

## Lesson 06: The Perfect Puppy

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*Will is trying to buy a dog and Susan is helping him at the pet shop. First, listen to their conversation and try to answer these comprehension questions:*

### **Listening Comprehension**

- 1. The problem with the first dog was...**
  - a. its age
  - b. its color
  - c. its size
- 2. Will lives...**
  - a. in the city
  - b. in the suburbs
  - c. on a farm
- 3. Will is going to give his son the dog on...**
  - a. Christmas
  - b. his birthday
  - c. the last day of school
- 4. Will rejected the Dalmatian because...**
  - a. it could be aggressive
  - b. it needs lots of open space
  - c. it's difficult to train
- 5. He rejected the pug because...**
  - a. it's too small
  - b. it tends to bark a lot
  - c. it's ugly
- 6. Will didn't buy any accessories because...**
  - a. he wanted his son to help choose them
  - b. he's not sure what type of dog he'll get
  - c. they're too expensive at the pet store
- 7. What kind of pet does Will's wife want?**
  - a. a bird
  - b. a cat
  - c. a fish

## Conversation Text

**Will:** Gee, I don't know. I really wasn't looking for a dog that size. My kid is seven years old. I'm not sure he can handle a big dog.

**Susan:** A German shepherd is a very good dog. They're smart and loyal and very protective. Also, this one's still a **puppy** and not a full-grown adult yet. Your son and the German shepherd can grow up together.

**Will:** Yeah, that's true. But the problem is I live in a very **close-knit** suburban neighborhood. Eventually the German shepherd will get bigger... and big dogs **bark**. Even if my son could handle a dog that size, I'm not sure my neighborhood could.

**Susan:** Okay, I understand your concerns. So let's **narrow it down** to small dogs. How about... say... a Saint Bernard.

**Will:** What?

**Susan:** I was just **pulling your leg**.

**Will:** Gee, you scared me. Listen, please, all I want is a little puppy... maybe a Chihuahua?

**Susan:** Nah, guys aren't Chihuahua type people, especially a seven year old. Kids have lots of energy.

### Vocabulary

**puppy** = a baby dog

**close-knit** = describes a community where the people have close relationships

**bark** = the verb for the sound a dog makes

**narrow down** = reduce the number of options

**pulling your leg** = joking, not being serious. Another way to say this is "I was just kidding."

Your son needs a puppy that can **keep up with** him – you know, run around, **play fetch**, and whatnot.

**Will:** Oh great, just what I need: Two tornadoes **running loose** in my house. Why did my son have to ask for a puppy for his birthday? Why not a turtle or a lizard or a fish?

**Susan:** Calm down, dad, we'll find the right puppy. Besides, turtles are boring, fish poop too much and lizards aren't exactly **cuddly**.

**Will:** Okay, what other kinds of puppies do you have?

**Susan:** I was thinking a Dalmatian.

**Will:** Still too big... and I've heard they're aggressive – if he bit one of the neighbors, they'd **sue** me.

**Susan:** Okay, so forget the Dalmatian. How about... a pug? They're small and full of energy.

**Will:** Nah, they're ugly and their eyes **give me the creeps**.

**Susan:** You're not making this easy.

**Will:** I'm sorry, but the puppy has to be just right. **Don't get me wrong**, I love big dogs. I had a Georgia Blood Hound when I was a kid – great dog. But the fact is that my neighbors **whine** if the leaves fall off the trees too loudly.

## Vocabulary

**keep up with him** =  
accompany him at  
the same speed

**play fetch** = game  
when you throw a  
ball or stick for the  
dog to get and bring  
back to you

**running loose** =  
running without  
limits or restraint

**cuddly** = able to be  
hugged and held in  
the arms with  
affection

**sue** = bring legal  
action against  
someone

**give me the creeps** =  
make me afraid or  
repulsed

**Don't get me wrong**  
= don't  
misunderstand me

**whine** = complain,  
usually in an  
immature way

**Susan:** That's why I live on a farm – no neighbors within ten miles. Okay, let me think.

**Will:** I'm all ears.

**Susan:** Hey, **I got it**. How about a Toy Fox Terrier? They're small, playful, full of energy and very affectionate.

**Will:** Hey, yeah, I think that just might work. Do you have any here?

**Susan:** A mother just gave birth to a **litter** of four. The puppies aren't **weaned** yet. But they should be by the time your son's birthday arrives.

**Will:** Terrific. Yeah, a Terrier is just right.

**Susan:** Is there anything else I can help you with? Do you wanna buy a feeding dish, a **collar**, maybe some dog toys?

**Will:** Not yet – I want to bring my son with me so he can **pick them out**. But there is one more thing – my wife wants a bird. Not too big and not too small.

**Susan:** Here we go again.

## Vocabulary

**I'm all ears** = I'm listening eagerly and carefully

**I got it** = I have an idea / I've solved the problem

**litter** = when a dog/cat gives birth to a group of babies, the group is called a litter

**weaned** = trained to stop needing the mother's milk

**collar** = a strip of fabric or plastic around the dog's neck

**pick them out** = choose them

**Here we go again** = the same situation is going to be repeated

## Vocabulary Quiz

close-knit

keep up with

puppy

sued

cuddly

narrowed it down

running loose

whining

giving me the creeps

picked out

1. Everyone else in the group was an experienced hiker, so it was hard to \_\_\_\_\_ them.
2. He comes from a \_\_\_\_\_ family, so he always thinks about how his actions affect his parents.
3. I love cats with long hair - they're so soft and \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The kids kept \_\_\_\_\_ that they were bored during the long drive.
5. She \_\_\_\_\_ the hospital after the wrong surgery was performed on her.
6. That guy has been staring at me for the past fifteen minutes; it's \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Several animals escaped from their cages and started \_\_\_\_\_ around the zoo.
8. The manager \_\_\_\_\_ the five strongest candidates to come in for an interview.
9. We still haven't decided exactly where to go on vacation yet, but we've \_\_\_\_\_ to either Australia or New Zealand.
10. I've had my dog for ten years - ever since she was a \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Speaking Task**

Today there are two choices for the speaking task – please pick one!

- a. If you have (or used to have) a pet, tell me about it – your pet's name, why you chose it, an interesting or funny story involving your pet
- b. What's your opinion about animal rights? For example, should animals be kept in zoos / killed and eaten for food / experimented on for science?

Explain your point of view and give reasons for your beliefs.

Record your 2-3 minute answer at <http://www.speakpipe.com/espressoenglish> or send an MP3 to [homework@espressoenglish.net](mailto:homework@espressoenglish.net) for feedback.

## **Answers**

### **Comprehension Questions**

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

### **Vocabulary Quiz**

1. keep up with
2. close-knit
3. cuddly
4. whining
5. sued
6. giving me the creeps
7. running loose
8. picked out
9. narrowed it down
10. puppy