
M: Hello everyone! And welcome back to another edition here at **EnglishPod**! My name is **Marco**.

C: And my name is **Catherine** and today we've got a great **upper intermediate level** lesson for you all about **animal and human rights**.

M: Right, so it's a very debatable topic: people want to protect animals; mistreatment of animals. And this is what we're gonna talk about today – protecting animals and giving them rights. Do you think animals have rights?

C: Ah, well, you know, I think we could leave that for the end. I don't wanna, you know, influence the argument here on today's dialogue, but, uh... yeah, as you've said I think it's very much a topic that people can go both ways on.

M: Uhu, so why don't we listen to our dialogue as two people discuss animal rights and let's get their opinions on things.

DIALOGUE, FIRST TIME

M: Alright, we're back and both of them had... have good points, right?

C: Yeah.

M: In favor and against. And, as you said, they also talk about human rights, which is also a very important topic.

C: Uhu.

M: But before we discuss this topic, why don't we take a look at the language, that was used, now in "**language takeaway**"?

Voice: Language takeaway.

M: Alright, so on language takeaway our first word today is **vulnerable**.

C: Okay, vulnerable is a great word; it's a way to describe something. And so, uh, something is vulnerable if it can't really protect itself.

M: Uhu. So you are **in danger of** being hurt?

C: Exactly, uhu.

M: Right, so you're... you're vulnerable. Now, uh, this isn't only used for animals, right? It can be as like an army is vulnerable if they don't have strong defenses on the... on the border or something.

C: Right, or my emotions: I'm feeling vulnerable, because I just had [a] really horrible week and I'm really depressed and I'm emotionally vulnerable.

M: Okay, very good, so vulnerable. And they also talked about **transgressions against** human rights.

C: Alright, so a transgression is a thing, it's a **noun**, and a **transgression** is like doing something harmful to or, um...

M: Against someone.

C: Against someone or something.

M: So a transgression, it's a **noun**, so it... is it doing something in a bad way? Or...

C: Exactly, it's a bad thing.

M: It's always negative.

C: Exactly.

M: You can't ??? it's not positive, right?

C: Right, and so, in many prayers, for example, in the Christian faith you say, you know: Lord, forgive me for my transgressions, for having, uh, kind of **cross the line** from doing good things to bad things, so you're doing bad things ???

M: Very good, so that's a good, uh, way of putting it to cross the line, to kind of go beyond where you should. Alright, so **transgressions**. And now, another very serious problem in the world is **poaching**. That's one other thing that they said, they should control **poaching**.

C: You might have heard this word in a different context, because it does have another meaning, but I'm just gonna explain the one meaning here that we're talking about, which is, uh, killing animals...

M: Uhu.

C: Especially **for sport** of for selling their skins and their **furs**.

M: Right, so that's poaching.

C: Uhu.

M: Um, what's the difference between poaching and hunting?

C: Uh, hunting can be legal, poaching is illegal.

M: Okay, so that's the main difference.

C: Uhu.

M: Hunting is usually for sport. You hunt either for food or for sport, right? Legal hunting. But poaching is usually you wanna sell like you said the fur or the skins or something.

C: Or the tusks on, uh, rhinos or something like that.

M: Exactly. Alright, so poaching. And then they talked about **synthetic products**. So what is... what is a synthetic product?

C: Well, a synthetic product is something that is **man-made**, so it's not natural **in that** it doesn't come from the earth. Uh, cotton is a natural product and plastic, for example, is synthetic or, um...

M: Or...

C: **Hit** another example.

M: Nylon.

C: Nylon is a really good synthetic product. And so people, who don't wanna use animal products like wool or leather, they prefer to use synthetic products.

M: Uhu, and I think maybe you've heard this in clothing, it's called **synthetic fibers**, right?

C: Uhu.

M: Like nylon or polyester.

C: Exactly.

M: These are all the words that we have for language takeaway today, so why don't we move on now to a couple of very interesting phrases, that we saw in the dialogue, now in "**fluency builder**"?

Voice: Fluency builder.

C: Okay this first phrase is, uh... well, it's a common one, but, uh, it's definitely not use in very happy circumstances, we say that something or someone is **at the mercy of** someone else.

M: Okay, so animals are at the mercy of human beings.

C: What does this mean exactly, **mercy**?

M: So basically it means that the animals in this case, uh, don't have control of what's going on, so human beings are the ones that control everything, so if I decide to... to kill them, then they are at my mercy, at my will, at my **vim**.

C: Exactly, and so, you could say: I'm at your mercy, Marco, please just like help me out with this!

M: Uhu.

C: It's like you're the one in control; you're the one who can help the situation.

M: Uhu.

C: **Will you** help.

M: Exactly, I'm at the mercy of someone. And then, uh, they were talking and debating this thing and... and an interesting comparison came up: **you can't compare apples and oranges**.

C: Alright, you're gonna hear this all the time in English, it's... it's not just a... a funny little phrase that the person uses, it's a very common **idiom**.

M: Uhu.

C: And so, we say: it's like apples and oranges.

M: Uhu.

C: Or: you can't compare apples and oranges.

M: Uhu.

C: And this is essentially saying: these are two different things.

M: Completely deferent.

C: Completely different, so, uh, I can't compare him and her, because it's apples and oranges. They're two different things, two different people.

M: Right, cause that's what in the movie, he said, they were like **peas and carrots**.

C: They just go together well.

M: They go together... is... does that make sense?

C: Not really. Forrest Gump is a little bit strange like that, but I... I think the meaning is that: if I say that's a big apple and I say that's a small apple, they're all apples, so I can concare... compare them...

M: Uhu.

C: But I say: this is a really big orange and that's a really big apple, well...

M: They're...

C: They're different.

M: Different, yeah.

C: You just... you just can't compare them.

M: Hehe. Alright, and, um... and towards the end the person said that, uh, **you're doing your part**.

C: Mm, uhu.

M: You're doing your part.

C: Yeah, so, uh, this is... this is a hard one to understand sometimes, because it's not like a part in a play. It's more like a part in society – you're helping make society or culture or civilization better.

M: So you're contributing.

C: Exactly.

M: So, for example, what... so what would be an example of a person doing their part towards society?

C: Well, for example, I don't own a car, I ride my bike.

M: Uhu.

C: And it's my way of doing my part to help the environment.

M: Okay, very good.

C: Because I can't... obviously, I can't, uh, buy a factory that's, you know, very green or I can't do all these things to change the world, so I'm gonna do small things that's my... that those are my way of doing my part.

M: Okay, so like another example would be **recycling**, that's doing your part.

C: Exactly.

M: Or in this case the person bought only synthetic, uh, products...

C: Uhu.

M: Nothing made from nature.

C: Uhu.

M: Alright, very good, so very interesting phrases. Um, why don't we listen to our dialogue for the last time and then we'll be right back.

DIALOGUE, SECOND TIME

M: Alright, so a debatable topic – animals and animal rights. Um, what do you think?

C: Well, I'll say this: I would be a **hypocrite** if I said that it's bad to hurt animals, because I'm me... I'm meat eater, I like to eat meat and I like to wear leather.

M: Uhu.

C: Uh, but I do think it's bad to mistreat animals, so I really... I try to buy, um, you know, **free-range** chicken or, uh, meat from places I know that treat the animals well. And I definitely disagree with **poaching** and with using animals, uh, especially **endangered animals**...

M: Uhu.

C: Um, for money and cash purposes and so, that's my position, but, uh what's yours? I mean I know you eat... eat meat too.

M: No, yeah, of course, and, uh, I think even though protection of animals is a very important topic and you don't want, um, the mistreatment of these little creatures that are very vulnerable to... to us, because we're... we're smarter than them **in the end**.

C: Uhu.

M: Um, but I think also it has to do a lot with, uh, **superstitions** sometimes and kind of mystical and magical things. For example, people killing rhinos, because they believe that the rhino horn has, uh... amazing curing properties or, you know... or the same thing with elephant tusks and stuff like that. So it also... it involves the certain aspect that people almost don't know any better, they just... they truly believe that these things actually work or that they'll help them, so they don't consider the... the... like in the dialogue said the... the imbalance that they creating in the environment or the... the consequences.

C: Or there're might be some very serious evolutionary consequences that we cannot even imagine and so...

M: Uhu.

C: You know, things... things change kind of overtime, sometimes quickly and sometimes slowly. But if we force change really quickly...

M: Uhu.

C: Who knows what the results are gonna be. It might be really negative for us.

M: Exactly, and that's what we wanna know now: what do you think, um, about these topics? Because in the end the environment, animals, uh... they're all connected: if you **wipe out** all the foxes in... in a forest and you're gonna have like, ah... you're gonna have too many snakes running around, right?

C: Yeah, uhu.

M: So, uh, what do you think? Come to englishpod.com and you can... where you can leave all your questions, comments or suggestions. And we're always there to help out.

C: So we hope to see you there and until next time everyone... Good bye!

M: Bye!
