

Lesson 29: Ready for an Adventure?

Steve's trying to convince his friend Andy to go rock climbing with him. Listen to their conversation and answer these eight comprehension questions:

Listening Comprehension

- 1. Which sport does Andy prefer?**
 - a. basketball
 - b. football
 - c. volleyball
- 2. Where does Steve want to go climbing?**
 - a. at a gym
 - b. in another city
 - c. on a mountain
- 3. What do you have to do before climbing?**
 - a. buy or rent some equipment
 - b. participate in a group class
 - c. take a safety training session
- 4. What events are often held at the place?**
 - a. children's parties
 - b. climbing competitions
 - c. school trips
- 5. What sport did Andy's family used to do?**
 - a. skiing
 - b. snowboarding
 - c. surfing

6. What does Steve say is riskier than extreme sports?

- a. driving
- b. flying
- c. smoking

7. What does Steve love most about climbing?

- a. being outdoors
- b. the mental challenge
- c. the physical exercise

8. What does Andy suggest doing next weekend?

- a. going to a basketball game
- b. playing tennis
- c. taking his kids to the zoo

Conversation Text

Steve: Any chance **you'd be up for** some rock climbing this weekend?

Andy: Eh, rock climbing isn't really my thing. I'm more of a basketball guy.

Steve: Exactly – you're tall, you've got good reach. So you'd probably be **a natural** at rock-climbing.

Andy: Okay, **I'll humor you**. What have you **got in mind**?

Steve: There's an indoor gym just twenty minutes from here. They've got a whole bunch of walls – some for beginners, some for **hardcore** climbers. You just have to do a half-hour training session to learn how to use the **harness** and stuff, and then they **turn you loose** on the walls.

Andy: Hmm. **On second thought**, I've got a couple of things to take care of this weekend...

Steve: Don't **chicken out** on me! Listen, they're always **hosting** kids' birthday parties there. If eight-year-old girls can do it, so can you.

Andy: Man, just thinking about being fifty feet up with nothing but a **flimsy** harness – it's making my hands sweaty.

Vocabulary

you'd be up for = you would want to

a natural = someone who has natural ability and learns quickly

I'll humor you = I'll go along with what you want in order to make you happy

got in mind = thinking about

hardcore = intense

harness = straps that are part of the safety equipment

turn you loose = let you go freely

on second thought = I'm reconsidering this

chicken out = become scared and not do something

hosting = having someone or something at your place

flimsy = weak, fragile, may break easily

Steve: You don't strike me as the type to be afraid of heights. Haven't you done any extreme sports before?

Andy: Uh, what qualifies as an "extreme sport"?

Steve: You know, anything that makes adrenaline rush through your veins: **whitewater rafting, jet skiing, skydiving, or bungee jumping.** That sort of thing.

Andy: My family used to ski. Does that count?

Steve: Depends. Were you, like, **weaving in and out** of trees, or were you on the **bunny trail**?

Andy: We definitely stayed on the easier **slopes.** I just **don't get** why it's so exciting to put your life at risk.

Steve: You know, statistically, your life's more at risk when you're **behind the wheel** than when you're skiing or rock climbing. Heck, either of us could drop dead of a heart attack in the next five minutes. Nobody's **invincible.**

Andy: OK, **I'll give you that.** But I don't see why I should increase my chances by **flirting with death.**

Vocabulary

you don't strike me as = you don't seem like

whitewater rafting = going on an inflatable boat in rivers with very agitated water

jet skiing = going on the ocean with a fast, motorized individual boat

skydiving = jumping out of an airplane with a parachute

bungee jumping = jumping off a bridge or high place with an elastic cord tied to your legs

weaving in and out = going around the trees to one side of each tree and then the other

bunny trail = the least dangerous hill, made for children and beginner skiers

slopes = hills

I don't get = I don't understand

behind the wheel = driving

invincible = unable to be hurt or defeated

I'll give you that = I'll admit that your point is correct

Steve: It's hard to explain – I just love the nervous anticipation **leading up to** it – will I be able to **pull it off**? Then when you're finally doing it, you get that **surge** of energy. And afterwards you feel like **you can take on the world**.

Andy: It's hard to disagree when you get all **fired up** like that. But... I'm a pretty big guy, are you sure those ropes can hold me? What if they **snap**?

Steve: Well, just in case, the floor's **padded**. But trust me, the ropes won't snap – they've been tested with over 500 pounds. Climbing gyms have to meet all sorts of safety standards in order to operate.

Andy: All right, I guess I'll **give it a shot**. But next weekend let's do something **tamer** – like playing tennis.

Steve: Yeah, so you can **kick my butt** on the court to **get back at me** for making you try rock climbing. I haven't played tennis in years, I'm really **rusty**.

Andy: Hey, I've gotta go pick up my brother's kids from **day care**. Where is this rock-climbing gym, anyway?

Steve: I'll text you the address.

Andy: Cool. **Catch ya later**.

Vocabulary

flirting with death = doing dangerous things with the risk of being killed

leading up to = coming before

pull it off = manage to do something difficult

surge = sudden increase

you can take on the world = you can do anything; you can face and overcome any challenge

fired up = full of intense emotion

snap = break

padded = covered in soft material that will protect you on impact

give it a shot = try it

tamer = less crazy/dangerous

kick my butt = beat me (slang)

get back at me = get revenge

rusty = performing badly because you haven't practiced in a long time

day care = place where young kids are taken care of during the day

catch ya later = see you later

Vocabulary Quiz

Complete each sentence with a word from the box. Three are not used.

chickened out
doesn't strike me
don't get
fired up

flimsy
get back at
give it a shot
got in mind

leading up to
on second thought
padded
pull it off

rusty
snapped
up for

1. I don't think I'm _____ going shopping today; I'm not feeling very well.
2. My friends and I are going to the World Cup final and we're really _____!
3. I wasn't going to buy that expensive backpack, but _____, it could be a good investment since it'll last for many years.
4. If he's as unhappy as he claims to be, I _____ why he doesn't look for a new job.
5. That fence is pretty _____, I think your dogs will be able to knock it down easily.
6. It's a risky operation, but if the doctors can _____, the patient's quality of life will improve greatly.
7. Mark is very deliberate. He _____ as a person who acts without thinking things through.
8. She said she was going to get a tattoo, but after watching her friend get one, she _____.
9. I studied German in high school, but that was a long time ago so I'm _____.
10. They bought a lot of diapers during the weeks _____ the birth.
11. If you want some suggestions, I can share a couple of the things I've _____.
12. I have a _____ computer case to protect my laptop in case I drop it.

Speaking Task

Steve talks about how he feels great when he's rock climbing or doing other challenging sports. Describe a hobby, activity, or sport you really enjoy. Talk about what you do and how it makes you feel. How did you get into (start) this activity?

Record your answer at www.speakpipe.com/espressoenglish or send the MP3 to homework@espressoenglish.net for feedback!

Answers

Comprehension Questions

1. a
2. a
3. c
4. a
5. a
6. a
7. b
8. b

Vocabulary Quiz

1. up for
2. fired up
3. on second thought
4. don't get
5. flimsy
6. pull it off
7. doesn't strike me
8. chickened out
9. rusty
10. leading up to
11. got in mind
12. padded