

Lesson 08: A Brand-New Smartphone

Listen to this conversation between Kate and Mandy, two high-school students. First, try to answer the comprehension questions as you listen; then learn the expressions.

- 1. Kate failed a test in...**
 - a. geography
 - b. math
 - c. science
- 2. Kate can keep her phone if she...**
 - a. does well in school
 - b. helps out around the house
 - c. doesn't spend too much time on it
- 3. Mandy is involved in...**
 - a. the cheerleading team
 - b. the debate club
 - c. the school newspaper
- 4. Mandy got her phone...**
 - a. as a birthday present
 - b. second-hand from a friend
 - c. with her own money
- 5. Mandy's parents are...**
 - a. also old-fashioned
 - b. addicted to technology
 - c. very religious
- 6. Kate's little brother likes to...**
 - a. chat online
 - b. create smartphone apps
 - c. play video games
- 7. Mandy leaves because...**
 - a. someone texts her
 - b. her mom calls her
 - c. she has to go to class

Conversation Text

Kate: Check it out – I *finally* have my very own smartphone!

Mandy: Cool! I can't believe your parents just **dished out** the money for a brand-new phone. I thought you were in trouble for **bombing** your algebra test.

Kate: I was. But my mom and dad **made a deal** with me. They'll pay for my smartphone if I bring home good grades. I've got **another shot** at the algebra test – Mrs. Smith is gonna let me retake it next Tuesday. If I pass, I keep my smart phone. If I fail, then my parents will **confiscate** my phone until I bring my grades up.

Mandy: So basically, they're **bribing** you to study.

Kate: Yeah, in a way. I have to admit their little **scheme** is working, though. Last night I studied for two hours straight! I really want to keep my smart phone... otherwise I'll be totally **out of the loop**.

Mandy: I know what you mean. Ever since I started working for the school paper, I've had to be **on call** 24/7! The editor, Sarah, is constantly texting me article ideas, sharing pics, changing plans for the

Vocabulary

dished out = gave freely, without restraint

bombing = doing very badly on; failing

made a deal = made an agreement

another shot = another try/attempt

confiscate = take something by authority

bribing = offering/giving a reward in order to influence someone to act a certain way

scheme = a secret or devious plan

out of the loop = not knowing or being involved in a situation

on call = available if called for

next issue **on the fly**... if I didn't have my smart phone, she'd probably **kick me off** the team.

Kate: At least you bought your smartphone with your own **allowance**, so you don't have to worry about it being taken away. My dad just **doesn't get** how important it is to have a phone! You feel, like, totally **left out** without one.

Mandy: Your dad's from a different generation and just sees things differently, that's all. Believe me, I know, my parents have given me **sermons** about the "good old days" when people weren't so **hooked on** technology.

Kate: Well, who says the "good old days" were better? I can text you in a second compared to waiting a week for you to get a letter in the mail. I can listen to music and check my e-mail anywhere I go, I can download tons of cool apps, I can –

Mandy: Hey, you're **preachin' to the choir**, girl! I love my phone too. But you've gotta admit our parents have a point. When my dad was a kid he played outside, and today I never see kids outside playing.

Kate: Yeah, I guess. My little brother **can't tear himself away** from his new PlayStation. When his

Vocabulary

on the fly =
spontaneously

kick me off = expel,
force to leave

allowance = a small
amount of money
parents regularly give
their children

doesn't get = doesn't
understand

left out = excluded
socially

given me sermons =
given me long speeches

hooked on = addicted
to

preaching to the choir
= trying to convince
someone who already
agrees with you

**can't tear himself away
from** = manage to stop
or get away

friends come over, they just **hole up** in his room and play for hours.

Mandy: Just imagine what life will be like for our own kids someday. They'll probably have, I dunno, virtual reality or **telepathy** or something like that – and smart phones will be considered **primitive**.

Kate: Geez, Mandy, just lemme enjoy having my smart phone for now!

Mandy: Okay, okay, go enjoy your phone. Ah – just got a message from Sarah, so I gotta run. Text me later!

Vocabulary

hole up = hide or take shelter

telepathy = the ability to communicate mentally through thoughts

primitive = old, basic, not sophisticated or modern

Vocabulary Quiz

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

another shot

hole up

deal

out of the loop

bombed

hooked on

on call

primitive

dished out

left out

on the fly

scheme

1. Despite lacking equipment, the village was able to construct a _____ irrigation system for the crops.
2. Let's make a _____: I'll help you move into your new place if you let me borrow your car for the weekend.
3. The age limit for this program is 18 years old, so if I'm not accepted this year, I won't get _____.
4. Our cat likes to _____ in the closet when there's a thunderstorm outside.
5. She didn't really have a business plan before she started, she just made it up _____.
6. The fundraiser for the animal shelter _____. They were aiming for \$10,000 in donations, and they only got about \$300.
7. My parents' house didn't have a television, so I used to feel _____ whenever my friends were talking about TV shows.
8. Three men were arrested after their ex-partner reported their illegal money-laundering _____ to the police.
9. You shouldn't check your work e-mail at home. It's not fair for the company to expect you to be constantly _____.
10. The manager didn't like any of the ideas we presented. He just _____ criticism to everyone.

Speaking Task

Describe the role of computers, smartphones, and the internet in your own life. What do you use them for? If you had kids (or if you have kids), how much technology would you allow them to use, and at what age?

Record your answer at www.speakpipe.com/espressoenglish or e-mail your MP3 to homework@espressoenglish.net

Answers

Comprehension Questions

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

Vocabulary Quiz

1. primitive
2. make a deal
3. another shot
4. hole up
5. on the fly
6. bombed
7. left out
8. scheme
9. on call
10. dished out