

Lesson 12: Meeting New People

Lila and Beth are two college students who meet each other for the first time. Listen to their conversation and try to answer these comprehension questions:

Listening Comprehension

1. Lila and Beth strike up a conversation in the...

- a. classroom
- b. gym
- c. library

2. One of their professors is Beth's...

- a. cousin
- b. father
- c. uncle

3. Lila and Beth are unpopular because...

- a. they are new at the college
- b. they are shy
- c. they don't like to party

4. Lila was forced to do another student's...

- a. homework
- b. laundry
- c. room cleaning

5. Most of Lila and Beth's friends...

- a. didn't go to college
- b. chose to study far from home
- c. went to a local college

6. In high school, Lila and Beth...

- a. were bullied
- b. had a lot of friends
- c. weren't very popular

7. At the end of the dialogue, they agree to...

- a. be friends and help each other
- b. share an apartment next year
- c. travel home together on breaks

Conversation Text

Lila: Oh, sorry. It looks like we're both reaching for the same book.

Beth: Oh, it's okay. The library is **packed** today. With exams **coming up**, everyone's **cramming** like crazy.

Lila: Myself included! By the way, my name's Lila.

Beth: I'm Beth. I've seen you in Professor O'Mally's class. You sit in the back row. That's very smart.

Lila: I've seen you, too. **You've got guts**, sitting all the way in the front.

Beth: I kinda have to. Professor O'Mally is my uncle. And he always **calls on me** in class because he thinks I'm popular.

Lila: Are you?

Beth: Are you **kidding** me? We're **freshmen**. The **lowest on the totem pole** around here.

Lila: Don't I know it. Last night a **junior** cornered me and made me do her laundry... all eight **loads**, including her sweaty gym clothes!

Vocabulary

packed = extremely crowded; full of people

coming up = happening soon

cramming = studying very hard right before a test

you've got guts = you're brave, courageous

calls on me = selects me to answer a question in class

kidding = joking, saying something that's not serious

freshmen = first-year university students

lowest on the totem pole = the lowest in the social hierarchy

junior = a third-year student

loads = baskets of dirty clothes

Beth: Gross! Seems like the juniors and seniors treat freshmen like their personal slaves. Last week a senior made me wash her car...three times. She said that learning to **do the bidding** of my superiors would prepare me for a future in the corporate world.

Lila: Seems like you and I have a lot in common. It's nice to meet someone else who is as miserable as I am.

Beth: Where are you from, Lila?

Lila: North Carolina. I'm from a town called Dayville.

Beth: Hey, I'm from North Carolina, too – Carrington. It's not too far from you. That's really **a small world!**

Lila: Yeah, you're the only person I've met from **my neck of the woods**. This college was tough to get into, and because it's far from home, most of my friends chose to stay in town and attend **state**.

Beth: Same with me. None of my friends back home wanted to move too far away. I didn't either, **to be honest**. But this is a good school and besides, my uncle helped me get in.

Lila: My parents **urged** me to come here, and I was excited to start over with my social life. I was a bit of a **nerd** back in high school. I got **straight A's** and...well, I was a member of the marching band.

Vocabulary

gross = disgusting

do someone's bidding
= submit to
someone's orders

a small world = a
surprising coincidence

my neck of the woods =
my region or
neighborhood

state = the state
university

to be honest = we use
this phrase when
expressing an opinion
that may be unpopular,
or when revealing a
secret thought or
emotion

urged = strongly
encouraged

nerd = intelligent but
awkward (few social
skills)

straight A's = all high
grades

Beth: I was never one of **the in-crowd** either.

Lila: And I didn't even get asked to the **prom**.

Beth: Yup, **join the club** – neither did I. But... who says we have to be known as nerds here? And hey, next year we'll **move up the food chain** on **campus**. We could even make a pact.

Lila: A **pact**?

Beth: To **stick together** and help each other **make it** through the years ahead.

Lila: Hey, yeah. I love that idea.

Beth: Great! Well, I'll let you get back to studying – we can meet up later for dinner.

Vocabulary

the in-crowd = the group of popular people

prom = a high school dance event

join the club = I am/was in the same bad situation

move up the food chain = start increasing in the hierarchy / social status

campus = the property of the college/university

pact = promise to each other

stick together = stay together

make it = successfully survive something difficult; endure until finishing or achieving a goal

Vocabulary Quiz

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

campus	guts	make it	to be honest
coming up	join the club	packed	urging
gross	kidding	stick together	what a small world

1. Do you think we have enough gas to _____ to the next town, or should we fill up here?
2. Don't take the train during rush hour - it'll be _____.
3. Everyone please _____ and follow the tour guide so that you don't get lost.
4. I'm excited for the summer; there are quite a few major music festivals _____.
5. You haven't washed the dishes for a week! The sink is getting really _____!
6. Our manager is very intimidating. The workers often disagree with him, but they don't have the _____ to say anything.
7. So, your flight was delayed? _____. The weather's so bad, I think we'll be waiting for a while.
8. There isn't enough parking on _____; I often have to leave my car in the supermarket parking lot.
9. You know Barbara Stevens? _____! She used to be my neighbor when I lived in Atlanta.
10. I've been _____ my grandfather to get a checkup, but he's stubborn and he hates doctors.

Speaking Task

Talk about one of your good friends: How did you meet? What do you like about him/her? Describe one nice memory/experience you've had together.

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

Answers

Comprehension Questions

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

Vocabulary Quiz

1. make it
2. packed
3. stick together
4. coming up
5. gross
6. guts
7. Join the club
8. campus
9. What a small world
10. urging