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ENGLISH CAFÉ – 64

TOPICS

“There you go!” vs. “There you are!”, estimate vs. determine, bump vs. dip, opposite vs. in front of, mudslinging, shade vs. shadow, assure vs. ensure vs. insure, definitely vs. exactly

GLOSSARY

There you go! – an informal expression; “That’s right”; “Good idea”

* A: I can’t hit the ball.

B: Yes, you can. Just swing a little harder. There you go! You hit it!

There you are! – I found you; Now I know where you are

* There you are! I’ve been looking for you all over this store for 10 minutes.

to estimate – to guess about how much something is, without calculating it exactly

* The police estimate that there will be over 5,000 people on the streets to celebrate the team’s championship win.

to determine – to firmly decide; to get information in order to find out something

* In order to determine why you’ve feeling so poorly recently, the doctor ordered some extra tests.

bump – a small, round area that is slightly higher on the skin or in a road

* When our truck hit that big bump in the road, the chair we were carrying in the back fell out and broke.

dip – a small area in the ground that is lower than the area around it

* Watch out! Don’t ride your bike over that dip too quickly.

opposite – across from; on the other side; across the street from

* In today’s newspaper, the page opposite the editorial page has a story about Dr. McQuillan!



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mudslinging – the use of insults (disrespectful language) and accusations (saying someone has done something wrong) that are not true to damage the reputation of someone else

* During the political campaign, both candidates did so much mudslinging that the voters didn't want to vote for either of them.

shade – a dark, cool place where the sun's light doesn't reach directly

* Let's see if we can find a table in the shade so we don't have to sit in the sun.

shadow – a dark shape that is caused by a person or a thing coming between the sun's light and a surface, such as the ground or a wall

* Walking home after watching the scary movie, Ida thought she saw shadows following her on both sides of the street.

to assure – to tell people positive things to make them more confident or to make them feel better about something they have doubt about

* The restaurant manager assured us that everything was ready for our business lunch and that nothing would go wrong.

to ensure – to make sure; to be certain about something

* To ensure that we had enough to eat on our trip, my mother packed us six sandwiches each!

to insure – to pay a company (insurance company) that will pay you money if something you own is damaged or lost, or if you are hurt

* The police will give you a ticket in California if you don't insure your car.

definitely – without doubt; clearly; for sure

* Don't worry. I'll definitely be there tomorrow afternoon to help you study for the test.

exactly – precisely; that's right; I agree; a precise number or quantity

* I wanted a guitar for my birthday, and this one is exactly what I had hoped for.



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WHAT INSIDERS KNOW

Classic Holiday Movie: It's a Wonderful Life (1946)

It's a Wonderful Life is a movie that is shown on American television every year in December. It is considered a “classic” (a high quality old film) with one of the most well-known actors in classic American movies: Jimmy Stewart.

In this movie, Jimmy Stewart plays a man named George Bailey. George grows up in a small town in “middle America” or what is seen as a very typical American way of life. From a young age, George is very interested in faraway places and he very badly wants to travel out of the small town where he lives. At the age of 21, George plans to go to Europe to study “architecture” (designing and making buildings), but the day before he is to leave, his father dies and he is left to run the family “savings and loan” (bank). He never gets to go to Europe.

In a short time, George gets married and the savings and loan has money problems, mainly because a rich dishonest businessman is trying to take over their business. George becomes very sad. He thinks he's a failure, a failure at business and also in life, since he never got to see the world as he had hoped. He becomes more and more “distraught” (deeply upset), but at the last minute, something wonderful happens. The townspeople and his friends all “pull together” (cooperate) to help him and he realizes that although he is poor, he is the richest man in town because he has the love and respect of his family and friends.

This is a “touching” (emotional) film and even though this movie is very old, nearly all Americans have either seen it or know the general story.



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

You're listening to ESL Podcast's English Café number 64.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 64. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

On today's Café, we're going to do a little catching up. That is, we're going to try to do some things that we are a little behind schedule on, and one of those things is to answer questions. We get lots of questions each week; more questions than we can answer on the Café normally. So, I thought I would take this Café and the next Café, the last two of year, to answer lots of different questions that we get. So, this is an all question edition of the English Café. Let's get started.

As we do on every episode, we remind you to visit our website at eslpod.com and check out the Learning Guide for this episode. You'll find all of the questions, words, definitions, additional sample sentences, cultural notes and a complete transcript of this episode.

Our first question today comes from Gabriel, "Gabriel," in Taiwan. Gabriel asks the difference between the expressions "there you go" and "there you are." This is a good question because these are both common expressions in every day conversation.

The expression, "there you go," actually has a couple of different meanings. The first and probably more common one is "that's right," or "that's a good idea." For example, let's say I'm talking to a friend, and I'm talking about these two beautiful girls that I met and I want to ask them both out on a date. I want to get to know them better, but I'm not sure which girl I should ask. This is a common problem for me! So, I say to my friend, "I know; I have an idea. I'll ask both of them," and my friend says, "There you go," meaning that's a good idea - you've thought of the right idea.

Another use of this expression, "there you go," is when you are giving something to someone, usually money when you are buying something. For example, if you are at the coffee shop - the café, the real café, not the English Café - and someone working there says, "That will be 500 dollars for your Starbucks coffee," and you say, "Oh, okay," and you give them your credit card, and when you give



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it to them you say, “There you go,” meaning here is my money or here is what I am giving you.

“There you are” is usually an expression when you have found someone. You're looking for your brother at the store; you can't find him and you walk around the whole store. Finally, you see him and you say, “There you are! You idiot, I've been...” no, you wouldn't say that! “There you are” is when you find someone.

There's another expression, also, that is similar to “there you go” that I wanted to mention, and that is “here we go.” There's a difference between “there you go” and “here we go.” We use the expression “here we go” when we are waiting for something that finally starts or we are leaving or moving after waiting for a while. For example, I am talking to my two friends in a movie theater and we're waiting for the movie to begin and suddenly the movie starts on the screen and I turn to my two friends and I say, “Oh, here we go,” meaning we are now starting.

Our next question comes Alexander, “Alexander,” who is in Toronto, Canada. Alexander wants to know the difference between the words estimate and determine.

Estimate, “estimate,” means to make a guess at something - to guess about something, usually a number or a quantity of something. So, you might say, “Well, I estimate that there are 50 thousand Italians living in Los Angeles.” I'm guessing; I don't know, but I am going to think about it and make a reasonable, intelligent estimate.

Determine is different. When you say you're going to determine, “determine,” something, you mean you're going to find out for sure - you're going to make sure that you know something is true. “I need to determine the telephone number of my local cable company for cable television.” I need to determine means I need to find out. I'm not going to guess; I need to know for sure. Or, you could say, “I have determined, after doing some investigation” - some research - “that my neighbor's dog is the loudest one on the planet” - in the entire world; that is another use of the word “determine.” And that's true statement - true story!

Our next question comes from Markus, “Markus.” Not sure where Markus is from; he's from somewhere I'm sure! Markus wants to know the difference between the words bump, “bump,” and dip, “dip.”



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When we use these words as nouns, they're sort of opposite in meaning. A bump is like a small hill on a road or on a street, so that you are driving your car and you hit a bump; maybe it's a rock or maybe it's some dirt that is higher than the rest of the street - than the rest of the road. We usually use, in fact, an expression, "a bump in the road," to mean something that is slowing you down - is slowing down your progress - is making you go slower. We can use that literally, meaning actually talking about driving on the street or, if you are talking about making progress on a project, for example.

The word dip is the opposite. A dip is a small hole in the road. So, it's where the road goes down lower. Of course, that will also cause problems if you are driving. If you hit a dip in the road, you will, or could, hurt your car - damage your car.

So, bump and dip are opposite. Bump is a small hill or small increase in the road, and dip is a small hole or a small decrease in the road or the street or the freeway or wherever it is that you are traveling.

Our next question comes from Alberto, "Alberto," in the Eternal City, in Rome, Italy. Alberto wants to know the difference between the expression "opposite" versus "in front of."

When you are talking about the location of certain things, usually buildings in a city, you can use both of these expressions, and they are similar. They can mean the same things, but they are also a little bit different.

To be in front of something means to be close to it. Not inside of it, outside of something - you are in front of it. A building, for example, on the street is something you could be in front of. You're standing on what we would call the sidewalk - the place where you walk in front of a building in a city.

Opposite is something that is in front of a building but on the other side of the street. You could say that "The bank is opposite the grocery store," meaning the bank is on one side of the street, and in front of it, but across the street, is the grocery store.

When you just say, "in front of," it could be on the same side of the street or it could be across the street; either one is possible. But when you say a building is opposite another building, then it is usually across the street in front of that building.



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Anthony, “Anthony,” in Hong Kong has a question about a word that he read, I believe in the newspaper or a magazine, and the word was mudslinging, “mudslinging,” (all one word).

Mudslinging is a word that comes from two different words: mud, which is dirt that is wet, and the word sling, “sling,” which as a verb can mean to throw, usually to throw at someone. You put these two together and you get mudslinging, which literally means to throw wet dirt at someone, but it's used instead as an expression to mean insult or say bad things about someone. You're usually saying something negative or insulting about someone in order to hurt their reputation - what people think of them is their reputation.

The most common use of this expression is in a political campaign, when two people are trying to win the same government office - president or senator or prime minister, whatever it is - and one of the people says something negative or insulting about the other. Often, what they say is false or not true; this would be mudslinging. It is something that is, of course, found in every political election, in some way or another. At least here in the United States it's very popular for one candidate - one person trying to win the office - to say negative things, insulting things and often untrue things about the other candidate. This is why I never went into politics!

Our next question comes from Pierre-Eduard, “Pierre-Eduard,” and as you may guess, Pierre is from the City of Lights, from Paris. Pierre wants to know the difference between the words shade, “shade,” and shadow, “shadow.” This is a good question; these are related words but we use them - they are used differently to mean slightly different things.

Let's start with shade. Shade is the area underneath or next to something where the sun is being blocked - where it is darker because something is between you and the sun. So for example, you are standing underneath a tree, and the tree is blocking the light of the sun so it is dark where you are standing. We would say you are standing in the shade, and that's the expression we would use, “in the shade.” Shade is an area that is big enough for a person to be in, or partially to be in. The opposite of in the shade would be in the sun.

Shadow is a more general term to refer to the dark area that's caused by anything, usually a person who is blocking light from the sun or somewhere else, but it's not necessarily shade. For example, if I am standing outside and the sun



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is out - the sun is shining - usually you will cast a shadow. In other words, there will be a dark area on the ground next to you where you are blocking the sun; that would be your shadow. Usually we talk about a shadow of a person but it could also be the shadow of a tree or a building.

Now, a shadow can be shade as well. The shadow of the building could give you shade, and you could stand in it to get away from the sun. But if you are just standing out in the sun, and you have your own shadow, that's probably not big enough to be shade for anyone.

So, those are the differences between shade and shadow. Notice the verb I used with the word shadow is cast, "cast." We say that you are casting a shadow, meaning you are producing or making a shadow because you are standing in front of a light or in front of the sun.

We also use that word, shade, only when we are talking about the sun. We use shadow when you are talking about the sun or some light inside a building, for example.

Our next question comes from Denivaldo, "Denivaldo," in Brazil, and Denivaldo wants to know the differences among three different words: assure, "assure," ensure, "ensure," and insure, "insure." This is a good question, and it's something that even native speakers have difficulty with - often make mistakes about.

Let's start with the word assure, "assure." To assure, as a verb, means to tell someone with confidence about something. When you are sure of something - when you know something is true - and you want to tell someone so that they believe you - so that they don't have any doubts - so that they are more confident or comfortable. This is the use of the verb assure. For example, "I assure you that most tourists who come to Los Angeles don't get killed" - most of them! So, when you say, "I assure you," you're saying I am promising you - I know this is a fact - I know this is true.

The verb ensure, "ensure," means to make sure or to make certain that something happens - to do something so that you get a certain result. For example, "I will pick you up at the airport to ensure that you arrive at the meeting on time." To ensure means so that this happens - to make sure that this happens.



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Notice that assure, “assure,” means to tell someone something you know is true. Ensure, “ensure,” means to make sure that something actually takes place - actually happens.

Finally, we have the word insure, with an “i,” “insure,” and this is related to the word insurance. When you have insurance, you pay money to a company in case something bad happens to your car, for example, or your house; the company will give you money to replace it. So, you give the company 500 dollars a year to insure your car, so if you get into an accident and you have this insurance, the insurance company will give you money for your car to fix it.

So, assure, ensure with an “e,” insure with an “i.”

Our final question comes from Satoru, “Satoru,” originally from Japan but now living here in beautiful California. Satoru wants to know the difference between the words definitely, “definitely” and exactly, “exactly.”

Definitely is the same as certainly - without a doubt. For example, “It is definitely cold in Minnesota in the wintertime” - there's no question about it - there's no doubt about it - I am completely sure - this is a fact. I know because I lived there for 23 years; it is definitely cold and Minnesota in the wintertime!

Exactly is similar to definitely, except it means precisely. Usually this is related to a number, you're talking about the quantity or a number of something. You could say, “It is exactly 4:01” - one minute after four. Not 4:02, not 4:00, not 4:01 and 30 seconds but exactly 4:01.

That's all we have time for, no less, no more, on the English Café. Remember, if you have a question, you can email us at eslpod@eslpod.com.

From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thanks for listening. We'll see you next time on the English Café.

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