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This is an all-ears English podcast episode 23. What Ivy League University in America really means. Welcome to the all-ears English podcast where you'll finally get real native English conversation and fluency for business and life. We believe in connection, not perfection, when it comes to learning English. Now here are your hosts, Lindsay McMan, the English adventurer, and Michelle Kaplan, the New York radio girl coming to you from Boston and New York City, USA. Today, get four real native English phrases to have a robust conversation about applying to college in the US with a native speaker. Your active, energetic, strong, but when it comes to getting injured, your skin needs a softer touch. Thanks to the extra large-centred advantage from the last aplast, you could feel protected when you are doing what you love. Skin friendly, soft, and breathable, they block 99% of bacteria, so you can get back to your active, energetic, and strong self. Available at your local supermarket or pharmacy, always read the label and follow the directions for use. A last-a-plast plastic protects against dirt and bacteria. Hey Lindsay, how are you? Hey Michelle, doing well. How are you? I'm good. I'm good. I'm excited about today's topic. This is going to be fun. I know this is going to be great. I mean, yesterday, guys, in episode 22, we talked about how to get accepted at a university in the US. We gave you three tips on how to do that. Michelle, do you ever just think back to that period of time when you submitted your applications and you were going through that hole, waiting for the letters, going to the mailbox every day, and checking for the thick or thin envelope? Yes, I remember the application process quite well, and I remember I went to University of Maryland, and when I got in, I remember I was with my dad, and I saw it actually popped up online, and I was very excited. I think when I was accepted, there was like, pre-email days, or something. No, I also got some, I also got some, you know, acceptances in the mail, but I remember that one was also online. I think they were like, maybe they were doing both at that time, I don't know. Maybe both, yeah, yeah, yeah. I remember getting wine too, just being excited and feeling like I knew the right place for me, it's kind of when you get like a pair of jeans that just fits perfectly, right? It fits like a glove, it feels like the right choice, like the right thing at the right time. Awesome, so today we're getting into this, right? Michelle, what are we talking about today to extend this conversation? Yeah, well, we're going to be talking about the Ivy League schools. Yeah, this is so interesting. I better listeners have heard this, right? This term Ivy League? Right, right, right. So yeah, Ivy League, I mean, I think of this as like the kind of the top, right? But it actually comes from sports, right?

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Lindsay? Yeah, it's so interesting. If you look up in the Wikipedia article, and this is kind of common known sort of trivia, sorry, that Ivy League was originally, the term was originally, came from the sports conference, the athletic conference, that's what they share in common, is there in the same sports conference? But then it's kind of extended to mean something completely different, beyond just sports, right? Michelle, so what does it actually mean culturally speaking? It's like a certain level, like, it's like, well, this is actually one of the expressions we'll teach today, which is the certain level of prestige. What is prestige? What is it? Oh, prestige. So prestige is a fun word, it's fun to say. It means exceptional and standing apart in terms of rigor, academic rigor, reputation, right? So something that has a high level of prestige is not an easy school to get into, Harvard, by no means is easy, right? Michelle, to getting accepted. Right, right, right, right. Exactly. So these schools are kind of known as, you know, being, you know, the top, you know, they're very, very good and, you know, people really, when I get into them and they're well known for that, maybe they have a lot of like famous people who've graduated from there. I mean, certainly Harvard has its fair share. Yeah, oh my gosh, pretty much many of the presidents have either graduated from what Harvard Yale, I feel like Harvard or Yale are the always the big ones that I hear. I know George W. Bush went to Yale, I'm pretty sure Obama went to law school at Harvard. I mean, they've all been to the, the I.B.s, right? And I just looked up Harvard acceptance rate in 2020, oh, in 2020, I mean, so in the last few years, right? In general, the Harvard acceptance rate is around 4.5%. That's actually higher than I thought. That's actually higher than I thought. I thought I was closer to one to two percent. I did not apply to Harvard, but I know I would not. I would never. No shame in that. It's okay. It's, you know, just a certain kind of person. And they also look for people that have very deep talents in certain areas like the flute, or I don't know, certain things, music, dance, cooking, whatever it is. So anyways, Michelle, why are we learning these phrases today for our listeners? Guys, these are useful to be able to talk about universities and be able to talk about Ivy League, you know, specifically even in conversation. So there, you know, this is a good connection topic as well. Exactly. So you guys should go back again, listen to yesterday's episode 22, get that content and then write these down and then go and have a conversation with a native speaker about the Ivy League, about colleges in the US. So the first one is again, Michelle, it's Ivy League. So there we go. And so what's the next one that we need to talk about this with the native speaker? Okay. Well, this one, it's kind of too wrapped into one. So you could say cut throat or competitive, right? Yes, what does this mean?

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Yeah, I mean, they're, they're, it's not easy to get in. A lot of people are trying for not that many spots. And so cut throat, it basically is a nice, it's very, well, it's like a very intense way of saying competitive. Yeah, very intense way, right? Something is cut throat. So it's kind of an adjective. It is an adjective, right? Michelle? So competition is cut throat, you know, that processes cut throat was the, was the competition cut throat between you and your classmates in college? No. No, definitive no. I mean, I was a theater major. So I guess there was a fair amount of competition in that sense. But like between my group of friends, we were not like competitive against each other. Interesting. Yeah. Same here, I'd say it was pretty more collaborative. But I would say at my school, kids had a really like the kids that I went to school with were very good students. Like people were all very serious about their work. Like people always had tons of work to do. At times I was like, yeah, yeah, I'm thinking, wow, these guys are really into it, you know? So it was a good academic tradition. I'd say at the school I went to for sure. And it kept me working hard on the right track. I wouldn't say it was cut throat, but it was like high expectations. People had high expectations of themselves. Okay, interesting, interesting. So yeah, the next one is we talked about this one already a little bit, a certain level of prestige. So yeah, just like that, you know, high level that like kind of honor of, you know, getting into something, right? Yeah, exactly a certain level of prestige. What are some other colleges if our listeners are looking at colleges in the US, let's say they want to go to undergrad or even graduate school. What are some other colleges that come to mind outside of the Ivy League, Michelle, that have a certain level of prestige? What would you say? Oh, I always give you tough questions. Yeah, really, I'm like trying to even think of because I feel like I don't have all the Ivy leagues memorized. So I feel like I'm just going to end up saying one of them. I mean, a lot of a lot of state schools also do like, I mean, I would say, I mean, I know like Boston University does. I would say, also like some of the specialty schools, like I don't know why I'm talking about Boston so much, but like Berkeley School of Music, right? So that kind of a thing, some specialty schools, Lindsay, any, what other ones can you think of? Yeah, I think going back to the state school thing, I think definitely we have some really good state school with University of Virginia as a really good one. University of, while UPEN isn't in the Ivy League actually, but Stanford is good, MIT is a really good Caltech.

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Yeah, Caltech is really, really good. There's a ton of them, Michelle, it's exciting. Yeah, and these schools, they accept the best and the brightest, which is our next expression. What does that mean the best and the brightest? Yeah, these are kind of fun chunks today, right? The best and the brightest, I mean, it just means again, like I said, 4.6% acceptance rate. Like they just look for the best and the bright, what does bright mean in this context? It means smart, smart, exactly. So that's another way to say, we could do another episode some day of Michelle on ways that say more. That would be kind of cool for our listeners to get that, because I do think there's a lot of talk around being smart in American culture. What do you think? Yeah, absolutely. But you know, sometimes, well, you know, sometimes the emphasis is on being smart, and sometimes it's not, and it should be. So like, there's a lot to be discussed there, but bright is a good vocabulary word to talk about someone being smart. And again, yeah, I'm wondering where, I know this chunk, I've seen it around the best and the brightest. I don't know, maybe on websites for colleges, you would see that. We only accept the best and the brightest. Program, special programs, you might see that guys. So just be prepared to see that chunk written somewhere in English, I would say. Right, right, right. Yeah. And then application process, that's the last one we're going to teach.

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Do you remember the application process for school? And I don't even know if I remember mine. Oh, I remember writing my college essay. And I remember, I guess it was a standard application that you could use for a lot of them, but then some of the schools that I applied you did not accept the standard application. So you had to get a special application just for them. I remember getting letters of recommendation from my teachers. Yeah, it's a whole thing, Michelle. And you have to start far in advance. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. You can't just do it in a day. No, I don't remember what the deadline's for, but I feel like when did we get our acceptance is like the springtime, right? Something like April or March, maybe. And then I probably like deadlines were in the fall, the previous year. So guys, check the deadlines. You know, if you're looking to do this, if you're looking to go to college in the US or graduate school, keep an eye on the deadlines because they do go really far back. And then some schools, some schools don't they have that rolling admission? Yes, that's true too. So that's where like you can apply and then like they'll accept you. That means like even, they may not have one formal like acceptance time, but they accept them as they come in and they want to get people, right? I don't know how many places have that. I know. And yeah, so you really have to check. I mean, some of them also have early decision and then there were early application early decision. There's a little bit nuanced actually. So yeah, you want to look closely and call people and ask questions. Let me know. Sure. Yeah, seek out help. Maybe there's a counselor you can work with call the department, the, you know, what is it? Applications department, admissions, and just do it because it's a unique experience going through this. But yeah, it's kind of fun when you get that letter, you can celebrate with your family and then everyone knows where they're going and it's like in high school, right? Kids are having the conversations where you're going to college and all that stuff. Very common part of American culture. That's right. That's right. Oh my gosh, I love it. Yeah, this brings me brings me back, Lindsay. I know. I know. And the fun part is getting the t-shirt for the school you're going to. Did you do that? You know, you go down, you're like, oh, yeah, of course. Of course. Yeah, like, because then you feel like the sense of like belonging and you have this immediate pride for the school that you go to, it's kind of a cool feeling.

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You're like, yeah, I feel like it's like an Harry Potter, right? Exactly. I remember the school that I chose was so far from my home. It was in Virginia, which is so far from New Hampshire, where I grew up and but there happened to be one other kid in my high school somehow. One other kid was also going there. And I remember finding that out like, wow, no one else knows the school, except for this kid just somehow decided to go there. We weren't friends or anything on campus, but it was fun knowing that he had chosen the school too for so far. Are you friends with the far high school? Not really. Nope. Just a random guy on YouTube. Yeah, I heard somewhere. Yeah. So how long, like, what was the distance between your school and home? Like 500 miles. Oh wow. It's Virginia. It was in Fredericksburg, Virginia. It's a DC, an hour south of DC. And then New Hampshire is, yeah, it would take me 12 hours to drive home. Oh, yeah, it was a polar drive. That's brave. I went to school like 45 minutes from my house. Yeah. I thought about going closer, but it was, it was honestly, it came down to price. I mean, the value for schools in the southeast is so much better, even if you're an out of state student for a state school. And yeah, it was just so different compared to northeastern schools. Very interesting. Oh, yeah. I want to hear more about your college experience. Like I mean, I feel like we had very different ones being that I was one of the kids that was close to home and you were so far away. And I wonder how. Yeah, did you go home? Did you end up going home a lot? Did you go home on the weekends, freshman year and that kind of thing? Freshman year a lot because I was, I mean, you're gonna laugh at me, but I was very homesick. And yeah. And even though I was only 45 minutes away, I, so first semester freshman year, I did go home a lot. But then I still remember the moment when I came back. I was so depressed to come back second semester. I really, I had a hard time. And I remember getting into the elevator and I ran into a girl who like I had become friendly with.

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And I remember, I don't know why I have this image of dropping my contact lens case on the floor. And I don't know, that's like what I remember in that moment. And like for some reason, I remember that and like then everything was okay. Not because of the contact lens. But I just remember like that like second semester was a huge shift. And then that sophomore year was the biggest shift. That's when I like loved it and everything. That's interesting. So did you become friends with that girl in the elevator? Or, well, we were, she lived like across the hall for me. And I remember my mom said like ask her to like get lunch every day or lunch or day. And like always just like try and make that like your routine. And then you'll know like that you have someone. And we did do that. And we were, we were very close. I mean, we even to this day like casually cave in touch. Oh, that's cool. Yeah, it is tough. It's a tough adjustment because, and this is something unique about I think about American culture that we do, we do weave home and we move into the dorm. We live on campus. So we're not around our family or friend or original hometown really at all. And so it's a pretty drastic change for an 18 year old, you know. When you've been living at home for so long and you're used to it. And then all of a sudden you're living in this dorm, which I didn't love the dorms. I thought there was 30 bathrooms and things. Yeah. My dorm the first two years, I didn't have any air conditioning. And it was very hot when I first come. And yeah.

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Yeah. And it doesn't feel homey at all. You know. So yeah, that's a big. I remember my school was kind of a suitcase school in that sense. And I didn't know that until I got there. That was there I couldn't go home. So the same thing happened. My dorm would just empty on Friday nights, especially first semester freshman year. And everyone was gone. And I was like, where is everyone? What's going on? This isn't college. Where are you? Sad or were you? It was a hard adjustment. Really hard. But luckily I had tennis. So I was on the tennis team. So that took me out of that place. And many times we were way on the weekends playing matches. So yeah, you got to stay busy. Yeah, that's the thing is. Yeah. Oh my gosh. I fall. College, Lindsey. I feel like I'm feel sad for you. Because like, I know like that's probably like that sinking feeling in your stomach. Like I don't know. That's how I felt. Yeah. Yeah. I wish they had told me it was a suitcase school. That's okay. It all turned out okay in the end. And it's all good. You know, our experiences are what makes us. And we can find a positive side of every experience guys. So guys, the positive side of this episode is that you want to take these words and phrases and go now have a conversation with a native speaker about college is what a good rich topic, right Michelle? Oh, yeah. Huge topic in the US. So guys, use these expressions, these phrases that we talked to today to taught you today, these chunks.

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And talk with people about their college experience. Great. I love it. All right, Michelle. I'll see you on the next episode. Have a good one. Thanks for hanging out today. All right. Bye. Okay, bye. Thanks for listening to all ears English. And if you believe in connection, not perfection, follow our show wherever you listen to podcasts to make sure you don't miss anything. See you next time.