

## **Lesson 30: Losing Your Temper**

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*Listen to this conversation between Jack and his wife Lynn, who lost her temper at work. Mark each sentence as "True" or "False."*

### **Listening Comprehension**

*True or false according to the dialogue?*

1. One of Lynn's colleagues didn't come to work
2. The restaurant was busy the entire night
3. The restaurant was featured in a tourist guide
4. Lynn had to answer a lot of questions
5. Lynn's boss helped her with the customers
6. There were children in the group of tourists
7. The customers were rude to Lynn
8. Lynn took a break after everyone left
9. Her boss was angry because Lynn didn't serve everyone fast enough
10. Lynn was fired from her job

# Conversation Text

**Jeff:** Hey, how was work today?

**Lynn:** You don't want to know. I don't have a job anymore.

**Jeff:** Really? You guys don't normally get tourists.

**Lynn:** We've been getting more lately. Someone put us in one of those "**off the beaten path**" guides.

**Jeff:** Ah, so now you get **flooded** with tourists looking for an "authentic" place to eat.

**Lynn:** Yeah. So anyway, here come all these tourists, and I'm **running around like a chicken with its head cut off** trying to get them seated and take their orders. And they're all **pestering me** with a million questions about the menu. I'm just trying to **keep my cool**.

**Jeff:** Where was your boss? She usually **pitches in** when the place gets busy, right?

**Lynn:** That's the thing – she was nowhere to be found. Finally I get all of the drinks served, and then I go in the

## Vocabulary

**you don't want to know** = the answer will not be pleasant to hear

**shorthanded** = lacking the necessary number of employees

**dead** = (informal) there were no people, no activity

**winding down** = getting less active and preparing to finish

**bursts in** = comes in quickly with lots of energy

**off the beaten path** = away from the main tourist areas

**flooded** = filled (possibly with too much/many)

**running around like a chicken with its head cut off** = moving around crazily, without direction or organization

**pestering me** = bothering me persistently

**keep my cool** = stay calm

**pitches in** = helps

back to look for a **high chair** and three more **booster seats**.

**Jeff:** Oh no, there were children?

**Lynn:** Soooo many children. I **gathered** that it was some kind of homeschooling group on a **field trip**. Anyway, I'm back there looking around **frantically** for a booster seat, and I hear my boss calling my name from the office. I go to the office and **I'm like**, "what?" She starts asking me about my tickets from last night, and I told her I couldn't talk about it because I was **swamped** with tables. She just **frowned** and said to come talk to her about it as soon as I could.

**Jeff:** Did she offer to help?

**Lynn:** Nope. So I just **dashed** back out front and started **scribbling down** orders. It wasn't that bad, actually. Everyone was pretty patient because they could see that the place was a **madhouse** and I was the only server.

**Jeff:** That's good. I hate it when people can't just **chill out** and wait.

**Lynn:** The customers were nice, but the cooks were pretty **pissed off** when they got all those orders in the window at once.

## Vocabulary

**high chair** = a raised chair for a baby to sit in

**booster seats** = plastic seats placed on top of a regular chair so that a small child can reach the table

**I gathered** = I figured out from observation

**field trip** = trip as part of an educational experience

**frantically** = anxiously and with a sense of urgency

**I'm like** = I said (informal)

**I was swamped** = I had far too much work to do

**frowned** = made an upset expression on her face

**dashed** = ran a short distance

**scribbling down** = writing very fast and sloppily

**a madhouse** = a crazy, chaotic place

**chill out** = relax

**pissed off** = angry

**Jeff:** I'd be **grouchy**, too, if I had to make 30 entrees at **the tail end** of my **shift**.

**Lynn:** They were basically throwing the plates at me. But I got everything served, and once the checks were paid, the whole place just cleared out at once. I figured I'd **take a breather** before cleaning up, so I sat down for a **sec**. And that's when my boss finally appears and yells at me because the tables are dirty! She said I was **slacking off**. And THAT was **the last straw**.

**Jeff:** Uh-oh. I'm afraid to ask, but... what did you do?

**Lynn:** Took off my **apron**, threw it at her, and **stormed out** of the place.

**Jeff:** Heh. I thought you were home a bit early. So... what now?

**Lynn:** Right now I'll just have a drink and **veg out** in front of the TV a bit. And tomorrow... I'll **get cracking** on some job applications.

## Vocabulary

**grouchy** = in a bad mood

**the tail end** = the final part, right at the very end

**shift** = period of work

**take a breather** = take a quick break

**sec** = second

**slacking off** = being lazy and not putting in effort to do the work you're supposed to be doing

**the last straw** = the final thing that made the situation impossible to tolerate

**apron** = a covering for your clothes to be used while cooking or serving food

**stormed out** = left angrily

**veg out** = relax in a mindless way

**get cracking** = start

## Vocabulary Quiz

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

<b>burst</b>	<b>flooded</b>	<b>get cracking</b>	<b>pitched in</b>	<b>tail end</b>
<b>dashed</b>	<b>frantically</b>	<b>grouchy</b>	<b>scribbled</b>	<b>take a breather</b>
<b>dead</b>	<b>frowned</b>	<b>last straw</b>	<b>stormed out</b>	<b>winding down</b>

1. Everyone from the neighborhood \_\_\_\_\_ to clear the snow from my grandparents' driveway.
2. He \_\_\_\_\_ as he read the letter, so I knew it was bad news.
3. I \_\_\_\_\_ tried to clean up the house a bit when the doorbell rang unexpectedly.
4. The lifeguard \_\_\_\_\_ into the water to rescue the little boy who had gone in too deep.
5. My son is \_\_\_\_\_ because I didn't let him spend the weekend at his friend's house.
6. OK everyone, we have a lot of work to do. Let's \_\_\_\_\_ so we can finish early!
7. Popular authors' mailboxes often get \_\_\_\_\_ with fan mail from people who love their books.
8. It's rude to just \_\_\_\_\_ into someone's office - you should always knock on the door first.
9. The city center is \_\_\_\_\_ on Sunday; nobody's around and all the shops are closed.
10. We went to Europe at the \_\_\_\_\_ of summer, when the weather was starting to get a bit cooler.
11. The antiques market starts at 9 AM; around 3 PM it's \_\_\_\_\_.
12. After the argument, his wife \_\_\_\_\_ of the apartment and didn't come back for several hours.

## **Speaking Task**

Talk about a time you got angry. What made you so upset? What did you do in the situation? Have you ever “lost your temper”? (lost control of your words/actions in anger). Alternatively, you can talk about a time someone else was angry with you.

Record your answer at [www.speakpipe.com/espressoenglish](http://www.speakpipe.com/espressoenglish) or send the MP3 to [homework@espressoenglish.net](mailto:homework@espressoenglish.net) for feedback!

## **Answers**

### **Comprehension Questions**

1. True
2. False
3. True
4. True
5. False
6. True
7. False
8. True
9. False
10. False

### **Vocabulary Quiz**

1. pitched in
2. frowned
3. frantically
4. dashed
5. grouchy
6. get cracking
7. flooded
8. burst
9. dead
10. tail end
11. winding down
12. stormed out