



# Unit 33

**Instructions:** Read the following exercise and try to associate the ideas in English without literal translation.

## American slang terms

**there is one catch:** That there is an exception, condition or problem to what seems to be an ideal situation.

**geeks:** People that are boring and not fashionable; people who are not hip.

**steer farther away from:** To be moving away from someone or something in a gradual and almost hard to notice way.

**single handed:** Without any help from anyone else.

**web-crawlers:** Derogative way to refer to people that spend most of their day surfing on the Internet and have started to lose contact with the real world.

## Useful Expressions

See Exercise 5

## High tech generation

There is an entire generation of people that has *grown up through the Internet*, chat rooms and search pages, which has been **pivotal** in the development and advancement of technology. *There is one catch* to this situation, though... Just how lonely is this generation, and how much lonelier will the generations that lie ahead become?

Survey freaks reveal that *pet ownership* has increased between 60 and 70 percent over the last quarter of a century. There are even cyber pets that have been developed (both online, and through video game consoles) for those computer *geeks* who don't want to deal with real-life pets. This has caused them to *steer farther away from* the human race.

The problem could be directly attributed to the fact that people are now more at ease initiating a chat online than starting up a conversation in person. *Moreover*, with information being **updated** almost at an hourly **rate** on the Internet, this addictive medium has, in a *single-handed* way, **achieved** having people sitting in front of the computers for hours, and in some cases, days.

The *sedentary lifestyle* of *web-crawlers* has also led to a more exercise-free way of life, which has brought with it as a consequence, a generation of obese people, usually with eyesight problems (*due to the time* spent in front of computer screens) with little or no interest in interacting with their **peers**.

With more electronic devices and professional careers to be developed in the systematic world, the problem **threatens** to only grow bigger by the day, since the percentage of Internet users will continue to increase over the years to come... As well as the new generation's **waistlines**.

## 2. Brand new vocabulary

**Instructions:** Match the words or expressions that are on the left side, which were taken from the reading's selected vocabulary, with the respective definitions given on the right side.

a. pivotal	1. That it is likely to happen.
b. survey	2. Central and important.
c. reveal	3. Belonging to or done by a particular person or thing.
d. ownership	4. Imaginary lines going through the narrowest part of the waist. .
e. updated	5. An examination of opinions made by asking people questions.
f. rate	6. Succeeded in finishing something or getting something done.
g. achieved	7. That gave someone or something the most recent information.
h. peers	8. To make known or show something that is surprising.
i. threatens	9. The speed at which something happens or changes.
j. waistlines	10. People who are the same age or have the same social position as others in a group.

## 3. Speak your mind

**Instructions:** Read and analyze the following questions and give your point of view accordingly.

1. How many hours per week do you spend browsing through the Web and why?
2. Do you agree with the fact that the new generations that are coming up are lonely ones? If so, why?
3. What is your opinion about virtual pets, and would you like to own one?
4. What do you think about the fact that people start chats and friendships online with total strangers?
5. What advice would you give to people that spend their entire day in front of computers surfing on the Internet, so that they could have more balanced lives?

## 4. American slang terms

**Instructions:** Read the definitions that were introduced to you in the reading exercise, and construct sentences orally with a similar structure to the one in the reading.

- |                       |                            |                 |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. there is one catch | 3. steer farther away from | 5. web-crawlers |
| 2. geeks              | 4. single handed           |                 |

## 5. Useful expressions

**Instructions:** Apply the following expressions when giving your opinion about Unit 33 ("High Tech Generation"), and what the computer-driven generations are like.

1. **grown up through the Internet:** This expression is used to talk about a generation of people that have been raised using Internet services, which has allowed them access to more information than their previous generations.

**Example:** My cousin and I keep in touch through the Internet, even though he's living in Norway; it's a good thing we have both grown up through the Internet.

2. **pet ownership:** Used to talk about the actual state of owning a pet, no matter what type of pet it is; also used when trying to establish amounts, percentages or averages.

**Example:** Pet ownership is no longer a fashion, but a necessity for lonely people.

3. **moreover:** Expression said when wanting to add information; it means also and more importantly.

**Example:** He has been a good executive this year; moreover, his contributions in the financial field have been very valuable.

4. **sedentary lifestyle:** Used to describe a type of life that is not active and that doesn't involve any type of outdoor or physical activities.

**Example:** If you continue with your sedentary lifestyle, you won't be a healthy person when you get older.

5. **due to the time:** Used to express that the time spent in something has an effect on other thing.

**Example:** She was not able to have all her job done due to the time she took in the research.



### Now, something important!

#### Would / used to

Like in the Simple Past, "**used to**" expresses the idea that something was an old habit which stopped in the past. It says that an action was often repeated in the past, but it is not usually done now.

*Isabella was shy, but now she is very outgoing.*

*Isabella used to be shy, but now she is very outgoing.*

"**Would**" suggests that someone willingly acted that way and sometimes expresses annoyance or amusement at the habit. It also often suggests the habit was extreme. To express the opposite idea, we can say "would never" to indicate that someone never did something in the past, but now they do.

*Abdel would come to the parties every weekend.*

*Abdel would never bring his younger brother to the parties.*

**Ref** For better reference, see **Finding Out About Grammar Book**, Unit 9, pages 155-156.

# Unit 34



**Instructions:** Read the following exercise and try to associate the ideas in English without literal translation.

## American slang terms

**so-called:** To show that the word that is being used to describe someone or something is not correct.

**behind the eight ball:** To be in a losing or endangered position.

**state of the art:** The latest. The very newest. The most advanced.

**take comfort:** To take consolation in a specific fact.

**cut to the chase:** To get to the matter at hand without distractions or detours.

## Man-made disasters

Slow-handed assassins such as air pollution, nuclear waste, arms testing, political agendas and even the cutting of trees, are damaging the human race in ways that cannot be described.

Human beings are, in most cases, perfectly aware of their actions; they can tell the difference between right and wrong at an early age. **Even so**, very often they make decisions to **terminate** the lives of their own **kind**; take for example, in the most aggressive of ways, **horrid** acts of terrorism against large amounts of **innocent by-standers**, as primary proof of what man is capable of when trying to make a point of a political or ideological nature.

In more passive and **subdued** ways, the same effect is taking place, even against the actions of those **so-called** environmentalists, who are supposed to protect nature.

We find ourselves **behind the eight ball**, and it is not a mystery to any of us that it has been our fellow man, who has put us there. Reasons such as the constant search for **state of the art** technology, differences because of social status, race, and nationalities, which can go along with holding **grudges** from past events (i.e. slavery, colonization, religious disagreements, etc.) have turned men against each other, and started an ongoing killing **spree** that seems to be a never-ending one.

If natural disasters happen to come into our lives in an **unwarranted** way, leaving behind nothing but destruction, heartache and **sorrow**, at least we can **take comfort** from knowing that there is nothing that can be done to prevent them. Or is there? Let's **cut to the chase** and realize that some of those natural disasters also have been generated by the **cause and effect** concept that can be **blamed** on the human race. The same cannot be said about man-made disasters, but then we would have to ask ourselves: "Can't we all just **get along**?"

## Useful Expressions

See Exercise 5

# Unit 34

# Man-made disasters

## 2. Brand new vocabulary

**Instructions:** Match the words or expressions that are on the left side, which were taken from the reading's selected vocabulary, with the respective definitions given on the right side.

a. kind	1. People who are present in an event without participating in it.
b. terminate	2. To end or stop, or to cause someone or something to end or stop.
c. horrid	3. Strong feelings of anger and dislike for a person who treated you badly.
d. by-standers	4. That was/were made responsible for something.
e. subdued	5. A feeling of sadness or regret, or something that causes this feeling.
f. grudges	6. Lacking a good reason; unnecessary.
g. spree	7. That causes horror; dreadful.
h. unwarranted	8. Restrained in style; in a softened way.
i. sorrow	9. A group with similar characteristics, or a particular type.
j. blamed	10. A short period of doing something in an extreme way without control.

## 3. Speak your mind

**Instructions:** Read and analyze the following questions and give your point of view accordingly.

1. What do you think are the main characteristics that separate human beings from animals?
2. How old would you say human beings are when they learn to really separate right from wrong?
3. Which is the worst way in which human beings kill each other?
4. Do you agree that men help cause natural disasters? If so, how?
5. How would you put an end to man-made disasters?

## 4. American slang terms

**Instructions:** Read the definitions that were introduced to you in the reading exercise, and construct sentences orally with a similar structure to the one in the reading.

1. so-called
2. cut to the chase

3. behind the eight ball
4. state of the art

5. take comfort

## 5. Useful expressions

**Instructions:** Apply the following expressions when giving your opinion about Unit 34 ("Man Made Disasters"), and what the human race is capable of doing to itself.

**1. even so:** Expresses that the person has something else to say, despite what has just been said.

**Example:** I wasn't feeling very well today, but even so I went to the party.

**2. innocent by-standers:** Used to talk about people who were innocent and had nothing to do with an incident or accident, but were near or at the location of that incident or accident, which ended up affecting them.

**Example:** Every time there's an attempt on a politician's life, innocent by-standers are the ones who end up paying the price.

**3. holding grudges:** Used when maintaining resentment or anger against someone for a past offense.

**Example:** They are still holding grudges against us because we beat them three times during the last season.

**4. cause and effect:** Used to express the concept that an action or event will produce a certain response to the action in the form of another event.

**Example:** Through cause and effect, I can reach the conclusion that the fight you started with that man will have as a consequence a bigger fight between our families.

**5. get along:** To be friendly or compatible; to have smooth relations.

**Example:** My boss and I get along very well.



### Now, something important!

#### Tag Questions

A **tag question** is a special construction in English. It is a statement followed by a mini-question. The whole sentence is a "tag question", and the mini-question at the end is called a "**question tag**".

We use tag questions at the end of statements to ask for confirmation. They mean something like: "Am I right?" or "Do you agree?" They are very common in English.

Snow **is** white, **isn't** it?

Your car **isn't** red, **is** it?

You **don't** like me, **do** you?

You **called** him, **didn't** you?

Notice that the question tag repeats the auxiliary verb or takes the tense of the verb from the statement and changes it to negative or positive or vice versa.