



## ENGLISH CAFÉ – 222

### TOPICS

The Mormon/LDS Church; school lunches; using “in” or “on” with body parts; fall off versus fall down; a dollar down and a dollar a week

### GLOSSARY

**denomination** – a group of people who have slightly different beliefs than do other people of the same religion, although they agree on the most important things

\* We are holding a meeting of leaders from all denominations to talk about reducing violence in our communities.

**angel** – a religious being that has wings, flies, and communicates with God

\* In my dream, an angel came to me and took me to heaven.

**revelation** – something new and surprising that is said; surprising and previously unknown information that is told in a dramatic way

\* It was a revelation to his family when Joseph told them that he was gay.

**polygamy** – the practice of having more than one wife or husband at the same time

\* This news story is about a man practicing polygamy with three wives in three different cities.

**mob** – a large, violent group of angry people

\* When the movie star came out of the hotel, a mob surrounded her and security officers had to be called.

**to distance (oneself) from** – to no longer be associated with; to no longer be close to

\* In an effort to win the election, the politician tried to distance himself from unpopular comments he made years ago.

**afterlife** – life after death; life in another form after one has died

\* Do you believe in an afterlife where good people are rewarded and bad people are punished?



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**tithe** – 10% of one's income given to a church to help support it

\* Our church does not ask people to tithe, but we do encourage generous donations.

**missionary** – a person who goes into another community and tries to teach others about his or her religious beliefs

\* Donna's parents were missionaries in Korea and that's why Donna speaks Korean fluently.

**to go hungry** – to be without food; to feel hungry because one does not have enough money to buy food

\* More and more children are going hungry as the economy worsens.

**surplus** – extra; more than what is needed; left-over

\* If we have any surplus money this year, maybe we could go on a short vacation.

**corndog** – a type of sausage (hot dog) that is wrapped in a type of bread made from corn and then fried in hot oil

\* My sister and I like to share a corndog. She likes the breading and I like the hot dog inside.

**to punch** – to hit hard, usually with a closed hand; to hit hard with a fist

\* Sam drank too much, got angry, and punched his friend in the mouth.

**to smack** – to hit with the inside of an open hand

\* Lily's date tried to kiss her and she smacked him across the face.

**to touch** – to gently handle; to make contact gently with part of the body

\* The magician made the rabbit disappear without touching the hat.

**to tap** – to pat lightly with a hand, finger, or foot, often repeatedly with quick short motions

\* When Davide is nervous, he taps his foot and sweats a lot.

**to fall off** – to fall without any control from a specific thing, such as a horse or a chair

\* Ming tried to climb the tree to save his cat, but he fell off the branch and broke his arm.



**to fall down** – to fall without any control from one place to another; to come down through the air, sometimes without intending to

\* The baby is learning to walk and falls down a lot.

**a dollar down and a dollar a week** – a payment method where a first payment of one dollar is paid to reserve an item, then one pays a dollar each week, until the full amount is paid

\* The TV commercial said that we could buy a car by paying a dollar down and a dollar a week, but I don't believe it!

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## WHAT INSIDERS KNOW

### Collecting Lunchboxes

Although many American schools provide hot lunches for their students, students in many schools also have the option of bringing their own lunch to school.

Beginning in the 1960s and 1970s, it became very popular and fashionable for students to bring their lunches from home in “lunchboxes,” small metal or plastic boxes with a handle for carrying sandwiches, snacks, and other items for lunch.

Lunchboxes may have images of “cartoon characters” (people and things from drawings), “superheroes” (people or creatures with powers that normal humans do not have), or “pop stars,” including singers or bands, people on television, or those in movies. Although lunchboxes are less commonly used today, many lunchboxes from years ago are very much “sought after” (looked for; wanted).

Lunchboxes, in fact, have become “collectible” items, with many people trying to own specific ones because of their age, design, or “rarity” (with very few in the world). In addition to the lunchbox itself, some people also collect the “thermos” that came with the lunchbox. A “thermos” is a tall, round container used to carry liquids, such as soda or soup, and is made to keep hot things hot and cold things cold. In many cases, having both the thermos and the lunchbox can increase the value of the collectible.

Lunchboxes have an interesting beginning. In the early 1900s, many tobacco companies used “re-usable” (for use again; for use more than once) boxes made of “tin” (a silver-colored thin metal). People started using these tins to carry their lunches, and by the 1930s, toy companies began making metal boxes specifically for carrying lunches to school.



## **COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT**

You're listening to ESL Podcast's English Café number 222.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast's English Café episode 222 – must be lucky! I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California, as our governor says.

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On this Café, we're going to talk about the Mormons, or people who are members of a religious group called the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We'll talk about what that means in a minute. We're also going to talk about school lunches in the United States, the food that children eat while they're at school. And, as always, we'll answer a few of your questions. Let's get started.

Today's Café begins with a discussion about religion. Americans have many different religious beliefs, but today we're going to focus on one particular religious denomination – one that is particular to the United States in the sense that it started here. A "denomination" is a group of people who have their own set of beliefs, and these beliefs are different from people of the same religion. For example, in the Christian religion most believers agree on certain key or important things. For example, all Christians believe that there is one God and that his son, Jesus Christ, was sent to Earth and died to save them. But there are many Christian denominations, and each one believes something slightly different even though they all call themselves Christian. There are Catholics, there are Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, Anglicans, and so forth; there are hundreds of these denominations.

You will often hear sometimes, when talking of religion, about the word "movement," or in terms of social groups or social change. A "movement" refers to a group of people who have the same ideas and want to change society in some way, or change the religious denomination in some way. For example, the civil rights movement in the United States in the 1960s was a group of people who worked together to make sure that African Americans, or black people, had



the same opportunity as white people. Within Christianity, the Latter-day Saint movement is a religious group that follows the teachings of a man named Joseph Smith, Jr., an American. The Latter-day Saint movement itself has many divisions – many smaller groups, what we could again call denominations within that church, just like the larger group of Christian believers. By far, the largest denomination in the Latter-day Saint movement is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, but there are other denominations as well. This largest group, or denomination of Mormons, most people call the LDS Church, or simply the Mormon Church. This is the religious denomination we're going to talk about today.

I just want to add here that I'm talking about the Mormon Church as a Christian denomination, but there is some controversy about this – some disagreement. Mormons consider themselves to be Christians. However, some other Christians disagree with this. I'm not an expert in "theology," or the study of religions, so I won't get into all the details about it here. I just want to let you know that this is something people don't always agree on, so it's important to mention when talking about the Mormon Church.

The Mormon Church currently has about 13½ million members. Around six million of them are in the United States, which makes it the country's fourth-largest Christian denomination. It is "headquartered," or based in Salt Lake City, Utah, but Mormons live everywhere in the country. When I lived outside of Phoenix, I lived in a town called Mesa, and Mesa has the second largest population of Mormons in the U.S., after Salt Lake City. Utah, I should point out, is east of Nevada. It's, of course, east of California. Nevada is east of California, Utah is east of Nevada; it's between Nevada and Colorado, among other states.

Like other Christians, Mormons believe in the Bible, the holy book of the Christian religion, but they also have other religious texts – religious books. The most important of these is the Book of Mormon, which was published in 1830 by Joseph Smith, Jr. Joseph Smith, the founder of the Mormons (the person who started the Mormon religion), said that an angel, a messenger from God, came to visit him one day. This angel guided him – showed him the way to a hill, and on this hill there were golden plates that had been buried, or put underneath the earth. A plate, in this case, is like something that you would write on. The angel's name, by the way, in the Mormon tradition was Moroni. The plates were covered with special unknown characters, or symbols from an alphabet that was completely different than any that Joseph Smith had seen before. But with the angel's help, Joseph Smith said, he was able to translate the text on the golden



plates into English. When he was finished, he gave the plates back to the angel, so no one else had actually seen these golden plates but Joseph Smith.

The translated text was then published as the Book of Mormon. In addition to the Book of Mormon, there are other religious texts in the LDS Church that contain God's revelations as recorded by Joseph Smith. A "revelation" is something new, something that is surprising that someone says. "Revelation" comes from word "to reveal," which means to show something that was hidden or was secret. So, Joseph Smith wrote down these revelations and published them for Mormons to read and study.

What exactly do Mormons believe? Well, they believe that Jesus Christ leads the Church – the Mormon Church, that is. But Jesus also chose one person, called the President of the Church, or the Prophet, to be his spokesperson on Earth, the person who can speak for Jesus Christ and share his ideas with other Mormons. Not surprisingly, Joseph Smith was the first President or Prophet. The current President or Prophet is a man by the name of Thomas S. Monson. Mormons believe that there is only person who can receive these revelations directly from God.

After Joseph Smith received these revelations beginning in 1830, the Mormon Church grew very quickly, although some of Joseph Smith's teachings made people angry and frightened, people who were not Mormons. For example, originally Mormonism allowed "polygamy" (polygamy), the idea that a man can have more than one legal wife, or one wife within the church. They were many people – in fact probably most people then and now dislike the idea of polygamy. In 1844, an angry "mob," or a large, violent group of angry people, killed Joseph Smith and his brother.

The next important leader of the Mormon Church in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (in the 1800s) was Brigham Young. Brigham Young led Mormons from where they were in the eastern part of the United States out west to the state of Utah. He led them there because he wanted to have religious freedom. He thought that if he went where there was no one else, well, the Mormons would be in the majority, and they could have their freedom. Mormons wanted to find a place where they could live without having their beliefs challenged or questioned, and since no one was in Utah they went there and they became the majority. That's why the Mormon Church, even today, is headquartered in the capital city of Utah, Salt Lake City. So the state of Utah has the majority of Mormons in the U.S.; it is basically a Mormon state.



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As the Mormon Church continued to grow in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, it began to distance itself from the idea of polygamy. “To distance yourself from (something)” means to say that you are no longer associated with that, you no longer believe in that, or you are trying to say I’m not a strong supporter of that. In fact today the Mormon Church – the LDS does not allow polygamy, although there are other smaller denominations within the Latter-day Saint movement, known as “fundamentalists,” who do believe that a man can have multiple wives. The United States government, and the states in U.S., do not, however, legally allow polygamy; it is illegal for a man to have more than one wife at a time, that is. But, there are still some Mormons, a small group that practice polygamy. They got into trouble recently in the state of Texas. One of the leaders of a group of fundamentalist Latter-day Saints believers was arrested. But again, the main LDS Church does not allow polygamy anymore.

I can’t even begin to explain all of the beliefs and practices of the Mormons, but I’d like to talk about a few of the things that might interest you. Like other Christians, the Mormons believe in an “afterlife,” the idea that there is life after death. However, Mormons believe that people themselves can become gods, or like gods, after death. Mormons also have a very serious interesting “genealogy,” the study of one’s ancestors: your grandfather, your great-grandfather, your great-great-grandfather, and so forth. The Mormons believe that even though someone is dead you can go back and, in essence, claim that person for the Mormon Church. So, it’s very important for Mormons to know who their ancestors were – who were the people that came before them in their family, so they can then bring those people into the Mormon Church.

Mormons have a lot of restrictions on what they can do, or what some people think are a lot of restrictions I should say. Mormons, for example, do not smoke, they do not drink alcohol, and they do not drink, typically, drinks with caffeine in them, especially hot drinks, such as coffee or tea. However, I was in Salt Lake City a couple of times in the last 10 years giving presentations, and I do know that many Mormons think that it is okay to drink cold drinks such as Coca-Cola or other sodas, even though they have caffeine in them. Now, there’s some disagreement in the Mormon Church about this issue. I can tell you that at the presentation I was at, almost no one drank coffee except the non-Mormons, but many people drank Coca-Cola at 7:30 in the morning.

Mormons also believe in tithing. “To tithe” (tithe) means to give 10 percent of your income (10 percent of the money that you make from your job) to the church; they donate that 10 percent. Other churches do this also, or individuals tend to do it, but Mormons are famous for this tithing.





Mormons are also famous for being missionaries. All unmarried men are expected to work as missionaries at some time in their life for two years, usually when they are in their early 20s. To be a “missionary” means to go to other communities, often other countries, and try to teach people about one’s religious beliefs. Women can also be missionaries in the Mormon Church, but it is not as common as young men becoming missionaries. The women’s missionary service lasts only 18 months. You may have seen Mormon missionaries in your own state or country. They often wear “nametags,” small pieces of plastic that give their name. They’re typically dressed very well, very nicely. The men wear dark pants and a white dress shirt; the women wear skirts or dresses. Mormons often have to learn a second language if they become missionaries, if they’re going to a country that doesn’t speak their home language. For example, if you grow up Salt Lake City and you become a missionary to South America, well, you’ll have to learn either Spanish or Portuguese. So the Mormons are also famous for learning languages, at least those that become missionaries, which, again, is almost every Mormon male does missionary work for two years.

Mormons are also famous, at least in the United States, for having very large families. The general impression of Mormons is that they’re very what we would call “clean cut,” meaning they are very healthy, they dress well, they don’t do things like smoke or drink alcohol. That would be someone who’s clean cut. That’s certainly the reputation of Mormons in the U.S.

There are many famous Mormons. You may have heard of a family called the Osmonds. They’re a Mormon family that became a very popular music group (singing group) in the 1960s, 70s, and 80s. Originally there were four brothers who performed, then two younger brothers and one younger sister joined them. Some of the brothers and sisters later became “solo” artists, meaning they began to perform on their own, especially Marie Osmond, the younger sister, who became a singing star in the 70s and 80s, and her brother Donnie Osmond, who was also something of a singing star in the 70s. The Osmonds had a very famous television show, The Donnie and Marie Show I think it was called, in the late 1970s. Anyone who’s my age or older – of my generation certainly remembers them. They continue to be performers; they have a show in Las Vegas. Both Donnie and Marie Osmond have appeared on a famous dancing competition here on American television called Dancing with the Stars, and they are still popular. People certainly have a good impression of them as singers.

Mitt Romney is another famous Mormon who was in the news a lot last year. He was governor of Massachusetts from 2003 to 2007, and then he tried to become





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President of the United States. If he had won, he would have been the first Mormon U.S. president. He didn't win, I should say; he didn't even win the nomination to be the Republican candidate. He lost to John McCain, who lost in the November election to the Democratic candidate, a guy by the name of Barack Obama – who is not a Mormon, by the way!

We're now briefly going to talk about a completely different subject: school lunches. Most American children are in school from the morning 'til the mid-afternoon, so they need to eat lunch sometime during the day. Some children bring their lunches in a small bag or box with them; the boxes are called "lunchboxes," and they're very popular among younger children who bring their lunch to school. I went to schools that did not have any sort of school lunch program, so everyone had to bring their own lunch. Usually, they bring them in a small brown bag. The schools I went to back in the 1970s, none of them had food that you could buy or eat at the school; you had to bring it from home. The place where you eat in a school is called the "cafeteria." It's a large room where everyone sits down to eat their food. Most schools now have kitchens, where the students can buy their lunch, get what we would call a hot lunch, typically.

Some children, however, are poor; they don't have money to buy a lunch – their parents don't have money to buy them lunch. So the U.S. government set up, beginning in the 1940s, a school lunch program. This was basically for poor students, who could then get a free lunch, or a reduced price lunch – you would get a discount on the lunch. These free lunch and reduced lunch programs were seen as a good way to help young people get the food and nutrition they needed when they might otherwise go hungry, or feel hungry because they have not eaten enough that day. Another reason why the free lunch program exists is something completely different, that has nothing to do with schools. It's because the United States government also pays farmers for their food, especially their surpluses. A "surplus" is extra of something, more than what you needed. In this case, more than what the farmers can sell. The idea is that if the farmers didn't sell enough their crops – enough of the food they grow, they would go out of business. Of course, that's true with any business. But for some reason, the government decided that farmers were different, and so they would buy their extra food and give it to the school lunch program.

In 2007, there were more than 30 million children who received low-cost or free lunches, which cost almost 9 billion dollars. Children who do not qualify for the program because their parents make too much money can always buy the food themselves at the school. We often call this money that children have to buy food at school "milk money," although you can use it for more than milk. At some



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schools, families can buy lunch tickets. These are small pieces of paper that a student can show at the cafeteria in order to get their food. But most schools now just use the student identification card sort of like a credit card, and they use that, they put it through the machine, and that's how the student pays for the lunches.

School lunches are supposed to be healthy; they're supposed to be good for children, although many people say that that is not, in fact, true, including the children who eat the school lunches. A school, for example can give a child a "corndog," which is a hot dog that is wrapped in a type of bread made from corn and then fried, or cooked in hot oil. This is considered a healthy meal in some school lunch programs. So just because the government has regulations doesn't mean they're going to get a healthy meal.

Now let's answer a few of your questions.

Our first question comes from Murat (Murat) in Turkey. The question has to do with the meaning of the words "punch," "smack," "touch," and "tap."

"To punch" means to hit someone hard, usually with your hand – your fingers closed up in a little ball, what we would call a fist. "To smack" means to hit someone, but instead of hitting them with your fist you hit them with your open hand. "To touch" means to gently make contact with a part of the body. Perhaps you can barely feel it when someone touches you. A "tap" (tap) is when you, with your hand, take it and repeatedly touch someone. So you touch them two or three times rapidly, one after the other. That's to tap. You can also tap your feet by putting your foot up and down as it hits the floor.

For the verbs that indicate a very strong or violent contact, such as "punch" and "smack," we usually use the preposition "in." For example: "I hit him in the head." That's where my fist landed; that's where I punched him or I hit him. "I slapped him in his face." "He was punched in the stomach."

Verbs that indicate a more softer are gentle contact, like "touch" and "tap," usually use the preposition "on." "I touched her on her arm." "Grandpa patted me on the head." Sometimes you can use these verbs without the "on" as well. "I touched her elbow" means the same as "I touched her on her elbow."

Our next question is from Lucy (Lucy) in Australia – not our Lucy. The question has to do with the difference between the phrasal verbs "fall off" and "fall down." Both phrasal verbs mean basically the same as "fall," to move rapidly, and



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usually without much control from one position to another. “The boy was running and suddenly he tripped. His foot got caught in the ground and he fell down.” He fell. “The book was sitting on the table when I hit it accidentally and it fell off.” It went from the table down to the floor.

Although both “fall off” and “fall down” are similar in meaning, we sometimes use them for different situations. “Fall off” usually refers to something or someone who is up high, such as on a table or a bookshelf or even a chair and sofa, and then suddenly is on the ground or on a different surface. So, it goes from the table to the floor. That’s to fall off. “To fall down” usually refers to a person who is walking or running and suddenly their whole body goes down – goes from being vertical to horizontal – but they’re still on the same surface; they’re still on the ground or wherever they are. “Fall off,” then, is more specific – a more specific kind of situation. “To fall down” can be used, really, more generally. If you’re not sure where the person or thing was, you can still say it “fell down.” You can also sometimes simply say it “fell,” without the “down” or the “off.”

Finally, Jung (Jung) in Korea wants to know the meaning of the expression “a dollar down and a dollar a week.”

“A dollar down” means that you are giving someone a dollar for something that you want to buy, but you don’t have enough money to buy the whole thing or to pay for it completely. So if it cost 10 dollars, you could begin by giving the person a dollar. They give you the item – they give you the thing you’re buying, but you have to continue giving them more money until you have paid for the entire thing. So “a dollar a week” would mean that you would give them one dollar each week until you have paid off, or paid for this particular item.

We often talk about something being “down” when we are really referring to a loan that the person selling you the object is giving you. If you buy a house in the United States, you typically have to put 10 or 20 percent down; that is, 10 or 20 percent of the price of the home. So if the home is 100,000 dollars, you have to give 10,000 dollars. That’s your down payment. Then you give them so much money every month; 1,000 dollars a month, for example.

So that’s the meaning of this expression “a dollar down and a dollar a week.” It can be used for any amount, really, and any amount of time in terms of the length of the loan.



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If you have a question, you don't have to give us a dollar down and a dollar a week! You can just send us an email at [eslpod@eslpod.com](mailto:eslpod@eslpod.com), and we'll try to answer it on the Café.

From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thank you for listening. Come back and listen to us next time on the English Café.

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