating it, so most people who get involved in it want to make good bread that they would like to eat. And as you

understand more about it and fermentation, you start realizing things about the appearance of well-fermented and well-made and well-baked bread, so you'd strive to have it of good appearance, as well as it being flavoursome and good to eat.

See Spotlight 14/2019, pages 36–37

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#### **committed: be ~ to sth.**

► sich einer Sache verschrieben haben

---

#### **consulting**

► Beratung

---

#### **craft**

► Handwerk, Fertigkeit

---

#### **cut out sth.**

► etw. weglassen

---

#### **decline: be in ~**

► im Niedergang begriffen sein

---

#### **excerpt**

► Auszug

---

#### **flavoursome**

► schmackhaft

---

#### **instant dough**

► Fertigteig, Instantteig

---

#### **stimulus (pl. stimuli)**

► Impuls, Antrieb

---

#### **strive to do sth.**

► bestrebt sein etw. zu tun

---

#### **time-consuming**

► zeitaufwendig

## Travel

### [4] Lunch with aliens

**David:** The American West is all about freedom. So what better way to experience that than to take a road trip in an RV? In the current Travel feature, Spotlight Deputy Editor Claudine Weber-Hof travels along the Extraterrestrial Highway through the Nevada desert. Listen now to an extract from Claudine's out-of-this-world story.

#### 10:20 a.m.

Back on US 93, a road sign tells me to expect wild horses, so I do. All I see, though, are tall cactuses. The next sign says: "Las Vegas, 149 miles." The big city is only two hours away. Instead of going to Vegas, we turn onto State Route 375. "Cattle Xing next 5 miles" is nothing compared with the next roadside announcement, a metal placard covered in stickers of spaceships and slogans guaranteeing the existence of life beyond Earth. We can just about make out its name: the Extraterrestrial Highway. This is the famous, 100-mile section of the 375 that runs past the military installation known as Area 51.

#### 11:30 a.m.

The Quonset hut guarded by a huge metal spaceman at this end of the Extraterrestrial Highway is the Alien Research Center. Lovers

of science fiction, of mysteries surrounding the 1947 UFO incident in Roswell, New Mexico, the X Files TV series, *Star Trek*, *Star Wars*, etc., would be justified in wanting more. But this is a gift shop selling cold drinks and Area 51 souvenirs, and that's about it.

Area 51, the focus of a high-profile Facebook "joke event" in September, is a secret US Air Force base within the three-million-acre Nevada Test and Training Range, which occupies much of southern Nevada. The goth store clerk at the center entertains us with anecdotes of visitors claiming to have been abducted, close to the test range, by aliens. One even offered to allow this clerk to "touch her transmitter,"

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#### abduct

- entführen

---

#### acre

- Morgen (4.047 m<sup>2</sup>)

---

#### alien

- Fremdling, Außerirdische(r)

---

#### cattle Xing (crossing)

- Vorsicht Viehtrieb

---

#### deputy editor

- stellvertretende(r) Chefredakteur(in)

---

#### goth if/ml.

- Grufti-

---

#### placard

- Plakat, Anschlag

---

#### Quonset hut

- Wellblechhütte

---

#### RV (recreational vehicle) N. Am.

- Wohnmobil

---

#### store clerk

- Verkäufer(in)

the one the extraterrestrials had embedded in her side. The Travel Channel was due to come through, the clerk added, to record part of a show about her store.

I buy socks showing an alien abduction — a person caught in a green tractor beam, being sucked up into a flying saucer — but pass on a T-shirt showing the original *Star Trek* crew: too retro. Salt-and-pepper shakers shaped like aliens call out to my wallet, as do *Star Wars* refrigerator magnets. The big fans blowing streams of air around keep the hut's interior cool.

Outside, the sun is high and hot. Even if aliens aren't getting any closer, lunchtime is. We steer the RV back onto the highway, where a sign warns of "low-flying aircraft." It crosses my mind to let Fox Mulder and Dana Scully know, but flying objects out here are usually operated by the US military. We're on our way to Rachel, the human settlement closest to Area 51, and its cafe, the Little A'Le'Inn.

Along the way, a big rock proposes "Let's get abducted" in old black graffiti. The RV rolls on. The sagebrush-lined road leads our Winnebago spaceship into Nevada's own weird desert dimension of space-time.

Source: *Spotlight* 14/2019, pages 28–35

## [5] Quick quiz

**David:** In the new quiz section in *Spotlight Audio*, we take a closer look at the background of an article in the magazine. This time, we focus on our travel story about the American West entitled "Lunch with aliens".

**Claudine Weber-Hof:** This month in *Spotlight* magazine, our travel story takes us to some exciting places in the western United States. In this edition of *Spotlight's* "quick quiz," we look at fascinating facts about one of them: the great state of Nevada. Maybe you know these things, these quirky facts, these odd bits of trivia — and maybe, just maybe, you don't. We'll give you a chance to test yourself. Here we go:

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### embed

• einpflanzen

---

### entitled

• mit dem Titel

---

### fan

• hier: Ventilator

---

### odd bits

• Eigentümlichkeiten

---

### quirky

• eigenartig, sonderbar

---

### sagebrush

• Salbeistrauch

---

### saucer

• Untertasse

---

### shaker

• Streuer

---

### tractor beam

• Traktorstrahl

The travel piece in this issue of *Spotlight* is about a road trip your correspondent took in an **RV** near the mysterious military base called Area 51. This is a secret US Air Force base that is associated with alien abductions — that is, with people being kidnapped by lifeforms from other planets. I went to Nevada not so much for the aliens, but because I love the desert. That said, I thought it would be fun to see some of the famous places that I had read about along State Route 375, a road known since its official renaming in 1996 as... the “Extraterrestrial Highway.”

This part of Nevada was very much in the news this autumn. Do you know why exactly it became the centre of so much attention? Perhaps it was because of...

- a visit by reality TV star Kim Kardashian
- a bike race around the perimeter of Area 51, or
- a joke Facebook event

The answer is c., a joke Facebook event.

It all started this summer when a podcast came out featuring an interview with Bob Lazar, an American who says he knows a lot about the US government’s supposed involvement with alien spacecraft. Lazar’s claims about flying-saucer technology got a lot of people

excited. Among them was a college student in California, who thought it would be funny to “storm” Area 51 and see the aliens the government was hiding there. He posted his idea on social media as a “joke event.” The joke took on real dimensions, though, when people began making plans to meet up in late September in Rachel, Nevada, the small settlement (with a population of only about 50 people) that is closest to Area 51.

In the end, not much happened: there was an alien theme party in Las Vegas on the weekend in question, plus a small gathering of UFO enthusiasts at the Alien Research Center in Hiko, Nevada — you can read about this weird place in my travel piece. The biggest event was widely reported in the press as... a few thousand people visiting Rachel, Nevada, home of the “alien cafe.” It seems that no one tried to “storm” Area 51 after all, except two Dutch people who, it was reported, paid a fine and

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**fine**

► Geldbuße

---

**supposed**

► angeblich

---

**perimeter**

► Umkreis

---

**weird**

► sonderbar

---

**RV (recreational vehicle)**

N. Am.

► Wohnmobil

spent a few days in a Nevada county jail.

That's it for the quick quiz this month. I hope you had fun. I know I did. Let's talk again soon on Spotlight Audio.

See *Spotlight* 14/2019, pages 28–35

## Everyday English

### [6] Keeping in touch

**David:** Sometimes life can get really busy. And that means old friendships have to take a backseat to work and family. Flo and Elaine are two friends who haven't seen each other in a long time. Now they're trying to catch up over dinner. Listen in on their conversation. How long has it been since they last met? And what did Flo promise?

**Flo:** Elaine! Oh, you haven't changed a bit!

**Elaine:** You're too kind. You look fabulous! Younger than the last time I saw you.

**Flo:** If only that were true. How long has it been? Five years?

**Elaine:** At least. I think the last time I saw you was in London at Brenda's wedding. Is that right?

**Flo:** Yes, that's right. Was that five years ago? My goodness, where does the time go? I remember promising to be better at staying in touch, but that obviously hasn't gone so well.

**Elaine:** I'm no better. I think we both know

that we can pick up where we left off regardless of how much time passes.

**Flo:** And that's lovely, isn't it? It's so good to see you.

**David:** Elaine and Flo last saw each other five years ago at a wedding. And Flo promised to stay in touch with her friends. When Elaine uses the phrase “to pick up where we left off”, she's talking about starting again from the point they last stopped.

Source: *Spotlight* 14/2019, pages 54–55

## Verb Power

### [7] Delirious Decorations — a tale of 20 verbs (part 1)

**David:** It's impossible to imagine a language without verbs, and yet the importance of these powerful words is often overlooked. To show the many ways there are of using verbs, *Spotlight* presents you with an amusing Christmas story. As you listen to the story, you'll be

**backseat: take a ~ to sth.**  
 • gegenüber einer Sache in den Hintergrund treten

**catch up**  
 • sich austauschen, sich auf den neuesten Stand bringen

**fabulous** *ifml.*  
 • fabelhaft

**regardless of sth.**  
 • unabhängig davon, egal



invited to answer questions on the various types of verbs highlighted in each section. Listen now to the first part of the story. The focus is on regular and irregular verbs.

Delirious Decorations had been making iconic Christmas ornaments for almost 70 years. Their products — including the Blinking Beautiful Christmas Star, the Seriously Saucy Santa, the Fabulous Farting Reindeer and the Eerily Eccentric Elf — could be found in homes all over Britain.

Now, though, the company was in trouble as a result of too many cheap imports and too much aggressive online marketing from competitors. To motivate his team and turn the business round, Victor Vanguard, the boss of Delirious Decorations, had organized a coaching seminar in the Scottish Highlands. After three days, as everyone was packing up to leave, a blizzard had struck, and now it seemed as if Victor, his four colleagues and the coach would be stuck in the hotel over Christmas.

For a few minutes, Pat Petty from human resources gazed out the window at the snowstorm. Then she turned towards the desk, pulled a file from her bag and settled on the bed. Why waste time? What a great opportunity to plan the downfall of one of her colleagues! Pat studied the notes in front of her: “Simon Shifty from finance”, it said in big red

letters. Pat was sure that even though Simon impressed the boss with his charts and sheets, he regularly cooked the books. She laughed quietly to herself and played out in her head the scene in which she would confront Simon. So, thought Simon Shifty from finance, they were stuck here in this freezing wilderness. How perfect! He knew this was his chance.

---

**blinking** UK *ifml.*

- ▶ funkeln; Wortspiel mit verdamm(t,e,r,s)

---

**chart**

- ▶ Tabelle, Grafik

---

**cook: ~ the books** *ifml.*

- ▶ Geschäftsbücher fälschen

---

**downfall**

- ▶ Niedergang, Untergang

---

**eerie**

- ▶ unheimlich, gespenstisch

---

**fabulous** *ifml.*

- ▶ fabelhaft

---

**fart** *ifml.*

- ▶ furzen

---

**gaze**

- ▶ starren

---

**petty**

- ▶ unbedeutend, kleinlich

---

**reindeer**

- ▶ Rentier

---

**saucy** UK *ifml.*

- ▶ hier: schlüpfrig, kess

---

**sheet**

- ▶ hier: Arbeitsblatt

---

**shifty** *ifml.*

- ▶ gerissen, verschlagen

---

**vanguard**

- ▶ Vorreiter(in)

---

**wilderness**

- ▶ Wildnis

Gloria Gorgeous from marketing was only one floor away. There was no time to be lost. He tore off his suit and tie, leaped under the shower and, in a few minutes, was dressed in his favourite cashmere tracksuit. He quietly trod the carpeted stairs up to the next floor and slid silently along the hallway to room 33.

**David:** Now try this exercise. What are the past simple forms of the following verbs? Watch out for any irregular verbs. First, I'll give you the root form of the verb. Then in the pause, say what the past simple is. Then you'll hear the correct answer. Ready?

wake	tell
woke	told

### [8] Delirious Decorations — a tale of 20 verbs (part 2)

**David:** In the next part of the story, the focus is on modal verbs like “might,” “can” and “will”.

“Shoulda, Woulda, Coulda” was the song that kept going through the head of Gloria Gorgeous from marketing. She should have spoken to Dan Dawdle from product development ages ago. She could have. There would have been lots of opportunities. “I will talk to him now,” she told herself. “I will tell him that I have seen the amazing collection of

new decorations he has hidden in his desk. I'll tell him he must show them to the boss. They could save our business.”

**David:** Let's practise the past tense of some modal verbs. Complete the gaps in these sentences using “must have” or “can't have”.

“Nobody is answering the phone at the clinic. It ..... closed early.”

“Nobody is answering the phone at the clinic. It must have closed early.”

“Sarah hasn't replied to me yet.

She ..... got my message.”

“Sarah hasn't replied to me yet. She can't have got my message.”

Now listen to the next part of the story. The focus is on stative verbs like “be”, “seem” and “look”.

---

**dawdle**

► trödeln, bummeln

---

**gorgeous**

► hinreißend

---

**root form**

► Grundform

---

**slide**

► gleiten

---

**tracksuit**

► Trainingsanzug

---

**tread**

► schreiten

Dan Dawdle from product development looked at the open folder with drawings in front of him, then stared out at the snowy landscape. He knew his designs looked good, and he always hoped other people could see that, too, but maybe some people didn't appreciate quality. Dan also knew he was slow. He understood that people saw him as a dreamer. It certainly seemed that Victor, his boss, considered him to be a bit sluggish. In fact, Dan was at the seminar only because his colleague, Derek Dynamic, had the flu. Now was Dan's opportunity, though. Victor was stuck here with nothing else to do but look at Dan's designs. If Victor hated them, too bad! At least Dan would have tried. He took the folder and stood up.

**David:** Which verbs are stative, and which are active or dynamic? I'll list some verbs. You say which are stative or active.

like	listen
stative	active

In the following part of the story, we look at phrasal verbs.

Down the hall, Victor Vanguard picked up his wallet and looked at a faded photograph of his father. "Have I let you down, Dad?" Victor wondered out loud. He knew his father had

gone through hard times, but he had never given up. Somehow, they had always hung in there and found a way to keep the business going. Now, though, it seemed as if Delirious Decorations was finally going to fall apart. Even the idea with the coach hadn't really worked out. If he, Victor, didn't come up with a plan before 1 January, the company would go into liquidation.

**David:** Complete the phrasal verbs in the following sentences using either "in" or "down".

"My car broke ..... on the way to work this morning."

"My car broke down on the way to work this morning."

---

### appreciate

► (wert)schätzen

---

### come up with sth

► sich etw. einfallen lassen

---

### dynamic

► rasant, tatkräftig

---

### faded

► verblasst, verblichen

---

### fall apart

► auseinanderfallen

---

### folder

► Ordner

---

### hang in *ifml.*

► durchhalten

---

### sluggish

► träge, schwerfällig

---

### wallet

► Brieftasche

“The man told my mother he was a policeman and she was completely taken .....

“The man told my mother he was a policeman and she was completely taken in.”

## [9] Delirious Decorations — a tale of 20 verbs (part 3)

**David:** Our story continues with a look at verbs followed by a gerund and verbs followed by an infinitive.

Ernest Empathy, the coach, poured himself a whisky and looked out at the blizzard. He was sad. He missed spending time with people who had a positive mindset. He used to imagine holding seminars where people actually reacted to what he was saying, not where they avoided looking at him. He couldn't bear participating in events of this kind any more. Ernest had thought that a company like Delirious Decorations would be fun to work with. He had enjoyed preparing for the three days with Victor and his team. He poured himself another whisky. No, it would take a miracle to save Delirious Decorations.

Nobody saw the man with the white beard and red anorak enter the hotel. The receptionist, who was texting her boyfriend at the time, said maybe there had been someone, but who would arrive during a blizzard? What was clear, though, was that somebody had been

there, because during the same evening, all the people working for Delirious Decorations, even the coach, had found notes pushed under their doors.

Pat Petty's read: "If you hope to be happy, tell Simon that you love him. It's true. You know it." Simon Shifty's note was shorter, but also to the point: "You need to find the right woman. She's not in room 33." Gloria Gorgeous was surprised to see her message: "Demand to switch departments. You will be much happier working with Dan." Dan, who was still thinking about how to approach Victor with his ideas, found a message that said: "If you fail to go to Victor now with your ideas, the company will collapse. It's as simple as that."

Victor didn't even notice his message until he opened the door, where he found Dan waiting. His note said: "Take care to listen to the next person who knocks at your door."

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### approach

➤ ansprechen

---

### empathy

➤ Einfühlungsvermögen

---

### mindset

➤ Denkweise, Einstellung

---

### miracle

➤ Wunder

---

### pour

➤ einschenken

---

### text

➤ eine SMS schreiben

Finally, Ernest unfolded his note and read: “Dare to try a different kind of coaching. Our organization has centuries of experience. Go to [SantaClausCoaching.org](http://SantaClausCoaching.org) for details.”

**David:** Decide on whether to use the gerund or the infinitive of the verb to complete the following sentences.

speak

“He demanded ..... to the manager.”

“He demanded to speak to the manager.”

read

“Have you finished ..... the report yet?”

“Have you finished reading the report yet?”

Now listen to the final part of the story. If you’ve completed the 20-verb exercise in the magazine article, you can use this recording to check your answers.

On Christmas morning, the members of the Delirious Decorations team rose from their beds and went down to the hotel breakfast room one by one — or, in the case of Pat Petty and Simon Shifty, as a pair. Pat and Simon sat down together at the little table in the corner. They held hands and gazed into each other’s eyes. Pat slid her other hand under the table and stroked Simon’s leg through his cashmere

tracksuit trousers. Simon tore a croissant in half and fed it to Pat. They were both hungry. Gorgeous Gloria and Dan Dawdle were at the next table, talking about their future plans as the new Delirious Decorations design department. Dan drew an idea for an exploding Christmas angel on a paper serviette, and Gloria worried about boring practical stuff like safety regulations.

At his table, Victor Vanguard, the boss of Delirious Decorations, couldn’t believe his luck. The motivational weekend couldn’t have gone better. With Dan’s amazing designs, and with the rest of the team revitalized, the company was saved. Victor’s father would have been so proud of his son. Victor hadn’t let him down after all.

Ernest Empathy, the motivational coach, poured himself a coffee, added a shot of Scotch from a bottle in his pocket and thought about what he’d seen on [SantaClausCoaching.org](http://SantaClausCoaching.org). At last, he dared to dream of a brighter future. He imagined coaching Santa Claus’s little helpers all over the world. It seemed to be the perfect opportunity. He wouldn’t miss working in

---

**dare**

► wagen, riskieren

---

**shot**

► Schuss

---

**unfold**

► entfalten

the corporate world, where everyone refused to adopt a positive mindset and avoided attending his motivational seminars. Instead, he would help Santa to deliver the magic of Christmas again next year — one motivational seminar at a time.

Source: Spotlight 14/2019, pages 18–23

## Replay

### [10] 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. In this edition: The former British Prime Minister David Cameron has just published his autobiography. What does it tell us about the man who called the referendum on Britain's membership of the EU?

### [11] On David Cameron's memoir

**Inez:** David Cameron was just 43 when he became prime minister of the United Kingdom in 2010. He was the youngest person to hold that position in almost two centuries, but six years later he was out, resigning the morning after the country voted to leave the European Union. After three years away from the spotlight, Cameron has just published his memoirs. In an editorial from Britain's *Guardian* newspaper, the writers discuss Cameron's time in power and his legacy. Their assessment

is that his rise to power shows up the flaws in the British political system. A “flaw” is a mistake in something that means it isn't correct or doesn't work correctly. Cameron is described as “an unremarkably decent man” — to be “unremarkable” is to be ordinary and not special in any way. Yet with great power comes great responsibility — something the editors feel Cameron lacked. Listen now to the first extract from the article.

The publication of ... [former British Prime Minister] David Cameron's memoirs casts a chill light on the flaws of the British political system. ...

Mr Cameron is upper-class — a distant relation of the Queen. Yet he won two elections in a country which was supposed to be a “classless society” ... His political skill was to

---

#### assessment

► Beurteilung

---

#### chill: cast a ~ light on sth.

► ein kaltes Licht auf etw. werfen

---

#### corporate

► Geschäfts-

---

#### distant

► entfernt

---

#### editorial

► Leitartikel

---

#### flaw

► Schwachstelle, Fehler

---

#### legacy

► Vermächtnis

---

#### resign

► zurücktreten

translate his personal brand into a guarantee that his was a new, moderate Tory party.

No one should be blamed for their parents or their luck. By the standards of everyday life he seems an unremarkably decent man... But politicians should not be judged by the standards of everyday life. They should be held to higher ones, because it is in their power to make much more damaging mistakes than most people can.

**Inez:** In the second excerpt, the writers criticize Cameron's austerity policies. The noun "austerity" describes a period when the economic situation is bad, and the government tries to save money by cutting spending. These policies made many people feel "dispossessed" — so what they possessed or owned was taken from them or reduced in value. Let's listen now to our second segment.

Mr Cameron was quite without the imagination or the moral seriousness to see the suffering that his government caused by its austerity policies; he was a man who could not really believe that food banks were needed even in his own prosperous constituency of Witney as a result of his deliberate actions. And just as he could not register the pain and anger of the financially dispossessed who had been robbed of their futures, he could not feel the

rage of those who'd been robbed of their pasts: the emotionally dispossessed whose vision of England could not be accommodated in his bland, technocratic, comfortable new world. ...

**Inez:** For the elite of society — and that certainly includes David Cameron — mistakes may not ultimately — or "finally" — matter. The editorial writers point out, however, that most people can't afford mistakes and can scarcely afford bad luck. "Scarcely" is another way of saying "almost not". Though Cameron made many mistakes during his time as prime minister, it is the country that has had to pay the price. Here's the third and final excerpt.

His whole life was spent among people for whom mistakes would not ultimately matter. Yet political passion is strongest in people who

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**accommodate**

- unterbringen

---

**bland**

- nichtssagend, farblos

---

**constituency**

- Wahlkreis

---

**food bank**

- Tafel (Lebensmittelhilfe für Bedürftige)

---

**prosperous**

- wohlhabend, erfolgreich

---

**rage**

- Wut, Zorn

know that they can't afford mistakes and can scarcely afford bad luck. There is something very broken about a system which allowed him to rise to the top without ever understanding why most of the other players were in the game. Until the end of his career his niceness never cost him anything, but his inability to see that others ... did not think or act as he did has cost his country very dearly.

Source: *Guardian News & Media* 2019

## [12] Words and phrases

**Inez:** Let's see if you can remember the meaning 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?

People who have had things taken away from them or reduced in value can be called... dispossessed.

What is another way of saying "almost not"? Scarcely

What noun describes a period when the economic situation is bad, and the government tries to save money by cutting spending? Austerity

What noun describes a mistake in something that means it isn't correct or doesn't work correctly? Flaw

What adverb has the same meaning as "finally"? Ultimately

If something is ordinary and not special in any way, it is... unremarkable.

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

See Spotlight 14/2019, page 24

## American Life

### [13] Wishing for a watchman

**David:** Our American columnist Ginger Kuenzel remains disgusted by the antics of many US politicians. Yet a book written over 60 years ago has made her look more closely at how she views those whose values differ from her own. Let's find out more in American Life.

It has come as quite a shock to discover that I'm a bigot, since I've always thought that a bigot is a racist, and have always believed in the equality of all humans. According to the

**antics**

• Eskapaden

**disgusted**

• angewidert

**bigot** ~

• intoleranter Mensch,  
blinde(r) Anhänger(in)



definition of the word, however, I now have to say that I am indeed a bigot. I'm going to explain this, but first, some background.

Recently, while reading *Go Set a Watchman* by Harper Lee, I was surprised by just how relevant her book, written in 1957 but not published until 2015, is to the culture clashes happening in America today. I knew Harper Lee as the author of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, published in 1960 and required reading in many schools. Set in a small town in 1930s Alabama, that book looks at racism and provides plenty of food for thought. The story is told by Scout, the young daughter of lawyer Atticus Finch, who defends a black man accused of raping a white woman. In *Go Set a Watchman*, Scout — now in her twenties and using her given name of Jean Louise — returns to Alabama from New York to visit her family. She is surprised to find a racist pamphlet about the inferiority of black people in her father's living room. Later that day, she secretly listens in on a citizens' council meeting as segregationists make clear their views on blacks being inferior. She is horrified that Atticus is at the meeting, and even more horrified that he does not speak out. Her image of her father as a champion of racial equality is destroyed.

When Jean Louise later speaks with her Uncle Jack about the experience, he calls her a bigot. Shocked, she reaches for a dictionary

and discovers that a “bigot” is someone who is “obstinately or intolerably fully devoted to his own church, party, belief, or opinion.” A bigot, Jack adds, doesn't even try to listen.

I do try to listen to people whose opinions differ from mine and to understand their way of thinking, but I draw the line when their speech involves racial or religious slurs, lies, or bullying, and when their arguments are not based on facts. That's when I stop listening. And here's the thing: I feel totally justified in doing so.

It's difficult for me to understand how so many people today — including many of our lawmakers in the US — can follow a national

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### accuse

- ▶ anklagen, beschuldigen

---

### bullying

- ▶ Mobbing, Schikane

---

### culture clash

- ▶ kultureller Konflikt

---

### devoted

- ▶ treu ergeben

---

### food for thought

- ▶ Denkanstöße

---

### inferiority

- ▶ Minderwertigkeit

---

### obstinately

- ▶ stur

---

### rape

- ▶ vergewaltigen

---

### required reading

- ▶ Pflichtlektüre

---

### segregationist

- ▶ Befürworter(in) der Rassentrennung

---

### slur

- ▶ Beleidigung, Verleumdung

leader who delights in name-calling, intimidation, racist diatribes, and religious denunciations. He's someone who lies frequently and seems to believe those lies himself. He fans the flames of racism and religious intolerance and tells his followers that the press is the enemy of the people. History has not been kind to nations that looked the other way when a leader chipped away at democratic values while cementing his dictatorship.

If I am a bigot for refusing to tolerate that kind of behavior, for refusing to remain silent in what I consider to be a dangerous environment, then I'm proud to be one.

Source: *Spotlight* 14/2019, page 26

## English at Work

### [14] Media management

**David:** Business communication expert Ken Taylor joins us in the studio now with tips on using English at work. This time, Ken has some advice on managing the media.

**Ken:** Hello. This is Ken Taylor from London. Being interviewed for the radio or for TV or running a press conference can be nerve-wracking — especially if the interview is conducted in English. You need to be well prepared and to have a cool head. Let's see what you know about managing the media. I'll make a statement. In the pause, decide whether you

agree or disagree with what I've said and why. Then I'll tell you my opinion. Good. We'll start.

In a TV interview, always look at the camera. I disagree. Look at the interviewer unless it is a "remote" interview with only a camera and sound link. Then look at the camera.

In a TV interview, look down if you need time to think.

I agree. Looking down for a few seconds doesn't show your eyes moving while you're thinking, which can give the impression that you're trying to avoid the question.

If you're interviewed for TV at your workplace, allow the reporter to choose the best place for that interview.

I disagree. The journalist may choose a background that works against your message.

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#### chip away at sth.

- ▶ an etw. nagen

---

#### diatribe

- ▶ Tirade, Hetzrede

---

#### fan

- ▶ hier: schüren

---

#### intimidation

- ▶ Einschüchterung

---

#### name-calling

- ▶ Beschimpfungen

---

#### nerve-wracking

- ▶ nervenaufreibend

---

#### remote

- ▶ Fern-

---

#### sound link

- ▶ Ton-Festverbindung

Always start a press conference with a written statement.

I agree. This allows you to control the direction of the questioning.

In press conferences, ask journalists to identify themselves before asking any questions.

I agree. This allows you to answer with that journalist and the media they represent in mind.

As soon as a crisis occurs, you need to make a plan how to deal with the media.

I disagree. You should always have a plan in place, especially if you work in a sensitive industry or area.

Your message should be consistent and therefore the same to the different media.

I disagree. Your message should be consistent but adapted to the different media's audience.

How did you get on? If you ever have to face a radio or TV interview, prepare yourself as well as you can. Think of three or four key points you would like to get across to the listeners or viewers and try to be yourself.

**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 14/2019, page 57

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**adapt**

- ▶ anpassen

---

**consistent**

- ▶ einheitlich

---

**copy**

- ▶ Exemplar

---

**get across**

- ▶ vermitteln, verständlich machen

---

**sensitive**

- ▶ sensibel, vertraulich

## Peggy's Place

### [15] Advice from Orwell

**David:** Now it's time to drop in to our favourite London pub, Peggy's Place. Pub owner Peggy and her husband, Phil, are back from their cruise to New York and can't wait to tell their friends all about it. Let's pull up a chair and listen in.

**Helen:** So, your cruise was fun?

**Phil:** It certainly was. And, of course, New York was incredible.

**Helen:** Did you enjoy yourself, Peggy?

**Peggy:** Absolutely, but I have to say that one of the highlights was the pub on the cruise ship.

**Phil:** Once a landlady, always a landlady.

**Helen:** Tell me you didn't just hang out in the ship's pub.

**Phil:** We did spend quite a lot of time there.

**Peggy:** The atmosphere was really good and they got the decor just right. I was impressed. It could have been a pub in any high street here in Britain.

**Helen:** They probably paid some swanky designer...

**Phil:** We asked the barman about that and he said they referenced an article by George Orwell.

**Helen:** As in *Animal Farm*? As in 1984? That George Orwell?

**Phil:** Yeah, him. It turns out he once wrote an

article for the *Evening Standard* — I think it was in the 1940s — called “The Moon under the Water”.

**Peggy:** It was the name of an imaginary ideal pub as George Orwell would have liked it.

**Helen:** I didn't know Orwell was a journalist.

**Phil:** Oh, Orwell wasn't just a novelist. He also wrote essays and articles, and he was a critic.

**Helen:** How come you know so much about him, Phil?

**Phil:** Well, back in my college days, all of us read Orwell. It was cool, but I must admit that it gave us a bit of street cred, too. Made us more attractive to the girls — or so we thought. Black

---

**hang out** *ifml*.

• abhängen

---

**high street** UK

• Haupt(einkaufs)straße

---

**landlady**

• Wirtin

---

**reference sth.**

• sich auf etw. beziehen

---

**street cred (credibility)**

*ifml*.

• Respekt, Coolness

---

**swanky** *ifml*.

• protzig, hochnäsiger

polo-neck pullover, an old mac and a dog-eared copy of Animal Farm. The world was your oyster.

**Helen:** So, what, according to Orwell, makes the perfect pub?

**Peggy:** We found the article online. What did he write? Can you remember, Phil?

**Phil:** Maybe I can find it on my phone. Hang on. OK, here we go. It needs to be original Victorian. Wood everywhere, mirrors behind the bar...

**Helen:** Good thing Orwell didn't come here, then.

**Peggy:** How do you mean? We have some Victorian elements.

**Phil:** ...a public bar, a saloon bar, a ladies' bar...

**Helen:** OK, a ladies' bar is maybe a bit old-fashioned. Read on.

**Phil:** The barmaids know most of their customers by name...

**Peggy:** That's definitely true here.

**Phil:** ...and they call everyone "dear", irrespective of age or sex.

**Helen:** You call everyone "love", but I suppose it's the same thing.

**Phil:** Oh, and we should be serving stout in a pewter pot.

**Helen:** Nobody asks for that any more.

**Phil:** Last but not least, according to Orwell, we need a garden.

**Peggy:** That we do have — even if it looks a bit unloved at this time of year.

**Phil:** So, what do you give us, Helen? On the Orwell pub scale of one to ten?

**Helen:** If I was being strict, it would have to be a four — no stout, no ladies' bar. But because you're the best pub in London, I'm going to give you ten out of ten.

**Peggy:** Let's drink to that!

Source: Spotlight 14/2019, page 10

---

### copy

- ▶ Exemplar

---

### dog-eared

- ▶ mit Eselsohren, abgenutzt

---

### irrespective of

- ▶ ungeachtet

---

### mac (mackintosh) UK

- ▶ ifml.
- ▶ Regenmantel

---

### oyster: the world is your ~

- ▶ die Welt liegt dir zu Füßen

---

### pewter pot

- ▶ Zinnkrug

---

### polo-neck

- ▶ Rollkragen

---

### stout

- ▶ Starkbier, Stout

---

### suppose

- ▶ annehmen, vermuten

## Short Story

### [16] “The revelation”

**David:** What does it take to change someone’s beliefs? That’s what the main character in our story wants to find out. Yet the answer he discovers is like nothing he expected. “The revelation” by Talitha Linehan looks at faith and belief — and what they do to us.

“It’s hopeless, Dad,” said Christopher. He was calling from a New Age conference in Los Angeles, where he had spent the day trying to convince people that they were wasting their time. It was something he had been doing all summer, as part of a social experiment to see if he could combat the lies propagated by speakers at such conferences with scientific fact. “They just won’t listen to me. They’d rather believe in the mystical power of tarot cards, crystals, so-called mediums and self-proclaimed gurus than in the truth.”

“I know, son,” said David, sleepily.

“Oh, I didn’t wake you, did I?” said Christopher. He was spending the summer with his aunt in Los Angeles, celebrating the end of his studies, and he was still getting used to the time difference. It was late in the evening in LA, which meant that it was early in the morning in London.

“That’s OK,” said David. He felt proud of his son. “I know it’s almost impossible to convince

people that what they believe is a lie.” As the founder of an international organization for sceptics, it was something he’d been trying to do most of his life. “But I love the fact that you tried.”

There was a pause, and David thought for a moment that there was a problem with the phone line, but then his son spoke again: “Actually, Dad, I want to try something a bit more... radical.”

It was then that Christopher told his father about his plan to orchestrate a year-long experiment. He would proclaim himself a guru, start a pseudo-religion and promise his followers a revelation. “A year later, I will reveal to them the truth — that I have deceived them in order to show everyone how easy it is to be deceived.”

After a long discussion about the ethics of such an experiment and the possible consequences for Christopher and his followers, David became convinced that it was a good idea. He

---

**deceive**

• täuschen

---

**self-proclaimed**

• selbst ernannt

---

**revelation**

• Offenbarung

spent the next few weeks helping his son carry out his plan, which was more effective than either of them could have believed. Within weeks, Christopher had thousands of followers online, and that number soon grew to tens of thousands, at which point, he started getting a lot of media attention. Some of his followers sent him money for the “mystical nectar” he was selling (aka tap water), while others travelled to LA to help him start a commune there. One day, about three months after the experiment had begun, David put on the TV news at his home in London, only to see a report about his son’s commune.

“Before I met Christopher,” one young follower with dreadlocks and tattooed arms was saying to the camera, “my life was in chaos. But now I have found the truth.”

Other followers described how Christopher had saved them from a life of crime and drugs, healed their broken hearts and bodies and given them something to believe in. David hoped that after The Revelation, they would realize that it wasn’t Christopher who had helped them, but they themselves, and that it was themselves they needed to believe in.

Next, the reporter travelled inside the commune to interview Christopher. David hadn’t seen or even spoken to his son for months. They had both thought it best for him to end all communication with his family and friends

so that he could immerse himself in the experiment. And naturally, he’d had to distance himself from his sceptical and non-believing father.

So, it was a shock for David to see his son now. No longer the bearded hipster who had left London for LA at the beginning of the summer, he had now shaved clean his face and head, and was wearing a green robe and white beads. Even his mannerisms and voice were different, slower, quieter, more controlled.

As Christopher talked about his healing and psychic powers — given to him, he said, by a higher authority, along with a mission to save humanity — his father found himself getting angry. He always got angry when he heard people trying to deceive others, and his son was very convincing. But then Christopher talked about The Revelation, and David smiled. By revealing the truth about himself, Christopher

---

#### aka (also known as)

► auch bekannt als

---

#### mannerisms

► Verhalten

---

#### bead

► Perle

---

#### psychic powers

► übernatürliche Kräfte

---

#### immerse: ~ oneself in sth.

► sich in etw. hineinfinden

---

#### robe

► Gewand

---

#### tap

► Leitungs-

would reveal the truth about other charlatans and the mystical powers they pretended to have.

A year after the experiment began, David travelled to LA for The Revelation. In a field inside the commune, he sat with tens of thousands of followers and dozens of reporters, all waiting for the so-called guru to speak.

Christopher emerged and walked slowly to the podium. David held his breath. This was the moment he'd been waiting for.

"My dear people," said Christopher, "I have asked you to come here today so that I can reveal the truth to you."

He then revealed to his followers how he had deceived them by pretending to be a guru and to have mystical powers.

"You mean it was all a lie?" shouted one follower.

"How could you?" shouted another.

"Charlatan!" "Liar!" "Deceiver!"

"Yes, I was all those things," said Christopher, holding up his hands to quieten the crowd. "But now I am someone different. You see, I wanted to show you the truth, but it is you who have shown me the truth. Every day, you tell me how I have healed you, saved you, told you of things to come. It is you, my followers, my people, who have saved me, for now I believe. I believe in a higher power and in the powers he has given me..."

As his followers applauded, David was overcome with dismay, for this was the one consequence they had not considered: that by spending a year trying to convince others that a lie was the truth, Christopher would end up convincing himself.

Source: Spotlight 14/2019, pages 64–65

---

**dismay**

► Entsetzen, Bestürzung

---

**emerge**

► auftauchen,  
erscheinen



---

## Conclusion

[17] **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 time, won't you? Until then: goodbye.

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