



LESSON 9. PROBLEMS AND ACCIDENTS

Introduction Activity

There are many problems we can experience such as our car breaking down, our phone running out of battery, spilling a coffee, dropping something, burning our hand, losing our keys or forgetting an important document. Fortunately, we can avoid many of these situations but sometimes, when we are having a really bad day, we can experience all of these problems at once!





Listening 9.1

Friday Night Mishaps

- 1. Where is Henry going this evening to pick up his wife?**
 - A. the train station
 - B. the bus station
 - C. the airport
- 2. What was Henry doing Friday night when his problems started?**
 - A. He was watching a game on TV with some pals.
 - B. He was playing basketball with a few of his friends.
 - C. He was having a barbeque with a couple of buddies.
- 3. The vase broke when one of Henry's friends:**
 - A. hit it with a ball.
 - B. accidentally dropped it.
 - C. bumped into it with his arm.
- 4. How did the manuscript of the book become totally ruined?**
 - A. It burned up in a fire.
 - B. Hot water damaged the entire copy.
 - C. Someone mistakenly threw it into the trash.

5. From the tone of the conversation, what sort of reaction does Henry expect from his wife about his misfortunes?

- A. disappointment
- B. anger
- C. contentment



Matching the vocabulary with the correct meaning

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. mishaps (<i>noun</i>) | a. be in bad trouble |
| 2. horsing around (<i>phrasal verb</i>) | b. trying to explain or justify the causes of a situation |
| 3. to pull something over someone's eyes (<i>idiom</i>) | c. to deceive or hide the truth |
| 4. be in hot water (<i>idiom</i>) | d. Accidents |
| 5. digging yourself out of something (<i>idiom</i>) | e. playing around or wasting time |

Fill in the gaps with the correct word or expression from above:

1. Don't even try _____. I'll be watching you very carefully.
2. Hey! Stop _____ and get to work.
3. There's no way you're going to be able _____. It was your fault, so just admit it.
4. Oh no, you broke the window! You're going to be _____ when mom gets back from the store.
5. There were a few unfortunate _____ while we were on vacation.

Role-Playing Activity

Role-Play the following accident-related scenarios with your teacher.



You're an accident victim making a report to a police officer.



You're a reporter asking bystanders to describe a crash they witnessed.



You're at the hospital with an injured relative, explaining the injury to the doctor.



You're describing the damage from a fire to an insurance agent.



You're on the phone with a 911 operator.

How to give people good advice

But remember: when giving good advice, strategy is even more important than language. Here is some advice about when and how to give advice.

First of all, make sure that the person who is talking to you is actually soliciting advice.

1. Listen carefully to the person asking for advice. Every situation is unique.
2. Put yourself in their shoes (imagine it is you living their problem in their situation).
3. Think about the consequences of taking your advice.
4. Empathize. The other person reaction will not be just rational, but also emotional.
5. Brainstorm to get good ideas
6. Be honest about the good and bad things of your advice.
7. Set a good example. If you don't follow your own advice, nobody will listen to you.
8. Understand that that person may or may not take your advice, it's their choice.

There are various ways how we can ask for/give advice in English. Imagine you have a problem and you ask one of your friends for a piece of advice, or a friend asks you for advice. You can ask for advice/ give advice by using some of the following expressions:

Asking for advice

What do you think I should do?

What should I do?

What do you suggest?

What do you advise me to do?

If I were me what would you do?

What ought I to do?

Do you think that I should...?

Giving advice

If I were you I would/wouldn't... .

If I were in your shoes/ position I would ...

You had better/ you'd better.... .

You should...

Your only option is to....

Why don't you....?

Have you thought about....?

Have you tried ... ?

Give your advice

1. John can't sleep at night. He has tried to go to bed earlier and wake up earlier, but he can't. He often has trouble sleeping at night. When he finally can sleep, it is usually very late, so he feels tired the next day.
2. Susan doesn't have enough free time to be with her boyfriend. She and her boyfriend both work at the hospital. The problem is, they both work different shifts at different times. This makes it hard for them to find time to be together.
3. Gary wants a promotion and a raise at work. Gary has worked at the same company for ten years. He likes his job but he feels he is ready for more responsibility.
4. Barbara wants to get better grades in school. She gets B's right now in most of her classes at high school. She would like to get A's.
5. Peter wants to learn how to drive. All his friends learned how to drive at driving school. Now, they all have their driver's license and he feels a little jealous.
6. Kathy wants more privacy at home. She lives with her parents and her younger brother and sister. She has to share a bedroom with her sister and she feels like she doesn't have enough privacy.
7. Michael wants to quit smoking. He is thirty-two years old and has smoked for fifteen years. He usually only smokes when he goes out with his friends and after he has dinner. He likes to have a cigarette at these times.
8. Jerry wants to lose weight. He is one hundred eighty centimeters tall. He weighs one hundred and ten kilograms. He would like to weigh ninety kilograms.

Discuss and use them in a sentence

Break	Drop	Chip
Damage	Spill	Scratch
Fix	Ruin	Slip
Repair	Tear	Trip
Replace	Leak	Lose
Burn	Stain	Forget

SUBORDINATING OR COORDINATING CONJUNCTION

Coordination

- Coordination gives **equal attention** to **two** items.
- Use coordinating conjunctions: **and, but, for, or, nor, yet, and so.**

The dog ate Marvin's favorite tie, **and** the cat rubbed white hair on Marvin's black suit.

Both clauses could stand alone. When joined with and, they get equal attention.

You can also coordinate with a **semicolon**.

Main clause + ; + **main clause.**

Main clause + ; + **transition** + ; + **main clause.**

The interviewer had seven Persian **cats**; **as a result, she** would understand Marvin's predicament. Still Balanced

Subordination

- Subordination gives **less attention** to **one** idea so that the **other** has emphasis.
- Use subordinate conjunctions, such as **because**, **even though**, and **when**.

Since Marvin tried to clean his suit, he was late to the interview.

Here are the subordinate conjunctions.

- | | | | |
|------------|-----------------|------------------------------|--------------------|
| ■ after | ■ even though | ■ since | ■ unless |
| ■ although | ■ if, even if | ■ so [that implied], | ■ when, whenever |
| ■ as | ■ in order that | so that | ■ where, wherever, |
| ■ because | ■ once | ■ than | whereas |
| ■ before | ■ provided that | ■ that | ■ whether |
| | | ■ though | ■ while |

Use a **comma** if you subordinate the **first** of the two clauses

Subordinate clause + , + main clause.

Even though cat hair clung to Marvin's pant **legs, he** still got the job.

The **first** clause is **less** important

The **second** clause has **more** emphasis because its thought is **complete**.

Use **no punctuation** if you subordinate the **second** of the two clauses.

Main clause + Ø + subordinate clause.

Marvin smiled at his **success as** cat hair wafted in his wake.

Now the **first** clause is the **most important**.

The **second** clause has **less emphasis** because its thought is incomplete.

Point out the conjunctions in the following sentences and state whether they are coordinating or subordinating.

1. You will succeed if you work harder.
2. We arrived after they left.
3. I waited till he returned from office.
4. Bread and milk is wholesome food.
5. You will not get the prize unless you deserve it.
6. Do not go before I return from the market.
7. I can't lend you any money, for I have none.
8. Since you have apologized we will not take any further actions against you.
9. The thief fled lest he should be caught.
10. I will be upset if you don't accept my invitation.
11. She didn't come because you didn't invite her.
12. He is smarter than his boss.
13. My grandfather died when I was a child.
14. Please stay here till I return.
15. He asked whether he could go.
16. Give me something to drink, else I shall die of thirst.
17. He deserved the prize, for he worked really hard.
18. We can travel by land or air.
19. Either you are wrong or I am.
20. I hear that you are working for a multi-national company.

Complete each sentence using the subordinating conjunction from the parenthesis

1. I visit the Grand Canyon _____ I go to Arizona. (once, whenever, wherever)
2. This is the place _____ we stayed last time we visited. (where, when, how)
3. _____ you win first place, you will receive a prize. (wherever, if, unless)
- 4 You won't pass the test _____ you study. (when, if, unless)
5. I could not get a seat, _____ I came early. (as though, when)
6. We are leaving Wednesday _____ or not it rains. (if, whether, though)
- 7 Pay attention to your work _____ you will not make mistakes. (so that, unless, or)
8. The musicians delivered a rousing performance _____ they had rehearsed often. (though, as, once)
9. She's honest _____ everyone trusts her. (if, so, when)
10. Write this down _____ you forget. (or, when, lest)

Complete each sentence using the subordinating conjunction from the parenthesis

1. My car has a radio _____ a CD player. (but, or, and)
2. Sharon hates to listen to rap music, _____ will she tolerate heavy metal. (but, nor, or)
3. Carol wanted to drive to Colorado, _____ Bill insisted that they fly. (and, or, but)
4. I'm afraid of heights, _____ I appreciate the view from the top of this building. (and, yet, nor)
5. I have to be on time, _____ my boss will be annoyed if I'm late. (and, nor, for)
6. Do you like chocolate _____ vanilla ice cream better? (or, nor, and)
7. I have to go to work at six, _____ I'm waking up at four. (but, so, yet)
8. I was on time, _____ everyone else was late. (so, but, for)
9. Nadia doesn't like to drive, _____ she takes the bus everywhere. (but, yet, so)
10. Our trip to the museum was interesting, _____ there were several new artifacts on display. (but, for, yet)



Listening 9.2

Accidents

I (1) _____ how many accidents I've had in my life. I've had a few serious ones where I've ended up in (2) _____. Traffic accidents are the worst. They're always painful. I (3) _____ had too many work-related accidents. I suppose that's because I do (4) _____ work and that's not so dangerous. Most of my accidents are those around the house. I've lost count of the (5) _____ of times I've hit my thumb with a hammer. I'm also really good at standing up and (6) _____ my head on something. I'm not as bad as my friend (7) _____. He's a real accident looking for somewhere to happen. Almost every time we meet, he has some story to tell about his (8) _____ accident. He's (9) _____ unbelievable. I think I'd be very (10) _____ if I were his mother.

What's the problem?

1. I cut my finger.
2. I cut my leg quite badly.
3. I twisted my ankle
4. I broke my arm
5. I've got a concussion
6. I burnt my hand
7. I've got a bruise on my arm

How did it happen?

- a. taking something out of a hot oven
- b. playing football
- c. using a knife
- d. I fell off my bike
- e. I fell over
- f. I hit it on the side of my desk
- g. running for a bus

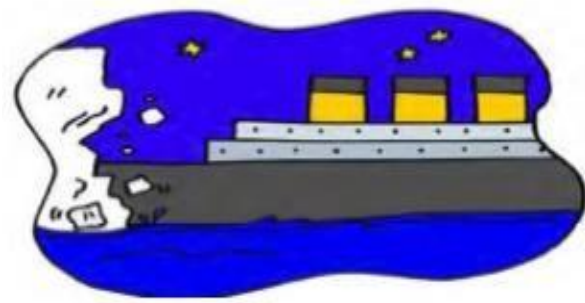
Result

- a. I'm confused; don't know where I am.
- b. It's very painful
- c. I can't use it
- d. It's swollen and blue/black in colour
- e. it's bleeding quite a lot
- f. It's bleeding a bit
- g. I can't walk on it easily

Solutions

- a. rest
- b. plaster and a sling
- c. ice pack
- d. special cream
- e. a plaster
- f. a bandage
- g. rest

Building Activity



Label the pictures with the following vocabulary. tree, accident, car, crash, accident, stuck, drunk, sling, cast, fire, bandage, cliff, fall, microphone, electrical, ski, broken arm, cameraman, accident, reporter, spilling, pole, drunk, bar, building, stapler, pain, finger, cone, computer, ice cream, shock, plug, iceberg, hit, sink

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_5JkdXNk1Ro



1. Describe the problems you saw in the video?
2. Have any of these problems happened to you?
3. How would you deal with these situations?
4. Have you ever had a bad day at the office?

Useful Expressions and Idioms

- **achilles heel** - This expression refers to a vulnerable area or a weak spot, in an otherwise strong situation, that could cause one's downfall or failure.
- **alarm bells ringing** - If something *sets the alarm bells ringing*, it makes you begin to worry, because it shows that there may be a problem.
- **asking for trouble** - Someone who is *asking for trouble* is behaving so stupidly that he/she is likely to have problems.
- **back to the wall** - If you have your *back to the wall*, you are in serious difficulty. **ball and chain** - This term refers to a burden or problem that ties you down and prevents you from doing what you want. It can also refer to one's spouse.
- **bite off more than you can chew** - If you *bite off more than you can chew*, you try to do something that is too difficult for you, or more than you can manage.
- **on the blink** - If a machine is *on the blink*, it is not working properly and needs servicing or repair.
- **break the back of the beast** - If someone *breaks the back of the beast*, they succeed in overcoming a major difficulty.
- **can of worms** - To describe a situation as a *can of worms* means that it is complicated, unpleasant and difficult to deal with.

Use them in a sentence

1. What sorts of accidents can people have in the home?
2. What typical problems can we experience with a computer?
3. What troubles can we have with a mobile phone?
4. What are some dangerous things that can be found around the home? What could happen?
5. What are some dangerous things that can be found in the garden? What could happen?
6. Have you ever broken something expensive?
7. Have you ever damaged something that belonged to someone else? What did you do?
8. What problems or accidents have you had at work?
9. Have you ever had a bad day where everything seems to go wrong?
10. What can be done to prevent accidents?
11. Have you ever had a car that has broken down?
12. Have you ever lost your keys? What did you do?
13. Have you ever locked your keys in the car? What happened?
14. Have you ever forgotten an important document?
15. Some people think more accidents happen when there is a full moon? Do you believe this superstition?

The End