

Learn English With Funny Conversations

Joe and Gail Crossman

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Foreword

In 2011, I started a facebook page with a very long and strange name. I called it, "ESL Fun with the Question Box". ESL stands for English as a Second Language, which is what my wife, Gail, and I teach at a university in Halifax, Canada. The Question Box is a box full of questions. It is a great teaching/learning tool that Gail and I invented and use in our classes. It really helps students practice their English and improve their skills in many ways.

I started this facebook page to help students outside my classes practice their English. This included old students of ours who had left our school, or gone back to their countries, as well as other English learners that I had never met from around the world. I want to help everybody in a fun way.

Our philosophy about learning English is that it should be fun. The things that you read about, write about, speak about, and listen to should be fun for you. If they are fun, then you will be interested and your brain will pay more attention. Then you will learn and remember more. If the material is boring, then you will have to force your brain to do it, and then it will be harder to learn and remember it.

So, on my page I ask a lot of questions, including many silly and crazy ones, to get people to participate. Once they write something, then I write back and the conversations we have are the fun practice.

In this book, I am going to show you some conversations that have happened on my page. I want to show you these so you can practice your reading skills and have fun with some hilarious conversations. I have changed the names of the speakers to protect people's identities. The people who write answers are trying hard to improve their English and that's the most important thing. When I respond to them, I usually rephrase their words if I have to so they can see how to say what they want to say in proper English. I usually don't directly fix people's grammar. There are plenty of other pages on facebook which concentrate on grammar, so I don't need to be just another one.

So, I hope you find this book as funny as I do because I laugh every day while helping learners practice their English. These people are really funny and really smart and really brave. How do I know? I know because you have to be smart to be funny in a second language.

Photo: What do you think about this hat? Many women have told me that I look great in it, but I'm not totally convinced. :-)



Lamarr: Great!!! Oh, yeah!

ESL Fun with the Question Box: Thanks, Lamarr. Why do you think women like this hat so much? :-)

Lamarr: Hmm. I didn't say that. Hahaha Maybe the women like the man wearing it. :-)

Kulie: You look like a donkey. LOOOOOL

Lamarr: Hahahah I was going to say what Kulie said, but I didn't want to hurt your feelings.

ESL Fun: What the....? I don't look like a donkey. I look like a movie star. That's what Gail said. :-)

Kulia: Gail is your wife, so she has to say nice things to you. That's her job. :-)

ESL Fun: Many German women have already written to me and said they think it looks really cool. So, what do you have to say about that, Kulie? :-)

Kulie: They or you are probably lying. Could you tell me the names of these German women? They have obviously fallen on their heads and they need medical attention.

ESL Fun: Kulie, these German women do not have any problems with their heads. They told me that they want their names kept secret because all of Germany is afraid of a crazy woman named, Kulie. LOOOL

Kulie: Now I know you are lying. :-) LOOOL

Donzo: Cooooool, Joe.

ESL Fun: Thanks, Donzo. You and other Mexican people definitely have great taste in hats. Do you wish you had one like this?

Donzo: It looks very warm, so I can't wear in my country, Joe. Please, save it for me when I come back to Canada. :-)

ESL Fun: No problem, Donzo. Hahahahaha

Suuki: Hahahahahaha You look like a cute dog!!! Lol

ESL Fun: A dog?!?!?!?! Suuki, I hate you five times now, and probably I will hate you five more times next week. :-)

Suuki: Oh, I will say sorry five times, Joe. I am only saying that you look super cute. :-)

ESL Fun: LOOOOOL Okay, Suuki. I forgive you now that you have explained to everyone on the Internet that you think I am cute. :-)

Both the students and I love talking about photos. If the photos are silly, like this one, then it instantly shows people that they can relax and have some fun. That is what people do in this conversation. They know I am only joking about being very handsome because this photo looks so ridiculous. Because of that, they try to say things that they wouldn't normally say to their teacher and this lets them practice and push their English further.

Suuki said I looked like a "cute dog" so I told her that I hated her five times. This is not proper grammar, however, I heard one of my students joke one time that he wanted to kill someone two times because he was so angry and I thought it was really funny. Since then I have been saying it to my students as a joke and they really love it. Some people who are very strict about grammar would hate it and would be angry about an English teacher saying it to students, but I don't care about those stupid people anyway. Ha

Kulie, a former student from Germany, had a lot of fun with me. We argued about whether many German women thought I looked great in my hat or whether they had fallen on their heads and so had mental problems. It was a lot of laughs being in this conversation and is also probably entertaining for other students reading it.

Advice from Joe: How can I improve my speaking ability?

This is a good question and a very important one. Most English students in the world want to improve their speaking ability so I hear this question quite often. My basic answer to students when they ask this question is that they should practice every day. Consistency is the most important factor in trying to improve any skill. If you do it every day, then little by little you will get better. That's when students usually move on to their second question, which is, "How can I practice speaking English every day when I don't know any English people you idiot?"

I don't like being called an idiot, so that's when I usually give that student an "F" in my class. I love my power. However, if they don't call me a bad name, then I can give them some suggestions about how to practice.

Here are my tips:

1. Practice with your friends, if you have any. You can help each other. Talking to other English students forces you to try hard to understand what they are saying, and it forces you to try hard to not make any mistakes so you won't confuse your friend. This is the main way my students improve when they use The Question Box and The Question Box App. All you need is some friends who also want to practice and then by asking questions from our App, you can have a lot of fun.
2. If you are living in a non-English speaking country, you can try to talk to people using Skype or some other on-line software. You can sometimes randomly choose to talk to someone. You might end up talking to an insane killer, or you might make a new friend. Either way, it is a good way to practice your English.
3. Find someone from another country and slap him. This will cause the foreigner to start yelling at you. Since they probably don't speak your language, they will have to yell at you in English. Now you can practice your English arguing and swearing skills.
4. Travel to an English speaking country and break the law. The police in that country will throw you in jail and your problems will be solved. In a Canadian or American jail you will have to speak English. This will give you lots of opportunities to learn. As well, you will learn how to do other things such as steal cars and sell drugs. Great, eh?

Question: How long does getting ready in the morning take you?

Chin Basil: About 30 mins.

ESL Fun with the Question Box: Pretty good. Is that with a shower and breakfast?

Chin Basil: I don't eat breakfast at home.

Omar: I always take a shower before go to bed at night. In the morning I get ready in about 30 to 35 minutes with a cup of tea.

ESL Fun: I see, Omar. I usually shower in the morning, but to save time I also eat my breakfast while showering. :-) Maybe you should try my way.

Ayaz: I have many things to do in the morning. 1-get up 2-take a shower 3-pray 4-eat breakfast.

ESL Fun: So, how long does that take you Ayaz? Are you fast, or do you take a long time like a princess?

Ayaz: Around 2 hours.

ESL Fun: That's what I thought, Brittany. You are similar to many girls I know.:-)

I was joking with Omar about how to save time in the morning so he wouldn't have to skip breakfast. He didn't write back after my foolish advice, so I don't know if it liked it or not.

Even though Ayaz was one of my students, we quickly developed a relationship that was more like friends, so I was able to joke with him. That's why I could call him "a princess" indirectly, and then give him the nickname, "Brittany". This is a girl's name, like Brittany Spears the singer. I am teasing him by saying he is similar to a girl since he takes such a long time to get ready. However, you will see he teases me in future conversations, too.

Question: What is the most you have spent while shopping in a single store?

ESL Fun with the Question Box: I think I once paid nearly \$20 for one of my really cool farmer shirts. I think a lot of people love my style.

Basit: I get everything for free. Most people love me. hahahaha

ESL Fun: Basit, I hate you five times. :-)

Rahnul: Believe me, you don't want to know.

ESL Fun: Rahnul, you are super rich. As you know, I hate rich people.

Rahnul: haha You are just guessing.

ESL Fun: Okay. What did you buy and how much did you spend? :-)

Rahnul: I will tell you face to face only. I can't say it on facebook. Hahahaha

ESL Fun: That sounds very haram. It must be drugs. Have you been to Bahrain lately? :-)

Rahnul: Bahrain!! Hahaa I have never been there by the way. Joe, why are you so dirty? Why are you asking about drugs? LOL

ESL Fun: I'm not dirty. I had a shower just a few days ago. Also, my mother was from Bahrain and she only took drugs on Sundays. :-)

Rahnul: Hahahahah Really? Why only on Sundays?

ESL Fun: Sorry. That was a lie. Remember, don't trust Canadians. :-)

Rahnul: I know...I already know about that...Don't worry about me. LOL

I start off this conversation by telling people how much I spend on my great "farmer" shirts. That is a nickname I have given all of the plaid shirts I usually wear because they make me look like a farmer. That is partly where I came up with my nickname, Farmer Joe. :-)

Basit is an old student of mine who is studying to become a doctor, so I tease him about being rich. I also say that I want to kill him "five times" because once is not enough to satisfy my hatred toward him. Just kidding, of course.

Rahnul is also an old student that I like joking with. He is from Saudi Arabia so I refer to some things connected to his country. "Haram" means forbidden in Arabic and thus people are not allowed to do things that are haram. I also joked about "Bahrain" which is a country next to Saudi Arabia. That country allows many things that are not allowed in Saudi Arabia such as movie theaters and bars, so sometimes Saudis visit Bahrain to drink alcohol or do other forbidden things. I know that Rahnul is a very good man, so teasing him in this way is obviously a joke to him. The final joke about "don't trust Canadians" is something I say in my classes a lot because I tell lies so people will keep talking to prove me wrong.

Question: Where do you think is a great place to make new friends?

ESL Fun with the Question Box: I made lots of friends in jail. :-)

Ussir: I meet lots of people where something is free. :-)

ESL Fun: Ussir, free donuts always bring people together.

Basit: The desert.

ESL Fun: The desert? Who can you meet in the desert, Basit?

Basit: Imaginary people.

ESL Fun: What...? What kind of doctor are you trying to be? A witch doctor? :-)

Basit: I wrote desert because I remembered a movie called "Cast Away". A man was in a plane crash and ended up on an unknown island. Then he made friends with a volleyball.

Basit: Plus, you can be the king of the imaginary people.

ESL Fun: You have a great imagination....you weirdo. Hahahahaha I hope you have lots of fun with your friends, the sports equipment.

I started off this conversation with my joke about making lots of friends in jail. Usually when I say this sort of thing in class, some students will be surprised and ask, "Really?". Then I answer, "No. That was a lie. Don't trust Canadians." And then we all have a good laugh.

As you can see, Ussir and I were referring to free donuts that our school gives students on Fridays at break time, so lots of students get together at that time. That might also be his favorite time to search for new girlfriends.

As I mentioned before, Basit is studying to be a doctor so that's why I joked with him about becoming "a witch doctor" since he was saying some crazy things about meeting lots of people in the desert. Finally, I called him a "weirdo", which means strange person, and I hope he has fun with his volleyball.

Question: If you were in a public bathroom and you saw \$100 on the floor, what would you do?

Kong: What the...? Of course, I would take it. You don't even need to think about it. Hahahaha

ESL Fun with the Question Box: After you take it, what would you buy with it?

Kong: Maybe I will buy some clothes. How about you?

ESL Fun: I might get some new books, or I might invest it so I could be rich someday, even though I hate rich people. hahaha

Kong: Really?? I thought you might buy some farmer clothes.

ESL Fun: Farmer clothes are always nice, too. I thought you might want to join a gym and work on your abs. :-)

Kong: hahaha You're right!!!! I might buy gym clothes. hahahah You know me very well.

ESL Fun: I know everything. That's my job. :-)

Ayaz: I would buy some drinks and drugs.

ESL Fun: Haram, Ayaz!!! I must tell your mother. Does she ever visit this facebook page? I want to tell her right away.

Ayaz: Sorry, she doesn't like Canadians.

ESL Fun: LOOOOOL. I hate you five times, Ayaz. Did you know that? Hahahaha

Bassit: I would rent a \$99 bill-board with my picture on it and write that I found \$100 on the floor of a public bathroom.

ESL Fun: Hahahahahah. Then you would only have one dollar to give back to the owner. Good plan. Hahahahah

Ussir: I will support ESL Fun with the Question Box. How does that sound?

ESL Fun: I like it when people give me money. Thanks, Ussir. :-)

Ussir: See how I'm the best student you have ever met!!

Caber: I'll say, "Did anybody lose something" for five minutes. If I don't get any answer, I'll take it and buy some fun stuff for me.

ESL Fun: That's very honest, Caber. I think I would just take it and run. :-)

Caber: LOL

Kong was an old student of mine who worked out at the gym two or three hours every day so his body was entirely made of rock hard muscles. So, seeing how am much rounder and softer, it is ironic that I am advising him to work on his abs more.

Ayaz is joking about buying alcohol and drugs which is funny and controversial since he is from Saudi Arabia where those things are forbidden or "haram" in Arabic.

That's why I indirectly said I was going to tell his mother. However, he got back at me by insulting Canadians.

Ussir said he was going to buy some Question Boxes which are materials that I use in my classes and where these funny questions come from. He was never actually in any of my classes but he always enjoyed answering questions on facebook and practicing that way. He tried hard to find lots of different ways to practice his English skills inside and outside of class, however, one of his favorite ways was chatting with pretty girls downtown.

Caber is a guy who I only met online, but he is very honest and has a great sense of humor. He thought I was joking about running away with the money, but I was serious. I would take it, especially if it belonged to one of my rich students. Hahahahaha

Question: Who would be a good person to stalk?

ESL Fun with the Question Box: I think I would stalk my old girlfriend, Nicole Kidman, the movie star. :-)

Ayaz: My grandmother. I don't know what she always does inside her room in the middle of the night.

ESL Fun: LOOOOOOOOOL. Ayaz, that has got to be the most haram answer you have ever given. I am going to laugh all day about that one. Thanks man. :-)

Daxel: I would stalk any king in the world. I want to see what they do all day. By the way, I like your taste in beauty. Nicole Kidman. Nice!

ESL Fun: Following a king around may be bad for your health since their security guards will probably shoot you. :-) hahahaha Yes, I broke up with Nicole Kidman right before I met my wife, Gail. :-) You can trust me. Hahahaha

ESL Fun: Do you think anyone wants to stalk me? Hahaha

Ussir: I would only stalk a pretty girl. I think most farmers are ugly. LOL

ESL Fun: Ussir, I am a very handsome farmer, but you're right. Farmers are hard to stalk because they usually wake up too early. :-)

This question is rather crazy because it is joking about a serious topic. Many bosses wouldn't like it because they are so worried about people taking things the wrong way, but I know my students are intelligent enough to understand humor even if some Canadian bosses don't. :-)

Ayaz made me laugh like crazy with his ridiculous idea of stalking his grandmother. He always says outrageous things like that because he knows I find them so funny. Even though it is just a joke, I told him the next day that he was probably going to hell for that one. Hahahaha

Daxel wants to stalk kings, but that would be asking for trouble. I'm sure he is joking, but he is also right about wondering what kings do all day. I wonder that too, sometimes. Daxel also complimented me on my "ex-girlfriend, Nicole Kidman". :-) hahah I don't know if he believed me or not, though since he has seen me lying many times before.

Ussir insulted me by saying that farmers, such as myself, are usually quite ugly and not worth stalking. Insulting teachers is not usual in most classes, but I appreciate and promote it in my classes. Maybe this makes other teachers not like me, though. :-)

Photo: Does everyone like my new Apple iPod? It is Canadian technology.
You don't have this in your countries. Hahaha



ESL Fun with the Question Box: I can listen to music and get some Vitamin A at the same time. Great, eh?

Janet: It looks fantastic, Joe. :-)

ESL Fun: Are you jealous of my new device, Janet? :-) I can get you one if you want.

Janet: But, Joe, it is not good for listening to music because it is just food. LOL

ESL Fun: Are you an Apple expert, Janet? :-) It plays great music and it only costs \$500.

Walter: Nobody has ever done this before, Joe....It looks soooo cool. How many GB is it?

ESL Fun: Actually, Walter, it doesn't have many GB, but it does have a worm in it. Hahaha

Walter: What song are you listening to, Joe? LOOL

ESL Fun: It's an old song called, "The Sounds of Silence". Hahaha

Molly: I love this picture!!!!

ESL Fun: Well, Molly, you can have this picture and put it up on your wall. Merry

Christmas! All of your friends in Japan will be jealous.

Molly: I can't stop laughing!!!

ESL Fun: Are you laughing at our Canadian technology, or my cool dancing pose, Molly?

Molly: Both. LOOOOOOL

All of my students at the time had Apple iPods that they used to listen to music at break time, so I made my own Apple iPod at home and took this picture. Janet thought the \$500 price tag was pretty high, especially since she didn't think it would work at all. She was very smart. Walter got a little too technical for me when he started talking about Giga Bytes because I am just a farmer and all I know about is worms in apples. Finally, Molly showed how much she loved my photo and had a good laugh.

Advice from Joe: What can I do to improve my listening skills?

Listening is also a very important skill for students. They often complain about not being able to understand native speakers or movies because people talk too fast for them. I had the same problem when I was in South Korea. Koreans speak very fast, so I couldn't understand them because my listening skills weren't good enough. Also, I only knew about 5 words.

Anyway, there are things that people can do to practice their listening skills and hopefully make them better. Here are my tips:

1. Watch movies and TV shows. Using your computer to watch old movies or TV shows is a great way to practice. You can replay the movie or TV scene many times, and you can also turn on the English subtitles. Also, choosing something fun to listen to helps you pay attention because fun stuff is much more interesting than the usual stuff that boring teachers want students to listen to in classes. However, don't watch dirty movies or I will tell your mother.
2. Listen to VOA (Voice of America). This is a website on the Internet that gives you the news in both written form and listening form. You can practice listening and reading at the same time. The broadcasts of the news are read very slowly and clearly, so it helps you to improve. After a while you will become bored by how slow it is, so then you can try faster things like movies or the regular news.
3. Sneak into hotel rooms and listen to people talk to each other. To practice this way, you have to be very careful since it might get you killed or arrested. However, listening to people talk is a good way to improve your listening skills. As well, if they are important business people then you might hear some information that you can use to make money if you sell secrets to other companies.
4. Marry a very talkative English person. Some people never know when to shut up, so they just keep talking all the time. This can be very helpful if you want to concentrate on listening. Your new wife or husband will just keep talking all day, every day, and soon your listening skills will be wonderful. The only negative thing about this method is you have to marry someone you don't love, and eventually because they never shut up, you will want to kill them.

Question: What kind of complaints do parents usually make about their kids?

Beghaz: I take vitamins once a day, but my mother used to ask me every hour, "Did you take your pill??" I had to keep telling her, "Yesssss, Mooommmmm. I'm 25 years old!!!!!"

ESL Fun with the Question Box: LOL. That's funny, Beghaz. Maybe your mother should take some memory pills. :-)

Beghaz: loooooooooool Probably!

Ayaz: Some parents complain when their kids get into fights.

ESL Fun: Ayaz, do you ever get into fights? I thought you were a man of peace. :-)

Ayaz: I don't fight anymore, bro...not anymore.

ESL Fun: Oh, did you stop fighting because some girl beat you up, Ayaz? LOL

Ayaz: I think I would like to have one more fight.....with you old farmer. LOL

ESL Fun: No thanks, Ayaz. I don't want to make your mommy angry at you. :-)
Hahahahah

Beghaz is a wonderful girl with a great sense of humor, but I guess her mother nags her about taking her pills sometimes. It would be annoying if your mom did that all the time.

Ayaz is a really funny student, but like many Saudis, I guess he used to get into many fights when he was in high school. However, like other Saudi guys, they say they get out of high school and no longer like getting in fights. I teased Ayaz about this by asking if he was beaten up by a girl. He responded that he would like to fight me and then he insulted me by calling me "old farmer". I answered him by saying I didn't want him to get into trouble with his mommy. This joke probably made him a little angrier since I was saying he was a little boy being controlled by his mother. Hahahahaha

Question: On Friday night, what will you be doing?

ESL Fun with the Question Box: We are going to PEI to visit my brother and sister for the weekend. :-)

Soon: Wow...I wish I could go to PEI. However, it is probably cold there right now, eh?

ESL Fun: Yes, we won't be visiting the beach while we are there, that's for sure, Soon. What are you going to be doing on Friday night?

Soon: I'm going to a movie, but I'm not sure which movie I will choose.

ESL Fun: Don't choose a dirty movie, Soon, or I will have to tell your mother. :-)

Soon: I have a lot of dirty things on my computer, so I don't need movie theaters for that. LOOOOL

ESL Fun: Soon, I'm sure your mother is very proud of youNOT!!!! hahahah

Sutani: I think you can guess what my plans are, Joe. LOL

ESL Fun: Okay, Sutani, I will guess that you are probably going to a party and will be drinking a lot of alcohol. :-) hahahaha Am I right?

Sutani: Oh, you are a guessing master. Hahahah That's my plan exactly. :-P

ESL Fun: Hahahahah Are you hoping there will be some cute guys at this party, Sutani? :-)

Sutani: LOOOOOOOOL. Maybe. :-)

Chand: Hey, Joe, why do you always visit PEI? Why doesn't your brother or sister ever come to your house in Halifax? :-)

ESL Fun: Good question, Chand. They haven't left the island in about 20 years. They think the 3 hour drive is way too long. They are real farmers. Hahahahahah

Soon is a funny student from South Korea who isn't afraid to joke about anything. That's why I can tease him about dirty movies. I was being very sarcastic about him mother being proud of him.

Sutani is a Japanese girl and while she was studying in my city of Halifax she enjoyed going to parties and going downtown nearly every weekend. That meant she often drank a lot of alcohol, but she would laugh about it the next time she was in class.

Chand was an old student who had studied at our school for over a year. He knew that I visit PEI, which stands for Prince Edward Island, a few times every year to visit my brother and sister. His question about why they don't ever visit Halifax was a good one. For some reason, my brother and sister have turned into people who think traveling is not fun. Hahahahah I hope I never get that way.

Question: Have you ever seen really bad or dangerous driving?

ESL Fun with the Question Box: For example, I saw buses driving up on sidewalks when I was in Asia. That was a bit scary. Hahahaha

Gomez: I might be the perfect example, Joe. :-) LOL

ESL Fun: Yes, Gomez. Didn't you get caught for speeding in a parking lot once? :-)
hahahah

Gomez: LOL, yes, but it was not my fault.

Ussir: I have driven 260 km per hour. Do you think that is dangerous, Joe?

ESL Fun: Ussir, was that in a car or in a plane?

Ussir: It was a car with the speed of a plane. XD

ESL Fun: You must have a few speeding tickets, do you, Ussir? :-) Hahahaha

Ussir: LOOL. I have plenty of them. Do you want some?

Ayaz: Most Saudis drive fast because they don't manage their time well.

ESL Fun: Canadians drive slowly because we are on time and we don't have to hurry. :-)

Ayaz: Yes, and because Canadians are old farmers who drive stupid Corollas. LOL

Ayaz: I've gotten one traffic ticket. I was in a hurry because I wanted to see my mother before she fell asleep. She was angry with me on that day. Ha

ESL Fun: Gail has gotten a few parking tickets, but that's the only trouble we've gotten into. :-)

Ayaz: What a nice teacher and mother. Hahahahahahahaah I miss her so much.

ESL Fun: So.....you miss my wife?!?!?!? What the hell? I will kill you five times.
Hahaha

Gomez was a student who got lots of speeding tickets while he was in Canada. He loved driving fast and then he had to pay lots of fines for all of his tickets. One of his speeding tickets was in the parking lot of a hotel. He was only driving 40 km per hour, but the police said the speed limit in that area was only 20 km per hour. Gomez had really bad luck that day. Hahahaha Eventually his rich father said he wasn't going to pay for any more tickets.

Ussir owns a really nice car and I think he loves driving fast in many different countries. He told me lots of stories about speeding in many countries in Europe and having language problems because the police spoke French, German, and other languages that he didn't know.

Ayaz teased me a couple of times in this conversation. First because I own a 1998 Corolla which he says is an old piece of junk. Then secondly, he teased me about missing my wife who is also a teacher at our school. In his country this would be absolutely forbidden, so he thinks it is hilarious to do it with me. I think it's funny, too, but I still have to threaten to kill him. Hahahaha

Question: Do you think any car is better than mine, the 1998 Toyota Corolla?

Ussir: BMW

Ayoob: How about the 1997 Toyota Corolla? lol

Ayaz: I'm in love with the Porsche Panamera.

Ghaz: The 1999 model is quite nice, too. Hahahahhaah

Nigel: The Flintstone's car.

ESL Fun with the Question Box: Ayoob, a friend of mine actually owns one of those. :-) Canadians sure love old cars. Hahaha

ESL Fun: Nigel is a person who is funny, but I hate him. :-)

Nigel: Me too. He is much too handsome for this world.

ESL Fun: Check your dictionary for the word, "handsome". :-)

Nigel: I did it, already. My picture is there!

ESL Fun: Spanish dictionaries cannot be trusted. :-)

Nigel: It was an Oxford dictionary.

ESL Fun: Also garbage. :-) You need a good dictionary written by me. Hahahahaha

Nigel: I think so, too. Then I would understand your jokes! I fear I'm missing so much fun!

ESL Fun: Mother father!!! I hate you five times. :-)

ESL Fun: Has anyone ever driven in a beautiful Corolla?

Ayaz: My younger brother has a 2001 Corolla.

ESL Fun: It sounds like your younger brother is a very smart guy. The 2001 Corolla is also a sweet ride. :-)

ESL Fun: How much do you think a 1998 Corolla is worth?

Ayaz: In Saudi Arabia, maybe around \$4000.

ESL Fun: Are you joking? Here it would be worth about \$40. So, do you want to buy my car, Ayaz? :-)

Ayaz: No thanks. I already have one. Also, I don't want you to become a rich man with my money. LOL

ESL Fun: Damn. Do you have any rich friends who want to own a classic car such as the 1998 Corolla?

Ayaz: I'll call my king for you, dude. He might help you with that. He is a very nice man.

ESL Fun: Excellent. I'll bet he doesn't own a 1998 Corolla. Tell him that I'll even drive it over to his house. :-)

Basit: The 1998 Corolla isn't a classic car.

ESL Fun: I hate you five times, Basit. :-) What would you say is a classic car?

Basit: Cars that show up in old movies.

ESL Fun: I love movies with Corollas in them. Those are the only movies I go to. In fact, I think the car that Batman used was a Corolla. ;) LOL

I own a 1998 Toyota Corolla so the students often laugh at me because my car is almost as old as they are. However, I keep telling them that it is a great car, and since they don't believe me, it is a great topic to keep them talking and arguing.

Nigel and I love to joke with each other and he is very good at making me look silly. I pretend to get angry when he is insulting me and I say, "mother father" as a polite way to swear. I think you can guess what the real swear words are. Ha

Ayaz also teases me by pretending to help me sell my car for a lot of money, but it is easy to see that he is being sarcastic, especially since he is going to get his king to help me.

Basit doesn't think my car is a classic, so I pretend to be stupid and keep believing that it is. Oh yeah!

Vocabulary (money / dollars):

Students sometimes make mistakes with these words because they forget or don't know that money is non-count. It seems funny that money is non-count, but it's true. You can't say, one money, two monies. :-)

You can't say, "My friend won two thousand dollars. He is going to spend **these** money to buy a new pair of underwear." You have to say, "He is going to spend **this** money to buy many pairs of new underwear."

Another example is, "Joe does not have a lot of money because he is a poor farmer." :-)

ESL Fun with the Question Box: Can anyone else think of sentences using dollars money?

Ayaz: I have a million dollars. LOOOL

Ayaz: I would pay lots of money to anyone who could kick Joseph Crossman's ass.

ESL Fun: The grammar in both of these sentences is correct. However, the writer is a very bad person. :-)

Natita: I don't have enough money to go see a poor farmer. :-(Hahahaa

ESL Fun: Natita, why don't you get a job? Are you finished school yet?

Ussir: What are you doing with \$5000 that was a gift from your girlfriend? Are you going to buy many pairs of farmer underwear?

ESL Fun: I can't even remember the name of my girlfriend since it was so long ago, Ussir. I am certain she did not give me \$5000 or any underwear? hahaha

ESL Fun: What is the largest amount of money you have ever won?

Ayaz: \$5000 when I was in Canada.

ESL Fun: Really? Did you buy any underwear with it.

Ayaz: No, I just went to parties and clubs. LOL

ESL Fun: That sounds a little harram, Ayaz. Did you tell your grandmother about that?

Ayaz: She asked me if she could come over and visit me because she wanted to go out to the clubs, too.

ESL Fun: LOL I don't believe you, but I sure wish your grandmother was on facebook so I could tell her what you said.

I started this post with a small vocabulary lesson about the difference between money and dollars. Students often make mistakes with these words, so I wanted to point out the difference. In the conversation that followed, Ayaz said that he was willing to pay someone a lot of money to beat me up, and I said he was a bad man. hahahaha

What a lovely Christmas picture?



ESL Fun with the Question Box: That is a great looking family. :-)

Ayaz: hahahahahahahaha I miss this family so much.

ESL Fun: We miss you too. That's why we look so upset in this picture? :-)

Ayaz: Tell your beautiful wife that I will try to come back and see her.

ESL Fun: I must kill you when I get a chance, Ayaz. I am too busy right now, though. :-)

Noko: I love this picture!!!!!!

Tiana: It is the best Christmas picture, ever!!!!!! LOL

Kisjia: I agree with Tiana. Hahahahaha. It is very funny.

ESL Fun: You guys should see the other pictures we took. They were even worse. This is the only one that passed the censor.

Cashar: Hahahahahahahahaahh Great family, but you might need therapy. :-)

Bahaman: Joseph Crossman, who took this pic?

ESL Fun: No one took this picture, Bahaman. I set the self-timer feature on my camera. You don't have this technology in your poor village yet. Hahahahaha

Waiser: What happened? Did you lose a lot of money in the stock market? You look very upset. Hahahahh I really miss this family....but not you, Joe. LOL

ESL Fun: LOOOOOOOOOL. Waiser, I hate you five times. Long time no see. :-)

Gaisal: You all look like Saudis in this picture. Hahhahaahah

ESL Fun: Really, Gaisal? I thought we looked crazy. :-)

Gaisal: That's what I mean. LOL

I put this silly picture on my facebook page because my kids love looking crazy in photos, and I knew my facebook friends would get a laugh out of it. :-) We took it in our hotel room when we were visiting my brother and sister in Prince Edward Island over the Christmas holiday.

Ayaz again says he loves my wife, and even though these words would start a big fight in Saudi Arabia, I just laugh at him. He is lucky that I am Canadian.

In our classes at school we have computers that are quite slow, but I always joke that they are super fast because they are made with Canadian technology. I tell the students that this great technology is super advanced and not available in their poor countries. They laugh at this every time because of course, the opposite is true and Canada is way behind other countries in technology. Anyway, when Bahaman asked me who took the picture, I told the same joke about Canadian technology since he had been in my class before and would get a laugh out of my answer.

Advice from Joe: What can I do to improve my reading skills?

This skill can be very difficult to improve for many students because most students hate reading. I can understand that because many teachers and many schools force students to read boring and hard to understand stuff. This frustrates students and makes them hate reading even more.

Anyway, here are some tips that I give my students when they want to improve their reading ability:

1. Read for fun. I hate reading boring books, and I am sure that most people feel the same way. It is hard, you don't want to do it, and if your brain isn't interested, then you won't learn or remember the stuff you read. However, if the reading is fun and interesting, then your brain gets excited, loves it, wants to do it more, and then, remembers it. So, go choose something that you like such as stuff about sports, or traveling, or your favorite movie stars. As long as it is in English and you like it, you will improve.
2. Read stuff that is low level. Don't worry about high level stuff. Low level books can help you to see how words go together with each other, with prepositions, and with articles. It will help you get used to how we write things in English. If you read enough of it, then you will get better at it, and become ready to read higher level stuff.
3. Become my friend on facebook. Every day I ask students from around the world lots of questions on my facebook page, "ESL Fun with the Question Box". I know lots of students who write and read lots and lots of stuff on my page. If you write to me, then I will write back and I will try to make things fun for you. So, this will be more practice at reading fun stuff.
4. Leave your English speaking husband or wife. If you do they will try their best to get you back, so they will write you lots of emails and letters. If you try to get a divorce then your husband or wife will have to get a lawyer, and then their lawyer will send you lots and lots of letters. These letters will probably be bad for you and your bank account, but they will be good practice for reading.

Question: Tomorrow I'm going to visit Gail's sister's family in Toronto. How should I behave?

ESL Fun with the Question Box: For example, perhaps I shouldn't wear farmer shirts in the big city. hahaha

Mustafa: Try your best to be cool because you mess things up when you are uncool. :-)

Tiana: Don't tell them that you hate them. And, don't tell any of your lame jokes. :-)

Ussir: Don't tell them that you lie all the time, especially to Gail and your students. ha

ESL Fun: This is all good advice. I thank you and I hate you all very much. Hahaha Last year I wanted to save the environment, so while I was in Toronto at their house, I never flushed the toilet. Do you think I should continue that plan?

Tiana: LOL. That is a gross plan, Joe.

Ussir: I think it is a great plan, Joe. Probably they will kick you out into the snow. Haha

Histan: Don't tell them about your other wife, the girl from Lebanon. LOL

ESL Fun: Hahahahaha. It will be easy to keep that secret, Histan, since I don't know anything about it either.

Ayaz: Don't show them your dirty underwear. LOL

ESL Fun: Don't worry, Ayaz. I am like you. I don't wear underwear during Christmas. :-)

Ayaz: hahahhahahhahahhahahhahahhah

ESL Fun: However, I never laugh about underwear. Underwear is serious business to me.

I call plaid shirts, "farmer shirts" because I wear them a lot and I joke with students that I look like a farmer.

In this conversation, many students give me lots of crazy advice on what to do and not do in front of Gail's family. The advice includes stuff about acting cool, dirty jokes, hatred, lying and my secret extra marriage to a Lebanese girl. Also, wearing underwear during Christmas is discussed.

Giving the students many chances to make fun of me and laugh at me is a great way to get them talking. I don't think this is a common thing in most of their countries since teachers are usually very serious and perhaps they don't joke around a lot.

Question: Did any of your rich friends ever spend money on something crazy? What did they buy?

ESL Fun with the Question Box: For example, I know a person who bought about 25 designer bags that cost about \$2000+ each. I thought that was pretty crazy.

Ussir: One of my friends spent \$70,000 on a diamond engagement ring!!! Crazy.

ESL Fun: Whoa!! That's a lot of cheeseburgers. :-)

Histani: I like cheeseburgers. LoooooolMy friend bought a mustang and sold it back after one week at half price. (100,000 Saudi Riyals)

ESL Fun: What the....? That is a pretty expensive week. :-)

Joou: I have one to tell you about. One guy I know spent around US\$ 300 to change the color of his car, but the original color was the same color as the one he changed to. What a stupid guy. hahaha

ESL Fun: Hahahahaah That is a great way to waste money, Joou. :-)

Wuji: My friend spent \$10 million on his car!!!!

ESL Fun: I think you have to check your numbers, Wuji. LOL That seems impossible.

Wuji: Hahaha. Oh, I was wrong. It is hard to do the exchange rate.

ESL Fun: I thought so, Wuji. Either that, or his car must have included a helicopter. :-)
Dn you have any other stories about money?

Wuji: I once spent \$120 to get my nails done, Joe. Is that a lot?

ESL Fun: Hahahah. That's \$12 per nail. I would never do that. But, you do have that nasty habit of biting you nails, right?

Wuji: I don't bite my nails. Who told you that?

ESL Fun: Your best friend told me that when you are nervous, you bite your nails....your toe nails. LOL I hope that wasn't a secret, Wuji. Hahahaha

Wuji: Joe, that is a lie. I hate you so much. LOL

A lot of the students that come to our school in Canada come from fairly wealthy families, so I often tease them about being rich and that I hate people who are rich because I am so poor. That makes the students laugh a lot, and then they disagree with me. So, for this conversation I asked about the spending habits of their rich friends.

As I expected, their friends have spent a lot of money on cars, but I think Wuji made a mistake on the number since \$10 million on one car is a crazy high price. We then talked about her getting her nails done, but I joked about her having a bad habit of biting her toe nails. I knew she would definitely get angry about that, so that's why it is so funny.

Question: If you saw someone drop \$1000 on the floor in a bank and no one else saw it, what would you do?

ESL Fun with the Question Box: I think I would leave it there because I don't like bending down. :-)

Riana: I would pick it up and give it back while showing my puppy dog eyes so maybe the owner would give me half of it. ^_^

ESL Fun: Good idea, Riana. I like the puppy dog eyes move. What if the guy didn't give you a reward? What would you do then?

Riana: If he can drop it once, then maybe he will drop it again...with a little help. :-) And then I would keep it all. haha

ESL Fun: Excellent plan, Riana. So, you are saying that you would knock it out of his hands with your quick reflexes? :-) Aren't you afraid of the police?

Riana: No, I wouldn't attack him in the bank. It would be more like an "accidental" push. hahaha

ESL Fun: LOL. I don't usually push people while I'm at banks, Riana. Perhaps it is different in your culture, eh?

Riana: I said just an "accidental" push. I am so clumsy that I would fall on him. That happens all the time, right? hahahahha

ESL Fun: All the time?!?!?! I have never seen a person fall down at a bank. Canadians only fall down in bars. :-) hahhah Is this how you earn money in your country?

Riana: LOL

ESL Fun: I am just joking, Riana. I think you are a very nice person.

Riana: If I robbed a bank, would I still be a good person? Hahahahaha

ESL Fun: Robbing a bank is not usually considered good behavior, but it depends what you do with the money. What are your plans for the cash, Riana?

Riana: I will give more than half to poor people and poor farmers and I will keep a little for my studies and a ruby necklace. LOL

ESL Fun: If you are sharing with farmers, then you are a wonderful person. Hahahaha
Dn you need a fast getaway car, such as a 1998 Corolla?

This conversation between Riana and I was quite funny. She has a great sense of humor and can think of funny things to do in a bank. I laughed a lot while I was chatting with her about her plan to take some money from a guy at a bank by falling down on him.

Photo: Were these lines in the Harry Potter movie? I can't remember.



Travis: Cute!! I haven't seen that movie in a long time. :-)

Jennifer: You look a little like these toys, Joe because your legs are short, too. LOL

ESL Fun with the Question Box: I have medium legs, Jennifer. You know that. If you don't then I will show you on Monday when I give you a good kick in class. LOL

Jennifer: Oh, I am sorry, teacher. I guess you are a little taller than these toys. :-)

Travis: Hahahahaha Joe, everybody thinks you have short legs.

ESL Fun: What the.....? No, way. I don't have short legs. I used to be a basketball player sn my legs are quite long, Travis. Jennifer has short legs.

Jennifer: Oh really? Are you a leg expert??? I am not short, so I must have long legs.

ESL Fun: I'm sorry, Jennifer, but your legs are super short. However, your neck is like a giraffe's so that is why you are normal height. :-) LOOOOL

Jennifer: Mother father! I don't trust you five times. :-)

ESL Fun: That's what a lot of short people say, Jennifer, so I am not surprised. :-)

Travis: Hahahahahahahahahahaha I don't know who to trust. You both seem like you have an issue with legs. :-)

Jennifer: Do you trust Joe, Travis?

ESL Fun: Travis, you shouldn't trust Jennifer. She is from North Korea, but she says she is from South Korea. Everyone in our class thinks she is a spy. LOL

Jennifer: Mother father, again!! Joe, I am not North Korean!! :-)

ESL Fun: That's what all spies say, Jennifer. How do you explain your North Korean army jacket that you wear every day? :-)

Jennifer: I don't have an army jacket. You must be mixing me up with another student because you are old and you have a bad memory.

ESL Fun: Jennifer, there is a saying in South Korea that the handsome men come from the south and the pretty girls come from the north. Do you know this saying?

Jennifer: Yes!! I know it. Do you agree that I am a pretty girl? Hohoho

ESL Fun: That means you must be from North Korea, right? Hahahaha I win again!

Jennifer: Mother father three times!!! I hate you so much because you are smart.

ESL Fun: Yes, I am. Thanks for noticing. :-) And, I have medium legs. LOL

Travis: I thought this conversation was going to be about movies and Harry Potter, but Joe has uncovered a spy network. Good job, Joe!!!! The Canadian government should be proud o f you. LOL

This was a funny photo that I made with my son, Adam. He owns a lot of Lego characters and he likes the Harry Potter movies. When I put this on my page, I thought some students might talk about the movie, but the conversation went in a totally different direction because Jennifer wanted to tease me about my short legs. I argued with her about leg length and then I started calling her a North Korean spy. She responded by saying "mother father" three times which is a polite way to swear when you are angry. Travis, another old student, followed the conversation and commented on our fight.

Advice from Joe: How can I get better at writing?

Improving your writing is difficult since students often make mistakes and don't realize it. If you are in my writing class, I can give you lots of practice and then I can check your stuff, and after a few weeks, you will be much, much better. But, students want to know how to improve without paying thousands of dollars and moving to Canada.

Here are some tips that can help you:

1. Write a lot. Some students are not good at writing because they just don't write at all. This is the same reason why you are not good at juggling and dancing. Start writing and try to do it every day. Along with all of the reading you do, you will start to figure out how words go together. Many students use questions from The Question Box or The Question Box App to give them something to write about.
2. Hunt for mistakes. When most people finish their writing, they pick it up and read it over to see if they made any mistakes. The problem with this is that you won't find very many because you are just reading what you think makes perfect sense. You must hunt instead of read. That means don't read, look for nouns and then ask yourself if you mean one or more than one. Then look for verbs and check to see if it matches the subject and if it is in the right tense. Hunting will help you find mistakes, and when you find them, you can fix them.
4. Check out the website, Free Rice. This is a large website that gives people many, many exercises to do, including grammar exercises. If you do some exercises, then you will be gathering free rice for hungry people around the world. By doing this you can improve your writing as well as help save the world. Win-win.
5. Complain about things. If you don't have a teacher to read your writing and check what you are saying, then try writing complaint letters to Presidents of countries or large companies. Tell them lots of crazy things that you are angry about. If you are lucky, they will write back to you. If you are unlucky, they will send security guards to your home.

Question: If your girlfriend and you are shopping and she asks you if a new pair of jeans makes her butt look really big, what would you do?

Ayaz: I'll say this is too haram. LOOOOL

Bassit: I would say, "Yes. Your butt is too big." Hahahaha

ESL Fun with the Question Box: Ayaz, why wouldn't you help your girlfriend go shopping?

ESL Fun: hahahah Bassit, for a doctor, you are pretty dumb. Don't you think your girlfriend would get upset?

Bassit: Maybe she wants to have a big butt. :-)

Ayaz: Women like big butts. They look sexy.

ESL Fun: Ayaz, I didn't know that you felt that way. Would you like to meet my sister?

Ayaz: HAHAAHAHAHHAHAHAHAHAHAHA I hate you ten times, man.

ESL Fun: What's wrong? I thought you liked women with big butts. :-)

Ayaz: But she is your sister.

ESL Fun: I see. That is too close, eh? Okay, I will look around for another large woman for you to fall in love with. :-)

Ayaz: I don't want a large woman. LOOOL. I mean women like Jennifer Lopez or Kim Kardashian.

ESL Fun: Sorry. My bad. I misunderstood what you meant because you were so interested in my sister. Actually, she looks very similar to Jennifer Lopez....in the dark. :-)

Ayaz: Well, all women look pretty in the dark. LOL

ESL Fun: So, does that mean you are interested in my sister again? I'll call her right now.

Ayaz: Why not? I want to be a member of your family.

ESL Fun: Oh wait a minute. I didn't think of that. Sorry, my sister is not available. She went on a diet and her bum fell off. :-)

Ayaz: Hahahahahahahhahahaahhahahahahahahhah Mother father. That is the best joke ever. Hahahahahahahahahah

In this crazy conversation, myself and two male students talk about going shopping with girlfriends and being asked a difficult question about butt sizes. It is very funny because the students start talking about how big butts are very sexy, but I pretend to be stupid and confuse that with just plain large women, and I suggest Ayaz can start dating my sister.

At first he disagrees and tells me that he hates me, and then he changes his mind and says he would like to be part of my family. That is when I totally change my mind and lie to keep him out of my family. He loves this joke and has a good laugh.

Question: What would you do if you were in an elevator with a super model, and the elevator got stuck?

ESL Fun with the Question Box: I think I would start up an interesting conversation. :-)
After all, I am a very charming guy.

Bassit: Super models are too tall.

Ayaz: I would just grab her and kiss her. LOOL

ESL Fun: What do you mean, Bassit? Do you think they are too tall to fit inside elevators? LOL. Do you want them to always take the stairs.

ESL Fun: That might be a very bad idea, Ayaz. I think she will have great kungfu skills sn she will beat the hell out of you. :-)

Bassit: LOL. Joe, I meant that I don't like girls who are too tall, so I am not interested in super models.

ESL Fun: Oh, I see, Bassit. You want a short girl who is ugly, eh? I wish you good luck. lol

Ayaz: I was stuck in an elevator once. It was a bad time, bro.

ESL Fun: I didn't want to make you feel bad by having to remember a bad time, Ayaz. Now, please tell me all the details. :-) hahahahaha

Ayaz: I was with a girl. LOOOL. There, I have to stop. No more details.

ESL Fun: I know you don't want to talk about this anymore, Ayaz. I just have one more easy question. What happened? :-) LOL

Ayaz: Hahaha. I hate you. I hope you get stuck in an elevator.

When I ask questions on this page, I don't know what kind of conversation is going to happen. I think it is funny when Bassit says that super models are too tall, so I just pretend he means that they shouldn't be allowed in elevators. Ayaz had an experience that he didn't want to discuss, so just for fun, I kept asking him for more and more details. Making Ayaz angry is one of my favorite hobbies.

Question: Have you ever seen someone wearing crazy clothes?

ESL Fun with the Question Box: For example, has anyone ever seen that old man in Halifax who used to wear women's high heel shoes?

Nigel: One time in Halifax I saw a tall man dressed all in black with a gas mask on. Seriously, I saw this on Spring Garden Road.

ESL Fun: Gas mask?!?!? Perhaps he was just coming from a restaurant where you were the cook, Nigel. :-) Just kidding.

Nigel: I'm surprised you didn't see this guy, Joe. You have been in Halifax for almost a century, haven't you?

ESL Fun: Nigel, I have never seen this guy. Perhaps you were seeing things because you smoke too many drugs. Oooops. Was that supposed to be a secret? :-)

Ayaz: All of Lady Gaga's clothes are pretty nuts.

ESL Fun: Ayaz, you are right about Lady Gaga. She wears some really outrageous outfits.

ESL Fun: Have you ever seen someone wearing an old farmer shirt? Hahaha

Ayaz: Yes, I saw a poor man on the street wearing one. He was asking for money.

ESL Fun: Are you saying I look like a beggar, Ayaz? I hate you five times. haha

ESL Fun: Has anyone ever seen Ayaz wearing that blue dress he bought last year?

Ayaz: How come? I hate blue. It is the color of my two of my most hated football teams. One in my country, and the other is terrible Barcelona. hahahaha

ESL Fun: I forgot that you hate blue, Ayaz. Perhaps your favorite dress was pink. Nigel, have you ever seen Ayaz in his pink dress?

Nigel: I have taken too many drugs, so I can't remember clearly. I saw him, but...he was...pink?

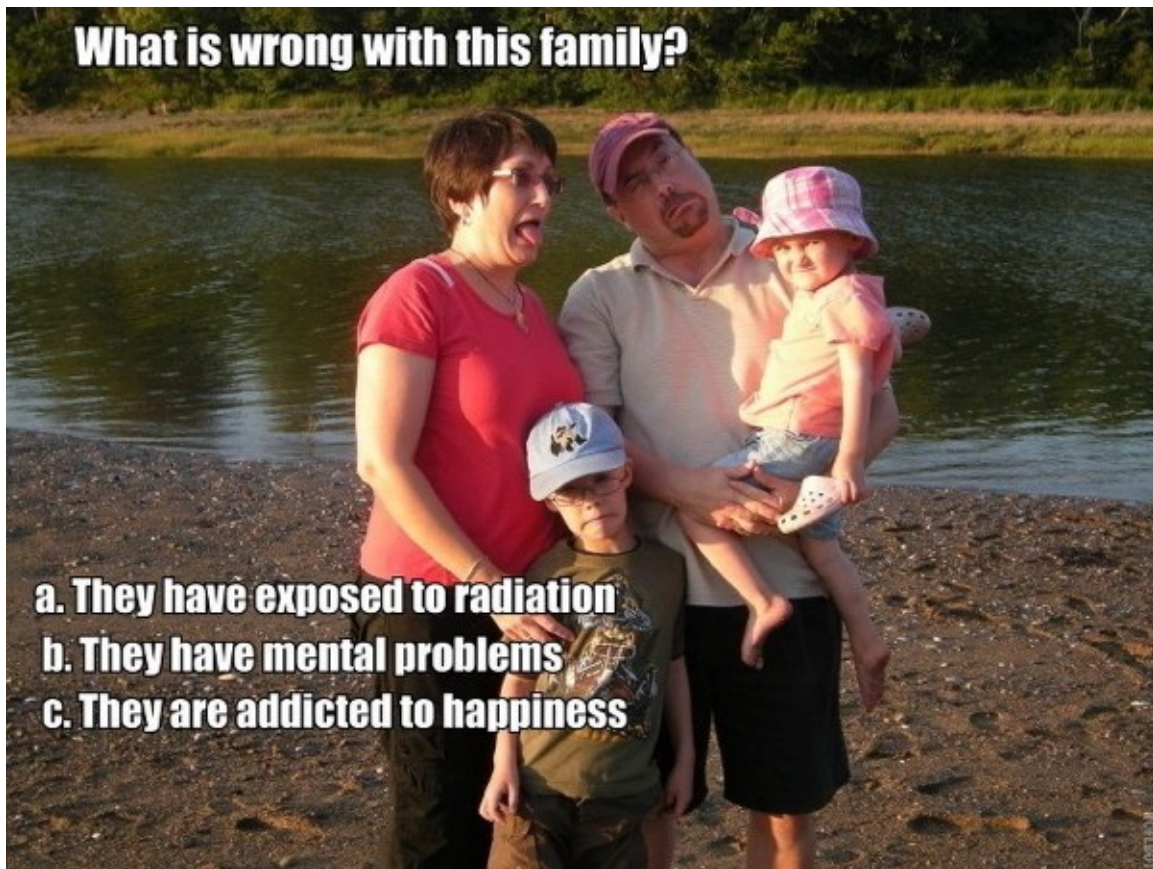
ESL Fun: What are you saying, Nigel? Do you mean you saw him with nothing on?

Nigel: No! He has on pink bikini...and you were dancing with a Hawaiian costume. ALOHA!!!

Ayaz: I hate both of you ten times. LOL

Here is another conversation that starts off one way, and then changes direction. I was talking about clothing, and joking around. However, it led to some insults about soccer. Ayaz and Nigel were both in my class together at one time, and they are good friends. However, the problem is that they support rival soccer teams. Ayaz likes Real Madrid, while Nigel likes Barcelona. Because of this, they often like to insult each other on my facebook page, and I encourage it. Their insults are in English so it still great practice. Hahaha

Photo: What is wrong with this family?



Sarah: You guys look hilarious. Adam looks crazy, but don't tell him I said that!!

ESL Fun with the Question Box: Okay, I won't tell him that. What should I tell him instead Sarah? :-)

Sarah: I don't know why I can't stop laughing at his face. (don't tell Adam) He is still sn young, but he can make crazy faces just like you can. LOL Tell him that I like his blue cap.

ESL Fun: Hahaahah Adam says that you must be a fan of his, so he wants to know if you want an autograph, Sarah. :-) LOL

Sarah: Yes, I'm a big fan of his. If Adam is not too busy, I would love an autograph. Haha

ESL Fun: I'll get him to sign something for you, Sarah. :-) LOL

Glen: I didn't know you used to have a beard, Joe. When was this?

ESL Fun: Yes, I had a beard for about 4 years. I shaved it this spring. Which do you prefer, Glen? Beard or no beard?

Glen: You look really tough with your beard, Joe.

ESL Fun: Thanks Glen, but many women love my clean shaven face. :-) You should grow a beard so you would look like a real Ukrainian. LOL

Glen: I don't have one. You caught me. I am a fake Ukrainian.

Connie: You guys look so happy. Can you please send some of your happiness to me?

ESL Fun: Sure thing, Connie. I think we are addicted. How about you? Are you addicted to anything?

Connie: I am addicted to chocolate and I really love my dog.

ESL Fun: Well, I really love hot dogs, Connie. Is that the same thing?

We took this crazy picture when we were on vacation one summer. We were staying at a cottage down at the western end of Nova Scotia with friends. I love the picture actually, because even though my daughter, Rachel, is very young, she is smart enough to know how to make a funny face for the picture.

I don't know if you noticed this, but there is a grammar mistake in this photo's text. The first option should say, "1. This family has been exposed to radiation." This shows that anyone can make a mistake in grammar, but it was no big deal. The students still understood the message and joke that this photo was trying to send, so everything was okay. I try to make this point in my classes, too. Mistakes are okay. You don't have to be perfect in English to be understood. Just keep trying.

Advice from Joe: What should your goals be for learning English?

Too many students believe they have to be perfect in English, so they are afraid to use their English unless it is perfect. I think this is a very backwards way to think about anything. You don't have to be perfect, especially if you are just learning. Just keep trying and you will get better and then you will be able to use your English to help you with other goals.

Here are my tips about setting goals:

1. Stop waiting to be perfect. The best athletes in the world weren't perfect when they were beginners, and guess what? They are still not perfect even though they are the best in the world in their sports. You will never be perfect, so that should not be the goal. Using your English to accomplish your other goals should be your goal. If that means traveling, working, or studying then don't worry about it. You don't have to be perfect to do any of those things.
2. Measure your skills. If you want to improve, then you should measure your skills by testing yourself every once in a while. This will give you an idea of what your ability level is right now, and what it is after a month of trying and studying. If you improve then you will feel good and be motivated to keep trying. If you don't improve, then that means you are either not studying enough, or you are not very smart. Ha.
3. Become King of the World. If you become the most important leader in the world, then you can hire people to translate for you. Then you won't need to learn English. Or, even better, you can get the rest of the world to just learn your language. Problem solved.

Fill in the blanks: My favorite type of _____ is _____.

ESL Fun with the Question Box: My favorite type of music is classic rock. I am kind of old.

Kong: My favorite type of teacher is Joseph Crossman.

ESL Fun: My favorite Korean student named Kong is you, Kong. Hahaha

Song: I thought I was your favorite Korean student, Joe. :-)

ESL Fun: Yes, you are my favorite Korean student named Song, Song. :-) hahaaah

Soon: My favorite type of girl's body is 34-24-35. LOL

ESL Fun: Soon, you are quite perverted, but at least you are honest. Hahahaha

Nigel: My favorite type of boring sport is ice hockey. :-)

ESL Fun: My favorite type of people to hate is those named Nigel. LOL

Ayaz: My favorite type of people are Canadians.

ESL Fun: Really, Ayaz? I always told you to not trust Canadians. Why do you like them sn much?

Ayaz: Because they do harram things.

ESL Fun: I thought you weren't supposed to like harram, or forbidden things. I am confused. :-)

Ayaz: I like it when you are confused by my answers. This is my style. LOL

ESL Fun: I was lying. I understand completely. You are a bad person. I must tell your grandmother, Ayaz. Does she have a facebook account yet? :-) hahaha

Filling in the blanks is supposed to challenge students to practice their grammar to fit the blanked out parts of the sentence. Most of the students do a good job, but the best parts of this conversation is that the students try to insult me and joke by using these blanks. I think when students are very concerned about trying to communicate or to make their joke understood, then they are really push their English skills. It takes a lot of intelligence and language control to be funny, so it is even harder to be funny in a second language. That's why I love giving them practice like this.

Question: If the person you were going to marry kissed someone else on your wedding day, what would you do?

ESL Fun with the Question Box: I think I would kiss someone else, too. :-)

Musta: I would get a divorce for sure.

ESL Fun: But, you are not married yet, Musta. You are supposed to get married later that day. Why would you break up?

Ayaz: I agree with Musta, 100% and I will ask her if she wants me to rent a room for her and that guy. LOOOL

ESL Fun: What if the man she is kissing is her father, Ayaz? hahahahah

Ayaz: That's okay then. But, only if it is a father or brother.

Ussir: If it is anyone other than a family member then I will put them both in the hospital.

Kuaa: I totally agree with what Ayaz said.

Ayaz: Hahahah Joe, many people agree with me. Ayaz's magic. LOOOL

Wastan: Sometimes my father gets jealous when I kiss my mother. ...loooooool

ESL Fun: Well, Wastan, it sounds like you have a very interesting family. :-)

ESL Fun: Okay Ayaz, what if the person is me, and I am going to be your best man at your wedding? :-)

Ayaz: I will kick your ass five times, and then kill you. :-)

ESL Fun: Really? That seems extreme. I was just kissing my sister before the wedding. :-)

Ayaz: I thought you told me that you didn't want me to become a member of your big butt family. LOOOOL

ESL Fun: Ayaz, her plan is to marry you, steal all of your money, and then divorce you quickly. Is that okay? Hahaha

Ayaz: Mother father. I hate your sister from now on.

ESL Fun: That's too bad, Ayaz, because she wants to send you some pictures. :-)

Ayaz: Ooh. Should I send her my email address? LOL

I know that this question is going to raise some emotions since it would be very terrible in some cultures if this happened. That's why I turn it around by saying it is just a father or brother kissing the bride.

Once again, Ayaz and I argue and laugh at each other because of our answers and there is a connection to a question a few days before about marrying my sister because she has a big butt. Ayaz gets curious and then angry again when I tell him about my sister's plan to steal his money. Finally, he says that he wouldn't mind looking at her pictures and he has a good laugh.

Fill in the blanks: Everyone try filling in these blanks to see who has the best sentence: I wish _____ would stop _____

ESL Fun with the Question Box: For example, I wish Ayaz would stop going to Bahrain every weekend. It makes his grandmother cry. :-)

Ayaz: I wish Joseph Crossman would stop telling us his boring jokes.

Ayaz: I wish Joseph Crossman would stop telling us that how sexy he is because it is not true.

Ayaz: I wish Joseph Crossman would stop selling drugs because he should try to be a better father. LOL

Kuaa: I wish my weight would stop going up.

Ussir: I wish smokers would stop smoking.

ESL Fun: Those are great sentences, you guys, even though some of them were written by rude guy named, Ayaz.

Bilso: I wish Joe would stop wearing that pink hat.

ESL Fun: I wish Bilso and other color blind guys would stop calling my red hat, pink. It's not pink.

ESL Fun: I wish all wars would stop because I really want world peace. :-) How's that for a New Year's Eve wish? hahaha

Ayaz: If there were no more wars, what would the President of the U.S. do? I think he would become very bored at work.

ESL Fun: If there were no more wars, then the U.S. could start looking for more oil in Nova Scotia near my city, Ayaz. :-)

Ayaz: I don't want this to happen because I want you to remain a poor man, Joe. LOL

ESL Fun: Mother father. I wish I had enough money to buy the company that Ayaz works for and then fire him. :-)

I sometimes like to give people blanks to fill in because their sentences can lead to conversations on many different topics. This conversation still had some usual insults from Ayaz and myself though. He doesn't want me to become rich and I don't want him to keep going to Bahrain to do shameful things.

Question: When do you think it is okay to hit someone?

Tuslan: If someone hits you first. :-)

ESL Fun with the Question Box: So, Tuslan, if your grandmother hit you on the shoulder, would you give her a punch right in the face?

Tuslan: I would probably jump out of the way, however, my grandmother doesn't usually go around hitting people, Joe.

ESL Fun: Okay, so you are saying that she is a good boxer and that you are afraid of her?

Tuslan: Sort of. Hahahahaha

Ayaz: It is totally okay if the person's name is Joseph Crossman. LOOOOL

ESL Fun: That's a good one, Ayaz. I hate you five times.

Lastan: I think I don't have the right to hit anyone unless he hits me first.

ESL Fun: Okay, Lastan, what if someone hits your sister, but doesn't hit you. Is that okay?

Lastan: That's not cool....I will start attacking them right away.

ESL Fun: That makes sense, Lastan, but what if your sister hit you? Hahahahaha

Lastan: Hahaha She did this before, so I just held her wrist. My father used to say that I must always respect my sisters no matter what happens because they are weaker than me. :-)

ESL Fun: Good answer, but now my question is....what if your father hit you first, Lastan?

Lastan: I will run out of the house immediately and not go home again until it is safe. Hahahah

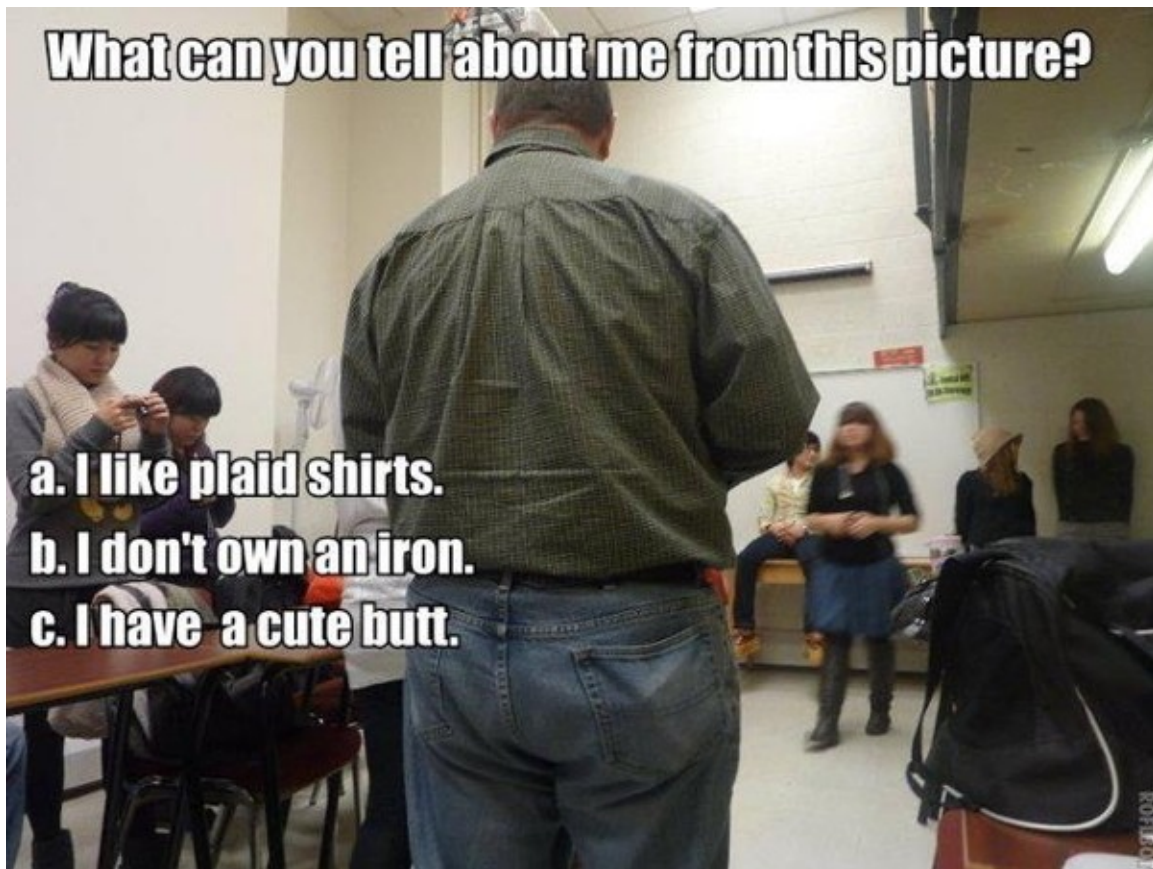
ESL Fun: Okay, Lastan. Final question. What if my mother hit you? LOL

Lastan: LOOOOOOOOOOL That's crazy. I don't want to fight with farmers.

ESL Fun: Hahahaha Good decision. We farmers are usually peaceful, but if anyone touches our farm animals, then it's war. :-)

In this conversation, I ask the students a question about when it is okay to hit someone, and then I keep changing it so they have to change their answer. This keeps the conversation going and they have to think up more English to fix their answers. Lastan goes from serious, to joking, and then back again a few times in this conversation. I think it was really good practice for him and a lot of fun for me. :-)

Photo: Most women say I have a cute butt. What do you think?



Sullivan: You are disgusting. Hahahahaha

ESL Fun with the Question Box: Sullivan, I hate you five times. My butt is not disgusting. Many people think it is cute. Just ask your friend, Ayaz. LOOOOL

Sullivan: I asked Ayaz if he thought your butt was cute and he just started saying many bad words. I can't write them here. LOL

Ayaz: I want to kick your ugly ass, Joseph Crossman. Hahahaha

ESL Fun: Ayaz, you might want to do that, but because of my awesome kungfu skills, you know you will never succeed. Hahahahaha

Soon: Joe you have an excellent butt. This picture is like art. loooool

ESL Fun: LOOOOOOOOOOOOL Thank you for your honesty, Soon. I think many people agree with you, but only a few are brave enough to say it. You are my new favorite student. :-)

Emmit: No one but you would ever put this photo on their page, Joe. You are a crazy man. :-)

Albert: Joe, you might want to get your butt looked at by a doctor. I think it is broken. There is a very large crack in it. Hahahahahahaa

ESL Fun: Don't worry, Albert. That crack has always been there. I just checked my baby pictures. LOL

Albert: Whoa. You must have been a very funny looking baby with a huge crack like that. LOOOOL

ESL Fun: Mother father. I was a super cute baby. My mom told me.

Albert: That was probably the last time you had hair, eh? LOOOOL

ESL Fun: LOOOOOOOL I hate you so many times that I can't count that high. :-)

One of my students took this photo in one of my classes. I don't think it is a very flattering photo of me, but if it will make people practice their English, then I don't mind putting it on my page. Most people had a good laugh and then started trying to insult me and my poor butt. That's okay, though. My butt is strong.

Advice from Joe: What are some stupid things I shouldn't do?

Some students do things that are the opposite of what they should be doing. I don't know if they know that they are hurting themselves or not, but hopefully if I tell them what they are doing wrong, they will change their ways.

Here are my tips of things you shouldn't do:

1. Don't stay home. Some students, who have come to Canada to study, stay home all the time. This drives me crazy. Their parents are spending thousands of dollars to send them to Canada and educate them, but instead of using this opportunity to make friends and use their English, they just stay home, and play computer games. What the.....? Some other students are going out, going to parties, making new friends, and improving their English in many ways by living life.
2. Stop making excuses. Some students come up with lots of excuses why their English is not improving. They blame their teachers, their books, the weather, and everything else for preventing them from not learning English. These types of people will not improve at anything in life until they start realizing that they have the power to overcome any challenges. You can do it if you really try.
3. Don't tell your teacher he is bald. If you do this, then he might hate you five times and give you an "F" on every test. I know that's what I would do. Ha.

Question: What did you buy on sale last week when you went shopping?

ESL Fun with the Question Box: I bought Gail some nice toilet paper. I am a romantic husband. :-)

Funci: To save money, I bought some used clothes at a second hand shop.

ESL Fun: Good idea, Funci. Did you buy a shirt, or just some underwear? I remember that you love buying underwear. lol

Funci: Hahahaha Unfortunately, that store didn't have any underwear, so instead I bought two coats. However, I was sad that I couldn't find some ideal used underwear. LOL

ESL Fun: That's too bad, Funci. Perhaps you can get some new underwear next year. ha

Imas: I bought a new T-shirt for my son.

ESL Fun: Nice, Imas. What was on the front of the t-shirt? Was there a picture or was it just plain? :-)

Imas: It has a cool picture on it. I will post it on fb so you can see them, Joe. :-)

ESL Fun: Cool. Gail bought me two new farmer shirts recently. Do you want to see pictures of them, Imas?

Imas: No thanks.

ESL Fun: Mother father. Hahahahaha

I asked this question to get students talking about stores and shopping. Like most of my questions, this conversation quickly turned to silliness when I started asking Funci if he bought some new underwear.

Imas bought a new t-shirt for his son and I was excited to see the cool picture on the front. However, when I asked Imas if he wanted to see my new farmer shirts, he was not interested. I hate him now. :-)

Fill in the blanks: Try to think of good words to fill in the following blanks and make a fun sentence. The next time I see _____ I'm going to _____

ESL Fun with the Question Box: For example, the next time I see one of the students I hate, I'm going to ask them if my hat is red or not.

Ussir: Your hat is pink. Believe me. LOL

Kika: The next time I see Joe, I am going to take a photo of his bald head. LOL

ESL Fun: What the...? The next time I see Kika, I am going to hit her with a snowball. :-)

Kika: Great. We can have a snowball fight when I visit Canada next month. :-)

Ayaz: The next time I see Gail I'm going to give her a hug. It is okay in Canada. LOOOOL

ESL Fun: Ayaz is very haram. The next time I see him, I am going to take him to a mosque so he can learn the rules. hahahaha

Ayaz: LOOOOL Are you talking about me? :-)

ESL Fun: Of course. You are the only haram guy I know. :-)

Ayaz: Thanks. LOL You are the only dirty old man I know.

ESL Fun: Mother father. The next time I see Ayaz, I'm going to rearrange his face. :-)

Filling in the blanks leads to different conversations about different topics. Kika wants to take a photo of my bald head, and Ayaz wants to hug my wife. Both of these old students have a great sense of humor, so I love joking with them.

When Kika visited the next month, she came to see my class. Her English was still great because she practiced every day on facebook with me and with lots of other friends from other countries that she met while she was in Canada the first time.

I ended the conversation with Ayaz saying that I wanted to rearrange his face. That means I want to punch his face so much that his nose will be where his eyebrows should be. Of course I was just joking because I love having fun with him, and he is much, much stronger than I am anyway.

Question: Who can think of some good lies to tell?

ESL Fun with the Question Box: For example, I heard that the TESL Centre is going to give away some free money to the top students. :-)

Soon: My company is going to give me a raise. However, in reality I can't remember the last time I got a raise. :-(

Dab: Tomorrow I am going to fly to the moon with some new wings that I just bought. I am oiling them right now. Does anyone want to come with me?

Ussir: I am going to commute between the TESL Centre and Dubai every day. :-)

ESL Fun: Soon, don't worry. I talked to your boss on Skype this morning and he told me he was going to give you a 100% raise by next pay day. :-)

ESL Fun: Dab, I will get my own wings this evening at Wal-Mart, so I will join you on your trip tomorrow.

ESL Fun: Ussir, I checked with Canada customs and they say you will need a very special Harry Potter visa to be able to leave the country every day.

Ussir: That sounds difficult to get. Do you have any advice for me?

ESL Fun: Don't worry. My mother works for the customs department and I asked her to smooth things over for you. It's all done. :-)

Ussir: That's great. Thanks. Hahahaha

ESL Fun: By the way, my mother asked if you could bring back some expensive gold from Dubai for her. :-) LOL

Ussir: Not a problem. I know how things work in the government. LOOOOOOOL

Ayaz: I had a date with Gail when she was single. This was before she met her old farmer husband. LOOOOL

ESL Fun: Gail told me about that, Ayaz. You two went to a scary movie and you got so scared that you cried and you peed your pants. :-) Oops. Was that a secret?

Ayaz: HahahahahahahahahMan, I hate you. :-)

This was an excellent question, in my opinion. Several people wrote great lies and we had a lot of laughs practicing. The lies included things about wings, traveling, money, and of course, Ayaz told a lie about going on a date with my wife, Gail. Unfortunately for him this lie turned out bad for him because I said that he peed his pants at a scary movie and now everyone on the Internet knows it.

Question: Imagine you are on a bus and a ninja gets on and wants to fight with you. What will you do? (This happens a lot in Japan)

Ussir: I will try my best to.....run away. LOL

ESL Fun with the Question Box: Ussir, do you think you can run faster than a ninja? They are super quick. :-)

Ussir: You are right, but before he catches me, he might see a pretty girl and then follow her.

ESL Fun: So, your plan is to throw a pretty girl in front of you, and then run away? Aren't you afraid that some people will call you a chicken, Ussir?

Ussir: That is life. Sometimes you have to fight, and sometimes you have to run. lol

ESL Fun: That's true. What would you do if you had a weapon on you?

Ussir: Well, that's a great time to fight. Hahahahaha

Ayaz: I will ask him if he knows anything about Saudi fighting style.

ESL Fun: What is Saudi fighting style, Ayaz?

Ayaz: Well, first we stop our cars at red lights and then look around. If we see another driver looking at us, then we say, "What are you looking at?". Then we fight.

ESL Fun: LOOOOOOOOOL. Oh, I remember you tell me this in class before, Ayaz. :-)

Ayaz: That's right, bro. Ninjas don't want to mess with Saudis. Hahahahahaha

Kiana: If I am in Japan then I will get my friend Nasumi to fight him. She knows some karate. :-)

ESL Fun: I'm sorry, Kiana, but Nasumi is usually drunk because she puts sake in her breakfast cereal. :-) LOOOOL

Nasumi: In Japan, sake is the starting point for real human relations, so I could become friends with the ninja.

ESL Fun: You are so wise, Nasumi. What an excellent solution. Alcohol often solves many problems. LOOOOOL

This question turned out really well because many people got involved and had lots of funny things to say. Ussir was honest about sometimes running away is the best idea, but if you have a weapon, then no problem.

Ayaz told me before in class that he and his friends had often gotten into fights at stop lights because they think some other driver is challenging them by just looking at them. I think it must be a major cause of traffic jams in that country.

Nasumi wants to solve all of these problems with Japanese alcohol, sake. She was a funny girl who liked to go downtown when she was in Canada.

Photo: Why did this iPhone say this about my phone? Hahahaha



Emily: Because it is true. hahahahha

ESL Fun with the Question Box: What the....? Why do you think it is true, Emily? :-)

Emily: You should change your phone. That one looks like an old farmer's phone. lol

ESL Fun: It just has a few scratches on it, Emily. It still works....I think. Not too many people call me except for wrong numbers. LOL

Emily: You should get a new phone with a pink cover. It will match your hat. LOL

ESL Fun: Do you think I would look really cool if I did that, Emily? Or, are you just trying to make me look stupid?

Emily: How did you figure out my master plan, Joe? Hahahahaha

Travis: Joe, you should get rid of that old phone and step into the 21st century. Hahaha

ESL Fun: But it still works, Travis. Why should I change?

Travis: Well, new phones are like small lap tops. They can be great cameras and play music with high quality sound. Basically, your hundred-year old phone can just dial numbers. :-) hahahahh

ESL Fun: Okay, you do make some good points there, Travis, but my phone still looks

super cool, right? :-)

Travis: Sure, Joe. You look like you have Alexander Graham Bell's original phone. Is that what you mean by cool? LOOOOOOOOL

ESL Fun: Are you making fun of my phone and my age at the same time? I hate you five times, Travis. :-) Good luck on our next grammar test. Hahahahahahha

I had an old phone and that's all I needed because I just needed it in case my kids were sick and their school was trying to contact me while I was at work. However, about once a week I would get a wrong number in class. The phone would ring and I would tell all of the students to be quiet in case it was something important about my kids. Then I would say, "Sorry. You have the wrong number. There is no one named Andy here." After that the students would laugh their heads off.

Anyway, this photo was taken in my class on the last day of the semester. I put next to a girl's iPhone which had a cute case just to make mine look even older and crappier. I know my phone looks bad, but again, if it makes people laugh and helps them to practice their English, then I don't mind looking foolish.

Advice from Joe: How can I be cool like you, Joe?

I know that many people want to be cool like I am, but it is hard. However, if you are really serious about trying to become cool, here are some tips:

1. Wear clothes that make you look like a farmer. Everybody knows that farmers are super cool. They grow stuff and they know how to do cool things like whistle and drive tractors. You might not be able to do those things, but at least you can look cool.
2. Get excited about stuff. Some people think it is cool to pretend to be bored by life and act like you don't care. Being cool is the opposite. You should be interested and curious about lots of things. I love reading and I really, really love learning new things. If you want to be like me, don't be lazy. Start caring right away.
3. Lose some hair. It is one of the most important secrets in the world. Girls really love guys that don't have a lot of hair. I know that might sound like a lie, but trust me. I don't have much hair, and I am the coolest guy I know. Ha

Question: After you wake up from a nightmare, what do you usually do?

ESL Fun with the Question Box: I usually wake Gail up and get her to tell me that everything will be alright. But, I'm still a man, though.

ESL Fun: I had a nightmare once that I was being attacked by a giant pillow, and I woke up with my pillow over my face. I think Gail was trying to kill me. :-) I don't trust her.

Juaa: I usually do nothing because I am able to fall asleep again within five minutes.

ESL Fun: Juaa, I am very jealous. It takes me more than 30 to 40 minutes to get back to sleep sometimes.

Ayaz: I call my grandmother.

ESL Fun: Ayaz, what do you talk to your grandmother about?

Ayaz: I ask her to tell me a folk story.

ESL Fun: Does she do it, or does she get angry and tell you to go the #\$%@ to bed. :-)

Ayaz: Hahahahahahahahahahaha....She talks to me until I fall asleep.

ESL Fun: Your grandmother is a wonderful lady. :-)

Ayaz: And your wife is very pretty. LOL

ESL Fun: LOOOOL What the....? You can always make me laugh. :-)

Here is a conversation about having nightmares and having trouble getting back to sleep. Juaa is a great sleeper, so she never has any problems. I am the opposite because I am a very light sleeper. If anything wakes me up, then I usually have a hard time falling asleep again.

For the first time in a long time, it looks like Ayaz and I are going to have a serious conversation about how his grandmother helps him sleep. I am not sure if he is telling the truth or not, but he seems sincere, so I accept it and say that his grandmother is a wonderful woman. The conversation is almost over when he slips in another line about him liking my wife, which is totally forbidden in his country. This made me laugh quite hard when I saw it.

Question: Is there anything about Canada that you love or hate?

ESL Fun with the Question Box: I hate the weather in January and February, but I love paying high taxes. They are super fun to pay. :-)

Kong: I hate the weather. It rains every day. Hahahaha

ESL Fun: Not true, Kong. It only rained 23 days last month. LOL

Soon: It is a very calm and beautiful country, but I hate cleaning up after snowstorms.

ESL Fun: I hear you, Soon. I loved snow when I was a kid, but now I hate it. :-)

Sadia: I love the people in Canada. They treat everyone in a fair and friendly manner. They don't care if you are Christian or Muslim. They are so helpful when you need something. However, the shopping here is like torture for me. LOL

ESL Fun: Hahahah Sadia, I didn't know you were Muslim. I would have failed you in my class if I had known. Hahahha Just kidding, of course. :-)

Ayaz: I love Canadian people, but I hate Joseph Crossman. LOL

ESL Fun: Ayaz, do you hate me because I am much smarter and more handsome than you? : :-)

Ayaz: You wish, bro. Hahahahahahahaah

ESL Fun: What do you mean? Do I wish that you were smarter, or that you were more handsome?

Ayaz: I wish someone would break your computer. Hahahahahahaha Then you wouldn't be so smart Mr. Facebook. :-)

Here is a fun conversation about what people loved or didn't love about Canada. The weather and the food are usually the biggest problems for people that come here to study. Sadia said some very nice things about how friendly Canadians are, so I couldn't resist joking about me wanting to fail her. Of course, I didn't because she was one of the smartest students I have ever taught.

Ayaz and I have another argument about him hating me and now he wants someone to break my computer. All in all, it was a great question.

Question: Do you have any bad habits?

Ayaz: Partying. LOL

ESL Fun with the Question Box: Ayaz, isn't going to parties a good thing? Why do you say that is a bad habit?

Ayaz: I agree with you, but when you do it too much, it becomes a bad thing.

ESL Fun: I thought there were a lot of rules in Saudi Arabia, so no big parties. Or, are you talking about visiting Bahrain to have fun, Ayaz?

Ayaz: Yeah, kind of like that. LOL I go to Bahrain twice a month.

ESL Fun: Well, I'm sure you will have to stop once I send this conversation to your grandmother, so then your partying problem will be solved. Hahahahaha You're welcome, Ayaz. :-)

Juaa: My worst habit is I'm not patient enough.

ESL Fun: Juaa, what makes you so impatient?

Juaa: I lose my patience with people who ask the same questions over and over again after I have already told them what to do. Hahaha

ESL Fun: Hahahaha I understand, Juaa. I get that in my classes sometimes. :-)

Juaa: That's why becoming a teacher was never a career option for me. I think teachers need a lot of patience. Hahaha Do you have any bad habits, Joe?

ESL Fun: I think my worst habit was teaching the words, "Mother father" to my students, Juaa. LOL So, what is your job anyway?

Juaa: I work as a consultant at a human resource company. It's a hard job, but I really like it.

ESL Fun: Human Resources, eh? That's good. Do you have lots of friends at work?

Juaa: Not a lot since there are only 8 people in our whole office.

ESL Fun: Did you tell your coworkers about me, Juaa? I think most Human Resource people like sexy farmers. LOL

Juaa: Hahahaha ...how do you know that we usually like sexy farmers? You must be very smart. :-)

ESL Fun: Well, I went to both teacher school and farmer school, Juaa. So, yes, I am super smart. LOOOOOL

This conversation started talking about bad habits, but it changed and ended up discussing other subjects. I spoke to Ayaz about his addiction to partying and I warned him that I was going to have to tell his grandmother. He stopped chatting after that so I believe I scared him.

Juaa is an old student who now has a job with a Human Resources firm. She said she often loses her patience because the people she works with don't remember what she tells

them. Our conversation shifted from this serious work related issue to a funny issue of telling her coworkers that she knows me, a sexy farmer. That nickname is one that a student mistakenly gave me here in Canada and it has stuck ever since. I love it.

Lying Practice: Can you think of any crazy lies to tell here?

ESL Fun with the Question Box: I got a phone call from Hollywood today. They want me to be in the next Mission Impossible movie. I said I would think about it. :-)

Helen: I am starting a singing school because I won American Idol last year. Does anyone want to take lessons from me? :-) LOL

ESL Fun: LOOOOOOOL That's fantastic Helen. I hope this new school doesn't interfere with your swimsuit modeling career. :-)

Ginn: Actually, I am not South Korean.

ESL Fun: I heard that you actually graduated from Pyongyang University, Ginn. However, your best friend Mito doesn't know about this. Should I tell her?

Ginn: Mito is not my best friend.

ESL Fun: Yes, I know. You told me that you hated her because she tried to drink all of your alcohol, right, Ginn?

Ginn: She always tries to drink my soju. Hahahaha I hate her. :-)

ESL Fun: Really? She is a terrible person. Don't worry. I will give her an F in our writing class, Ginn.

Mito: Hey, what are you two talking about? I didn't steal any soju. Ginn has short legs and Joe is a bad farmer. LOL He is definitely not sexy. :-)

Ussir: I taught Michael Jackson how to dance.

ESL Fun: LOL. I think that is a lie, Ussir. He is dead now and he knew how to dance before you were born. :-) Also, you dance like a drunk guy with one leg. LOL

Soon: I was going to marry the movie star, Natalie Portman, but she married another man in April. So, now I am going to ask Scarlet Johansson to marry me.

ESL Fun: Soon, it is possible that you will ask many women to marry you, but they will all probably say "No" because your face looks like the pretty end of a pig. LOL

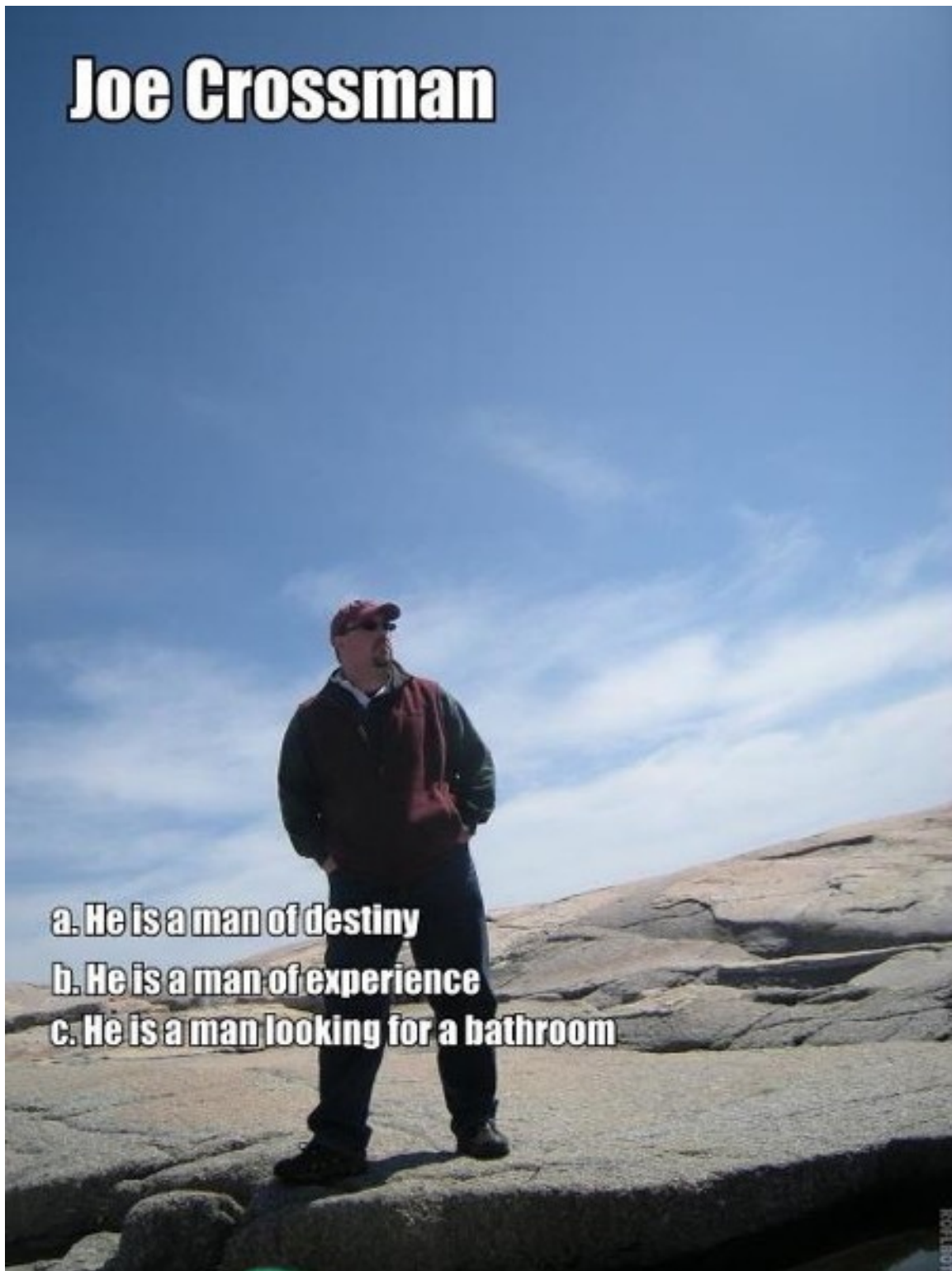
Ayaz: I had a romantic dinner with Lady Gaga last night.

ESL Fun: Three days ago I got an email from Ayaz. He said he wanted to paint his fingernails. I told him to go for it.

Ayaz: I hate you five times. That's the truth. LOL

Lying practice is usually lots of fun because people get to write lots of crazy things about themselves and others. Also, when they write their friend's names in their lies, then facebook alerts them to see what is being said about them. This brings more people to the conversation and that means more fun and more practice. That's exactly the way I want it.

Photo: Do I look like a great leader in this photo?



Aaron: hahahahah You are probably looking for a bathroom. Why don't you just use the

ocean?

ESL Fun with the Question Box: The ocean?!?!? What if I fall in if a big wave comes up, Aaron? That could be very dangerous. Hahahaha

Aaron: Are you afraid of big waves or big whales, Joe?

ESL Fun: Hahahaahaha Both would be extremely dangerous, Aaron. A wave might take me, and a whale might eat me. :-)

Aaron: Either way would solve your bathroom problem, Joe. LOOOOOL

ESL Fun: I don't have a bathroom problem, Aaron. I have a problem with you, though. :-)

Henry: You look like a man of destiny, Joe. Mankind needs you.

ESL Fun: Thank you for realizing my greatness, Henry. You are my new favorite student. :-)

Henry: Also, it always a good idea to know where the closest bathroom is, so we should follow you, Joe. :-)

ESL Fun: What the....? I am not looking for the bathroom, Henry. You are not my new favorite student anymore. LOOOOL

This photo was taken near our city at a place called Peggy's Cove. It is a great place with a lighthouse and wonderful view of the Atlantic Ocean. I put this picture on my page so students could get a good laugh, and then I made a joke about me looking for a bathroom. Of course, the students could not resist making fun of me with bathroom humor, and I pretended to be angry at them.

As a teacher, we are taught that we should not have favorites among our students. I like to do things the opposite way, so I often tell my students that they are "my new favorite student" when they say something nice to me. However, they quickly lose the title when I change my mind after a few seconds.

Advice from Joe: How can I be happy like you are all the time, Joe?

Many of my students have told me that they admire my happy attitude. They want to know why I am so happy. Here are some tips:

1. Be grateful for everything in your life. Some people think their lives suck, but the truth is things could be much worse. If you are reading this book, then that means you have many, many things in your life to be happy about. If you start noticing the good things, then you will become happier. If you become happier, then more good things will start appearing in your life.
2. Stop worrying. Worrying about things is useless. All it does it make you feel bad and waste your time. If there is a problem in your life, then do something to start to fix it, and then feel good about making progress. If there is nothing you can do to fix it, then stop thinking about it and think about other things. Life is too short to waste time worrying about stuff.
3. Do something that makes you excited. I love teaching. I love helping students get closer to their dreams. It makes me feel so good, that work feels like play. I know that not everyone should be a teacher, but I do know that everyone can be excited by things. Find something that makes you excited, and find a way to do that more, and hopefully you can do it for a job one day.

Survey: What is THE STUPIDEST gift to give your wife on your anniversary?

A picture of your ex—girlfriend — 14 votes

A divorce — 4 votes

Joe's photo!!!! — 4 votes

Cleaning supplies — 3 votes

A bikini that is too small because this shows she has changed — 2 votes

A hammer — 2 votes

A ladder (my dad actually did this one year) Hahahahaha — 2 votes

I'm not married yet — 1 vote

Ice cream — 1 vote

Sometimes I would ask some silly survey questions on my page and lots of students would answer with some very funny votes. This question was about crazy gifts that you shouldn't give your wife on your wedding anniversary. The most popular stupid answer was "A photo of your ex-girlfriend". I don't think many wives would appreciate that. The bottom two votes were probably by students that didn't understand the survey completely since they were so sincere. That makes them funny, too.

Lying Practice: Think up some ridiculous lies and write them here. It's a great way to get better at English.

ESL Fun with the Question Box: Most people think Joe is a good dancer, but the truth is that he is a FANTASTIC dancer. :-)

Shadel: I think you are a bad teacher. LOL Actually, I don't think that. :-)

ESL Fun: Shadel wants to visit Disney World and take a picture with Mickey Mouse. LOL

Shadel: Yes, I hope that happens. I'll take my family with me. Hahahahaha

ESL Fun: After that, Shadel wants to visit George Bush's house and ask him how he got to be so smart. Hahahahaha

Shadel: No way!!! Lying is one thing, but I'm not crazy. :-) LOOOOOL

Baima: I am hungry. Hahahaha In reality, I'm not. Is this a good lie, Joe?

ESL Fun: What the....? LOOOOOOOOOOOOL That's such a great lie, that I don't know which side to believe, Baima. :-)

ESL Fun: Baima is thinking about getting a job at McDonald's because the idea of getting free French fries is very exciting for her. Hahahaha

Baima: Actually, I would go into the kitchen, eat other people's French fries and then quit. Hahahahahaha

ESL Fun: Baima, you are not going to win Employee of the Month with that behavior. :-)

I had a lot of fun with both Shadel and Baima in this conversation. Their lies were funny because they were so nice because they immediately told the truth afterwards. I think both of them need to practice more if they want to become expert liars like me.

Shadel was having fun, but he didn't want to admit that he loved George Bush. That made me laugh a lot. Baima will not be the best employee at McDonald's obviously because she steals food and then quits. Employers should be careful if they try to hire her.

Question: Can you guess what questions I was asked while going through customs at the airport today?

John: Did they ask, "Can we frisk those short legs of yours?"

ESL Fun with the Question Box: Well, John, they didn't frisk my legs, but I did have to take off my shoes and my belt, so then my pants fell down. It was a wonderful moment for everyone. :-) LOL

John: Hahahahahahaahahaha Are you serious? I wish I would have seen that. :-)

Gomez: Maybe they asked you, "Why are you bringing cocaine into the country?"

ESL Fun: No, they didn't ask me that, Gomez. They asked me, "Do you know any bad people from Colombia?" I said, "No", so now you owe me a big favor. LOL

Gomez: I don't smuggle anything from Colombia, but some of my Japanese friends do. :-)

ESL Fun: I will ask them tomorrow in class, Gomez. I think you are going to be killed. Hahahahaha

Lonzo: "Hey, you look like a farmer. Do you grow marijuana?"

ESL Fun: LOOOOOOOL I didn't look like a farmer today, Lonzo. I looked like a big city traveler. :-)

Lonzo: That's impossible, Joe. I think you only own jeans and farmers shirts, right? Hahahahah

ESL Fun: Okay, you're right, but I don't grow marijuana.....anymore. LOL

Lonzo: LOOOOOOOL I'm going to tell your mother.

ESL Fun: That's okay, Lonzo. She took over the farm from me when I became a teacher. She is making lots of money. :-)

I had just returned from a trip on this day and the customs people had asked me for my shoes and my belt. My pants didn't actually fall down, but I still thought it was pretty funny. When I asked my students what questions they thought I had been asked, they all thought I had been asked about drugs and my short legs. My students don't miss a chance to make fun of me. By the way, I don't think my mother owns a marijuana farm. I was just joking.

Conclusion: What have you gotten from this book?

If you have made it this far in this book, then that means you have read over 18,000 words in English. Below are some things I hope this book has given you:

1. I hope you have had fun. I wrote this book to show people how fun learning English can be. The students that I chat with on facebook have a lot of fun with me and I think this book shows that. I hope you want to join my facebook page and join the fun, too.
2. I hope you learned some English. I wrote this book in English, so if you read it, that means you had to do it in English. Maybe there were some new words that you didn't know, so now I hope you know them. Also, now you have gotten some practice at seeing how words go together in English. All of this is good practice, and if you feel good about it, it is even better.
3. I hope you want to read more. Reading is usually something that students hate so they don't do it very much. If you liked this book, then maybe you will like more. If you keep reading and do it a little every day, then you will improve your English and in the future you will be very happy that you made that decision.
4. I hope you see that learning English isn't impossible. All of the students that were in this book started out as beginners that were very bad at English. They all had good attitudes and worked hard. Eventually, they got better and better and many of them even went on to study at a Canadian university. If they can do it, then so can you. English is just a skill, so I know if you try hard enough, you can become good at it.
5. I hope you download The Question Box App. My dream is to help people learn English in a fun way. That's the way I teach in my classes and that's what I tell people on my facebook page. My wife, Gail, and I created The Question Box to help people improve their English and practice speaking and it really works. If you download our App to your smart phone or tablet then you will get lots of chances to practice speaking, you will improve your listening and pronunciation, you will learn some new vocabulary, your confidence will go up, you will speak more fluently, you will help my children go to university and possibly, you will fall in love and get a job that pays you million dollars. That is a lot of positives for the price of a cup of coffee. Ha!

THE END