

## 1.07 Lesson 2A, Exercises 1 and 2

**Speaker 1** I like contemporary dramas that are set in the real world. One of my all-time favourites is *Billy Elliot*. It's set in a run-down mining town in the north of England, and it's about an eleven-year-old, working-class boy who wants to become a ballet dancer. But his dad and brother, who are a bit old-fashioned and narrow-minded, are dead against it and want him to become a boxer. But when his dad gets to see his son dance, he comes round to the idea and lets Billy go to ballet school. It's a really heart-warming story.

**Speaker 2** I really like action-packed thrillers, with a fast-moving plot and lots of twists and turns. For example, I just love the James Bond films, especially the more recent ones, with Daniel Craig as Bond. He's such a cool guy, you know, smartly dressed, good-looking and always so self-assured. He gets involved in some hair-raising adventures, but he remains cool-headed however much danger he's in, and he's always quick-witted enough to get out of trouble.

**Speaker 3** The only films I like are sci-fi and fantasy. I love films that are set in the far-distant future, like *Blade Runner*, for example. It's quite an old film – it was made in 1982, but it's a real classic. It's quite slow-moving and difficult to follow at times, but it's a film you can watch over and over again. The main character, played by Harrison Ford, is an ex-cop who's brought out of retirement to help find and destroy things called 'replicants', which are basically genetically-engineered robots

that are indistinguishable from humans. These man-made replicants have super-human strength but limited lifespans and they want to force the people who created them to prolong their short lives. I guess the film's really a futuristic detective thriller.

## 1.08 Lesson 2B, Exercises 3 and 6

**Chris** I watch TV most days I guess, usually when I come in from school. I do it to unwind really, and give my brain a rest. I'll watch more or less anything, and Mum comes into my room and –

**Joanna** You've got a TV in your bedroom?

**Chris** Yeah, and Mum comes in and she's like, 'Why are you watching that rubbish?'

**Steve** Yeah, my parents are a bit like that too. But they're just as bad, forever watching cheesy sitcoms and quiz shows. It's true there's a lot of rubbish on, though, don't you think?

**Joanna** I suppose. My main criticism of TV these days is the way women are portrayed. They're all impossibly thin and good-looking. And everything is so sexualised. The women and girls are all in relationships with guys and the relationships are, um, nothing like what happens in the real world.

**Steve** Yeah, I think you're right about the world we see in TV programmes not being realistic. There's always a beginning, a middle and an end – usually a happy one – and things just aren't like that in real life.

**Chris** Stories are always like that, though, whether on TV or in books or whatever.

**Steve** Do you watch a lot of telly then, Joanna?

**Joanna** I suppose I watch quite a lot ... but I don't have a TV in my bedroom, like Chris does. I like to watch the news and find out what's going on in the world. And, um, we usually sit down together after dinner as a family and watch telly ... We like the same kinds of things, luckily.

**Steve** What kind of stuff do you watch?

**Joanna** We watch dramas and films mainly, and series like *Heroes*.

**Steve** Really? I can't stand all that fantasy and superhero stuff.

**Joanna** *Heroes* is great. The storylines are really good.

**Chris** I'm with Joanna on that. The stories are fascinating, as are the characters – really well drawn.

**Steve** I prefer series like *Lost*. The stories and characters are great too, but unlike *Heroes*, *Lost* is set in the real world.

**Joanna** I'm a big fan of *Lost* too, but I wouldn't say it's set in the real world. In fact one of the reasons I watch it is to escape from the real world. You can really lose yourself in programmes like that.

**Chris** Well, our family can never agree on something to watch. My mum and sister always want to watch romantic comedies or slushy sitcoms. Me and my dad always go for the thrillers or the action-packed blockbusters. But I guess it's just that men and women have different tastes.

**Joanna** I think that's just stereotyping people, I don't think it holds true for everybody. I'm not a big fan of rom-coms, like your mum and sister – I prefer something with a bit of action ...

**Chris** The exception that proves the rule!

**Joanna** Yeah. Whatever.

**Steve** *Lost*'s starting in a few minutes. Shall we watch it?

## 1.09 Lesson 2C, Exercises 5 and 6

**Linda** Willy!

**Willy** It's all right. I came back.

**Linda** Why? What happened? Did something happen, Willy?

**Willy** No, nothing happened.

**Linda** You didn't smash the car, did you?

**Willy** I said nothing happened. Didn't you hear me?

**Linda** Don't you feel well?

**Willy** I'm tired to the death. I couldn't make it. I just couldn't make it, Linda.

**Linda** Where were you all day? You look terrible.

**Willy** I got as far as little above Yonkers. I stopped for a cup of coffee. Maybe it was the coffee.

**Linda** What?

**Willy** I suddenly couldn't drive any more. The car kept going off on to the shoulder, y'know?

**Linda** Oh. Maybe it was the steering again. I don't think Angelo knows the Studebaker.

**Willy** No, it's me, it's me. Suddenly I realize I'm goin' sixty miles an hour and I don't remember the last five minutes. I'm – I can't seem to – keep my mind to it.

**Linda** Maybe it's your glasses. You never went for your new glasses.

**Willy** No, I see everything. I came back ten miles an hour. It took me nearly four hours from Yonkers.

**Linda** Well, you'll just have to take a rest, Willy; you can't continue this way.

**Willy** I just got back from Florida.

**Linda** But you didn't rest your mind. Your mind is overactive, and the mind is what counts, dear.

**Willy** I'll start out in the morning. Maybe I'll feel better in the morning. These goddam arch supports are killing me.

**Linda** Take an aspirin. Should I get you an aspirin? It'll soothe you.

**Willy** I was driving along, you understand? And I was fine. I was even observing the scenery. You can imagine, me looking at the scenery, on the road every week of my life. But it's so beautiful up there, Linda, the trees are so thick, and the sun is warm. I opened the windshield and just let the warm air bathe over me. And then all of a sudden I'm goin' off the road! I'm tellin' ya, I absolutely forgot I was driving. If I'd've gone the other way over the white line I might've killed somebody. So I went on again – and five minutes later I'm dreamin' again, and I nearly – I have such thoughts, I have such strange thoughts.

## 1.10 Lesson 2C, Exercises 7 and 8

**Linda** Willy, dear. Talk to them again. There's no reason why you can't work in New York.

**Willy** They don't need me in New York. I'm the New England man. I'm vital in New England.

**Linda** But you're sixty years old. They can't expect you to keep travelling every week.

**Willy** I'll have to send a wire to Portland. I'm supposed to see Brown and Morrison tomorrow morning at ten o'clock to show the line. Goddammit, I could sell them!

**Linda** Why don't you go down to the place tomorrow and tell Howard you've simply got to work in New York? You're too accommodating, dear.

**Willy** If old man Wagner was alive I'd a been in charge of New York now! That man was a prince, he was a masterful man. But that boy of his, that Howard, he don't appreciate. When I went north the first time, the Wagner Company didn't know where New England was!

**Linda** Why don't you tell those things to Howard, dear?

**Willy** I will, I definitely will. Is there any cheese?

**Linda** I'll make you a sandwich.

**Willy** No, go to sleep. I'll take some milk. I'll be up right away. The boys in?

**Linda** They're sleeping. Happy took Biff on a date tonight.

**Willy** That so?

**Linda** It was so nice to see them shaving together, one behind the other, in the bathroom. And going out together. You notice? The whole house smells of shaving lotion.

**Willy** Figure it out. Work a lifetime to pay off a house. You finally own it, and there's nobody to live in it.

**Linda** Well, dear, life is a casting off. It's always that way.

**Willy** No, no, some people – some people accomplish something. Did Biff say anything after I went this morning?

**Linda** You shouldn't have criticized him, Willy, especially after he just got off the train. You mustn't lose your temper with him.

**Willy** When the hell did I lose my temper? I simply asked him if he was making any money. Is that a criticism?

**Linda** But, dear, how could he make any money?

**Willy** There's such an undercurrent in him. He became a moody man. Did he apologize when I left this morning?

**Linda** He was crestfallen, Willy. You know how he admires you. I think if he finds himself, then you'll both be happier and not fight any more.

**Willy** How can he find himself on a farm? Is that a life? A farmhand? In the beginning, when he was young, I thought, well, a young man, it's good for him to tramp around, take a lot of different jobs. But it's more than ten years now and he has yet to make thirty-five dollars a week!

**Linda** He's finding himself, Willy.

**Willy** Not finding yourself at the age of thirty-four is a disgrace!

**Linda** Shh!

**Willy** The trouble is he's lazy, goddammit!

**Linda** Willy, please!

**Willy** Biff is a lazy bum!

**Linda** They're sleeping. Get something to eat. Go on down.

**Willy** Why did he come home? I would like to know what brought him home.

**Linda** I don't know. I think he's still lost, Willy. I think he's very lost.

**Willy** Biff Loman is lost. In the greatest country in the world a young man with such – personal attractiveness, gets lost. And such a hard worker. There’s one thing about Biff – he’s not lazy.

**Linda** Never.

**Willy** I’ll see him in the morning; I’ll have a nice talk with him. I’ll get him a job selling. He could be big in no time. My God! Remember how they used to follow him around in high school? When he smiled at one of them their faces lit up. When he walked down the street ...

## 1.11 Lesson 2F, Exercises 3 and 4

- Interviewer** How long have you been homeless?
- Young woman** For about a year now.
- Interviewer** How did you become homeless?
- Young woman** I had family problems. I was living at home and I wasn't getting on very well with my mum. We used to row every day. And then I started skipping school and they suspended me and then finally I was expelled ...
- Interviewer** So you were at home every day?
- Young woman** Not really. It got me down being at home. I slept there, but I didn't hang around during the day. I used the place like a hotel, that's what Mum said.
- Interviewer** So what made you leave in the end?
- Young woman** I'd got into drugs by then, and I'd steal to feed my habit, you know, shoplifting stuff.
- Interviewer** Did you steal from your parents?
- Young woman** From my mum, yeah. My dad doesn't live with us. I'd nick money from her purse. And one day she confronted me and accused me of stealing from her and we had an almighty row. That's when I walked out.
- Interviewer** And you came to London.
- Young woman** Yeah.
- Interviewer** And where did you stay?
- Young woman** At first I slept rough, on park benches, under bridges – it was summer, so it wasn't too bad. Then I started going to a hostel. You can take a shower and get a good night's sleep. But they kick you out at nine and you can't go back till five.
- Interviewer** So what do you do during the day?
- Young woman** Wander around, hang out with other homeless people.
- Interviewer** And have you kicked your drug habit?
- Young woman** Yeah, pretty much. I haven't taken anything for a month now.
- Interviewer** So where do you get money for food?
- Young woman** By begging.
- Interviewer** How do people react when you ask them for money?
- Young woman** Most people ignore me and walk on. A few are nice and give me a bit of loose change. You get the occasional one who's aggressive and nasty.
- Interviewer** Does your mum know where you are?
- Young woman** She knows I'm in London. I ring her about once a month to let her know I'm OK.
- Interviewer** Do you want to go back home?
- Young woman** I don't know. I want to get off the streets, but I'm not sure about going home. I used to see homeless people on the streets and wonder why they just didn't go home. But it isn't always that easy.
- Interviewer** Where do you see yourself in a year or two from now?
- Young woman** I dunno. I'd like to get a job, but I haven't really got any qualifications.
- Interviewer** Why don't you go to college?
- Young woman** Yeah, maybe I will.



### 1.12 Lesson 2F, Exercises 7 and 8

This man looks quite young – possibly not even twenty. It doesn't look like he's had a particularly hard life. I doubt he's been homeless for very long. He certainly appears to be in better shape than the man in the second photo. His clothes look like they're in good condition, and it looks like he has enough layers to keep warm. He's sitting on a bunk bed in what's presumably a night shelter of some kind – there are plenty of other beds crammed into the room. I imagine he hasn't been sitting there for long, and he probably doesn't spend his days there. These shelters are only open at night, so it's likely he's on the streets during the day. He must feel quite vulnerable when he doesn't get a bed in a shelter and has to spend the night on the street. I imagine he's short of money and probably has to beg to be able to buy food. He doesn't appear to have any possessions with him. I guess life is pretty tough for him. I wonder if he's run away from home for some reason, maybe after quarrelling with his parents, or he might have a drugs problem.

## 1.13 Skills Round-up 1–2, Exercises 5 and 6

**Boss** So have you relocated to the UK?

**Edgars** No, I'm just here for two weeks – to try and find a job. Then, assuming I find one, I'll relocate.

**Boss** And, I guess you have several interviews lined up ...

**Edgars** Yes ... well, I have this one and two others. But this job with InterPost is the one I'd like most of the three.

**Boss** I suppose you have to say that really.

**Edgars** But it's true.

**Boss** You'll miss Latvia though, won't you?

**Edgars** Yes, of course. But I can visit during the holidays.

**Boss** Holidays? What holidays?

**Edgars** I thought ... I mean, aren't there ...?

**Boss** Only kidding! You'll start with twenty days plus national holidays. And then, the entitlement increases by a day for every two years that you remain with the company. How does that sound?

**Edgars** Fine.

**Boss** Good, well, I think ... don't worry about that alarm, they're always testing it without letting us know!

**Edgars** OK.

**Boss** What was I going to say? Oh, yes. Well I think that covers most of what I want to talk about. The next stage will ... Can you smell burning?

**Edgars** Yes.

**Boss** I think we'd better get out of here.

**Edgars** OK! Which way?

**Boss** Follow me.

...

**Boss** Sorry about all this. Really unfortunate. I hope it hasn't thrown you too much.

**Edgars** Not at all.

**Boss** Good. You know, I think we'd just about finished anyway. Our human resources department will be in touch soon. Actually, off the record, I can say that we will definitely be offering you the job. I've seen all the candidates now and you've got the best experience, qualifications ... basically you're just what we're looking for.

**Edgars** Thanks! That's great news.

**Boss** These other interviews you're having ... have you had them already?

**Edgars** Er ... I've had one already. The other one is tomorrow.

**Boss** Oh, right. Well, what do you think?

**Edgars** About what?

**Boss** Do you want to accept this job offer? I know we're not doing things quite by the book here, but it would be good for both of us to get it all done and dusted right here and now. Don't you agree?

**Edgars** Well, I suppose so ... yes.

**Boss** So, you're accepting the job?

**Edgars** Yes, I am!

**Boss** Great! Let's shake on that!

**Edgars** OK.

**Boss** I bet this is the first time you've been offered a job in a car park, eh, Edgars?

**Edgars** Definitely!

**Boss** So, what's your next move? Look for somewhere to live?

**Edgars** Yes. While I'm here, I can start finding out about rented accommodation.

**Boss** I can give you the details of a good letting agency.

**Edgars** Thanks.

**Boss** Assuming my address book hasn't been destroyed by the fire.

**Edgars** It doesn't look too bad from here. I can't see any smoke.



## 1.14 Get Ready for your Exam 2, Exercise 3

Stories of colonies of alligators living in the sewers under the streets of New York date back to the early 1930s. The first sighting was reported in *The New York Times*. According to the newspaper, a group of boys was shovelling snow into a manhole cover, when a large alligator emerged. When it threatened to attack the boys, they beat it to death with their shovels.

At about the same time, men working in the sewers claimed to have come across a large number of alligators, a claim which was verified when city officials launched an investigation. As the news spread, more sightings were reported, including one of an alligator in the subway. Passengers who were waiting for a train at Brooklyn Museum station were startled by the sudden emergence of a two-foot alligator from a rubbish bin on the platform. However, witnesses later told the police that shortly before the alligator appeared, a passenger had been seen putting a large bundle into the rubbish bin. However, this possible explanation did little to quash the rumours. People began to speculate as to how the alligators might have got into the sewers, as they are not native to that part of the United States. The most frequent explanation was that wealthy families would return to New York after holidaying in Florida, bringing alligators with them as presents for their children. When the alligators grew too large for comfort and became unsuitable as pets, the family would flush the reptiles down the toilet. The alligators would survive in the sewer by feeding on rats and rubbish, and would reproduce to form large colonies. Eventually they would grow to enormous sizes, striking fear into sewer workers and anyone foolish enough to venture down into the tunnels beneath the streets. However, zoologists believe that a sewer is not a fit environment for an alligator, and they would be unlikely to be able to reproduce down there. The animals need warm temperatures all year round. They also point out that if an alligator really did get into the sewer, it would not stay in the sewer but would try to get out. But, despite the scientific evidence, the rumours persist to this day.