

EPISODE 53

LEVEL B2

READING COMPREHENSION



PET PEEVES

'Ugh, I just hate people who leave things lying around and will not tidy them up.'

'Are you talking about your...?'

'Yes, I AM talking about Rona, my flatmate. Can you believe it? She didn't even bother to hang her clothes up properly, but left them lying on the floor, **let alone** the piles of books and papers scattered all around the house and half-finished cups of coffee left on the table. She is always doing this and I feel **I've had enough**.'

'I know what you mean. Not that I'm perfectly tidy myself or something, but **it gets to me** (= it makes me angry) when people just have no respect for those who they live with.'

'And there is one more thing that actually **drove me mad** (= annoyed me) yesterday.

Although I avoid doing it, I had lent Rona one of my books that she was desperate to read. So yesterday she hands me the book back, all happy, I flick through the book and what do I see? My book with ten or so pages **dog-eared** (= with their page corners damaged by folding)!!! I felt I could kill her there and then!'

'No wonder the girl **gets on your nerves**. There is also one person in my office who is a real **pain in the neck** (= annoying person). Her name is Teresa.'

'What about her?'

'To begin with, she keeps using the office phone for private calls, which **doesn't bother me** (= doesn't annoy me) that much, but the thing is that we all have to listen to her quite intimate conversations with her boyfriend.'

'It's just **appalling** (= awful)!'

'It IS. And then she will **go on** (= talk so much that people become annoyed or bored) about her personal problems and make us listen about people we do not have the slightest wish to know. It really **bugs** (= irritates) me.'

'I just can't understand how thoughtless and carefree people can be.'

'But I guess we are not ideal, either. I wonder which behaviour of mine could be someone's **pet peeve** (= a kind of behaviour you hate)?'



More contexts for the new words:

- I thought I might go out with them, but **I can't be bothered**.
(= used for saying that you feel lazy or it is too much effort and that's why you will not do it)
- My Mum keeps **bugging** me to get married and settle down.
(= continue asking someone to do something in a way that annoys them)



EXERCISE 1

Write words and expressions next to their definitions.

1. = a kind of behaviour you hate
2. = an annoying person
3. = awful
4. = not to mention
5. = to talk a lot about sth
6. = with folded corners



EXERCISE 2

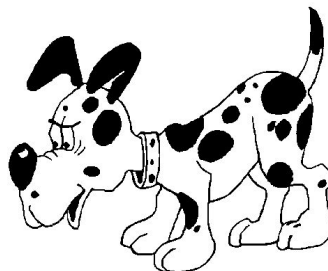
Use the pictures to complete the questions. Then answer the questions.



1. What kind of behavior really s you Why?
2. Which one of your friends is a real pain in the



? Why?



3. Do -eared books bother you? Why / why not?

ENGLISH IN USE



In this lesson there were a few structures used for indicating that we are angry. One of them is:

*'I hate people who leave things lying around and **will not tidy** them up.'*

*'And then she **will go on** about her personal problems.'*

WILL does not refer to the future here, but is used to emphasize that the behaviour is repetitive and irritating. Look at a handful of other examples:

*She **will leave** the light on even if she isn't in the room.*

*They are the sort of people who **will not just show up**, but will not say 'Sorry', either.*

IDIOM CLOSE-UP



A/ Why does your new colleague get on your nerves?

*B/ Her work simply isn't **UP TO SCRATCH**.*

If something is **up to scratch**, it is at an acceptable standard.

PHRASAL VERBS CLOSE-UP



1. When you **RUN** somebody **DOWN**, you criticize them, often unfairly.

*Sue's big sister is always **running** her **down**, even though Sue is much smarter than her.*

*You're a wonderful mother. Why do you **run** yourself **down**?*

2. When you **RUB** something **IN**, you talk to a person about something that they are trying to forget because they feel bad about it.

*I know it was my fault, but I wish people would stop **rubbing** it **in**!*

*OK, I lost, no need to **rub** it **in**!*



EXERCISE 3

Match the sentence halves.

1. You're always running
 2. OK, I made a mistake,
 3. Your last essay wasn't
- a. me down!
 - b. up to scratch.
 - c. you don't have to rub it in.

NEWS



TOP 3 PET PEEVES

A street survey was conducted last week, asking **passers-by** about their top pet peeves. Here are the things that drive mad most of the respondents:

1. People smoking everywhere.

It is simply **unfeasible** to go anywhere without walking into a cloud of **billowing** cigarette smoke. Despite numerous bans, smokers are everywhere – at the bus stops, next to the bus stops, around entrances to all buildings. Lung cancer from passive smoking guaranteed.

2. People on public transport.

It is unbelievable how **obtuse** people can be on public transport. Getting on the bus, everyone seems to stop right after entering, thus blocking the doorway and preventing the others from getting on. Also, people tend to take the **aisle** seats, leaving the window ones unoccupied, so if you want to sit down you have to fight your way past them. Nervous breakdown guaranteed.

3. People parking badly.

Last but not least, drivers are also **notorious** for being **thickheaded**. Everyone seems to routinely **flout** the **Highway Code**, and parking in disabled spaces is **rampant**. Accidents guaranteed.

So, next time you smoke, get on the bus, or drive a car, think twice. Maybe it is you who drives people mad?

GLOSSARY

- **passers-by** – people who walk in the street
- **unfeasible** – impossible
- **billowing** – hovering
- **obtuse** – stupid
- **aisle** – narrow passage
- **notorious** – famous for sth bad
- **thickheaded** – stupid
- **flout** – break the rules
- **Highway Code** – the law connected with traffic
- **rampant** - widespread

KEY TO EXERCISES

Ex.1

1. a pet peeve
2. a pain in the neck
3. appalling
4. let alone
5. to go on about sth
6. dog-eared

Ex.2

1. bugs
2. neck
3. dog

Ex.3

1. a
2. c
3. b