

Lesson 15: Holiday

Answer the questions based on the conversation between co-workers Rhonda and Mac:

- 1. Mac is working on...**
 - a. reports
 - b. presentations
 - c. sales calls
- 2. Mac and Rhonda have a lot of work because...**
 - a. a big company event is coming up
 - b. the supervisor gave them a lot to do
 - c. they just got back from a holiday
- 3. How does Mac feel about Mr. Green?**
 - a. he's annoyed at him
 - b. he feels sorry for him
 - c. he respects him
- 4. After Rhonda leaves work, she's going to...**
 - a. the airport
 - b. her relatives' house
 - c. the supermarket
- 5. Mac and his wife usually spend Thanksgiving...**
 - a. at a restaurant
 - b. cooking at home
 - c. with Mac's parents
- 6. Rhonda suggests...**
 - a. making a pumpkin pie for Mr. Green
 - b. spending the holiday together
 - c. taking a road trip
- 7. Mac doesn't want to...**
 - a. help prepare the turkey
 - b. invite Mr. Green to Thanksgiving
 - c. work late on the holiday
- 8. Does Rhonda change her mind based on what Mac says?**
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

Conversation Text

Mac: Man, I can't wait for this week to end and for Thanksgiving to begin. If I see one more report, **I'm gonna pull my hair out**.

Rhonda: This has really been the week from hell. Mr. Green sure **piles on the work** every time we prepare to take off for a holiday.

Mac: That's because he's a **tightwad**. **It wouldn't be the end of the world** if he allowed his employees to have a few paid days off. That's why he's made this last week so tough – he wants to **squeeze out** the productivity before the holiday. I'm surprised he hasn't **chained** us to our desks yet.

Rhonda: I know. But let's not let him **ruin** our Thanksgiving. When I get out of this **stuffy** office I'm going straight to the grocery store and buying the biggest turkey I can find, along with the ingredients to make one of my homemade pumpkin pies.

Mac: Oh, now **my mouth is watering**. As much as I love my wife, **she can't cook to save her life**. We usually spend our Thanksgiving meal at a restaurant. In fact, I can't remember the last time I actually had some homemade pumpkin pie.

Vocabulary

I'm gonna pull my hair out

= an exaggerated way to express that you can't endure much more

piles on the work = gives LOTS of work

tightwad = someone who doesn't like to spend money (negative connotation)

it wouldn't be the end of the world = it wouldn't be a disaster

squeeze out = get something by applying pressure

chained = used metal chains to keep someone prisoner

ruin = destroy, make bad

stuffy = describes a place that lacks ventilation (negative connotation)

my mouth is watering = that sounds delicious; I want to eat it!

she can't cook to save her life = she has ZERO cooking ability

Rhonda: Well, then, why don't you load Megan and the kids into the car and come over to our house on Thanksgiving? We'd love to have you.

Mac: Oh, I don't know. We wouldn't want to **intrude** on your family's holiday.

Rhonda: Who's intruding? You guys are like family to us, Mac. Intruding? **Good grief!**

Mac: All right... okay... we'll come.

Rhonda: Great! We'll **have a ball**, you just wait and see. Roger will get the fireplace going. We'll **stuff ourselves** full of turkey and pumpkin pie, **savor** some hot chocolate and sit by the fire.

Mac: Ahh, that sounds really nice. Way better than sitting in a plastic **booth** listening to some **crabby** waitress complaining about working on Thanksgiving. It sure **puts a damper on** my holiday spirit.

Rhonda: Well, **keep in mind** that we all have to make a living, and that waitress is probably just **scraping by**. It *is* sad that some people can't be with their families on the holidays. I feel bad for those people.

Mac: Like Mr. Green – I don't think he has any family in the area. He'll probably spend the holiday right

Vocabulary

intrude = enter without permission or without being welcome

Good grief! = an exclamation of surprise, shock, or amazement

have a ball = have fun; have a good time

stuff ourselves = eat excessively

savor = greatly appreciate the taste or smell of something

booth = a type of seating used in diners and restaurants

crabby = in a bad mood

puts a damper on = makes less enjoyable

keep in mind = remember; don't forget

scraping by = having difficulty surviving on a low salary

here in the office **poring over** reports and **grumbling** that his accounting department is **incompetent**.

Rhonda: Maybe we should invite the **old fart** to Thanksgiving at my home?

Mac: Uh... you might wanna **think twice about that**, Rhonda. He's so demanding, he'll probably write up a report **critiquing** your pumpkin pie and file it with your performance review.

Rhonda: Don't be so **uptight**, Mac. I'm sure even Mr. Green **loosens up** a bit during the holidays. Yeah... I *will* invite him, if he doesn't have any other plans.

Mac: ::sighs:: **The more the merrier**, I suppose. Okay – I'm just gonna **wrap up** a few things, and then head home. See you tomorrow at 6?

Rhonda: You bet!

Vocabulary

poring over = read or look at something carefully

grumbling = complaining in a low voice

incompetent = not intelligent, not skilled

old fart = a disrespectful way to refer to an older person (very rude!)

think twice about that = reconsider if it is truly a good idea or not

critiquing = analyzing and evaluating

uptight = anxious, tense

loosens up = becomes more relaxed and friendly

the more the merrier = if there are more people, it will be more fun / enjoyable

wrap up = finish

You bet! = Yes, definitely!

Vocabulary Quiz

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

crabby	loosen up	ruin	thinking twice
incompetent	piling on	savoring	tightwad
intruding	poring over	scrape by	uptight
keep in mind	put a damper on	stuffy	wrapping up

1. All my professors have been _____ assignments lately - I'll have to stay up all night to finish everything!
2. Can we open a window? It's getting _____ in here.
3. Her parents' disapproval of the marriage _____ her excitement about her upcoming wedding.
4. He's very unpleasant to work with because he gets _____ when he doesn't get his way, and makes some nasty remarks.
5. I tried to put them out of my mind, but the worries kept _____ on my thoughts.
6. It's so rare that I get to eat lobster. I'm _____ every bite.
7. Maybe the problem was inevitable, but the way they handled it was completely _____, and it just made things worse.
8. My husband's planning a round-the-world trip, so he's been _____ airline websites and tourist guides lately.
9. She's such a _____, she refused to contribute even \$5 to the community fundraiser.
10. This lingerie is delicate so you need to wash it by hand. Putting it in the washing machine and dryer will _____ it.
11. Well, he's single and has no kids, so he can _____ on minimum wage.
12. We're almost done here - we'll be _____ this meeting in about ten minutes.

Speaking Task

Mac doesn't seem to get along very well with his supervisor. Talk about either a particularly good or particularly bad boss you've had. Also, do you prefer managing people, or being managed, and why?

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

Answers

Comprehension Questions

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

Vocabulary Quiz

1. piling on
2. stuffy
3. put a damper on
4. crabby
5. intruding
6. savoring
7. incompetent
8. poring over
9. tightwad
10. ruin
11. scrape by
12. wrapping up