



ESL Podcast 182 – A Star Trek Convention

GLOSSARY

whoa – an informal greeting used when you are surprised

* Whoa! Is that your new car?

check you out! – look at you!; a way to show that you are surprised to see someone in a different way

* She came to work with pink hair and Mike said, “Check you out!”

costume – clothes people wear when they want to look like someone or something else

* He came to the party dressed in a Superman costume last year.

Don't get me wrong – Don't misunderstand me; someone uses this expressions when they think that other people might think they mean something else

* Don't get me wrong. He's a good basketball player. I don't want him on the team because he doesn't get along with the other players.

fan – someone who admires, or has a good opinion of someone or something

* He's been a baseball fan since he played on a team as a child.

no offense – usually said before or after something that might hurt or upset someone, it's another way to say “Don't get hurt or upset,” or “Don't think what I say is unkind”

* I told her, “No offense, but I don't really want to go on a date with your brother.”

geek – an unfashionable person or someone who doesn't have good social skills

* She is a fashion model now, but can you believe she was a geek in high school?

exhibition – a display or show

* I always enjoy the art exhibitions in the museum.

collector – a person who gets and keeps things; usually things that are rare or valuable

* She is a stamp collector with a very large collection.



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autograph – a signature, usually from a famous person

* After the movie, he waited in line for three hours to get Brad Pitt's autograph.

star – a famous performer, such as actors and musicians

* Who is the star of the new TV show?

highlight – the best part, or the most important part

* The highlight of her year was her college graduation.

crowd – a big group of people close together in the same place

* The crowd was so noisy it was difficult to hear the speech.

I can't make it – I am not able to come

* I can't make it to your party on Saturday because I have to work.

how come? – why?; what is the reason?

* The boss asked her, "How come you weren't at work yesterday?"

comic book – a book of drawings, usually with words, that tell a story

* Batman is my favorite comic book character of all time.

live long and prosper – a famous greeting from the Star Trek TV shows and movies; used when saying good-bye to someone, meaning, "I wish you good luck to your future"

* I was sure he watched Star Trek because he told me to "Live long and prosper..."



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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Why is Guido not going to this year's Star Trek Convention?
 - a) He is not a fan of the shows.
 - b) He does not like crowds.
 - c) He is already going to the comic book convention.

 2. Rita went to last year's Star Trek Convention with:
 - a) Her friend Claire.
 - b) Her friend Guido.
 - c) Her parents.
-

WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

collector

The word “collector,” in this podcast, means a person who get and keep things that are rare or valuable: “Book collectors pay a lot of money for old, hard to find books.” But collectors aren’t just people doing something as a hobby. The word can also be used for organizations that collect things as part of their business or job. For example, art museums are collectors of art; and the Internal Revenue Service, the IRS, is a collector of taxes, or money paid to the government.

crowd

In this podcast, the word “crowd” means a big group of people, close together, in the same place: “I could find her in the crowd.” The word here is used as a noun, but it can also be used as a verb, “to crowd,” which means to form into a crowd, or to get together in a group: “The people crowded into the movie theatre.” The word is also used as part of the phrase “to gather a crowd,” which means to attract many people: “The president’s visit gathered a crowd outside the building.”



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CULTURE NOTE

In the U.S., television programs are owned by the production company, or the company that made the show. This is usually the TV network, such as NBC or MTV. In the television industry, or business, “syndication” is the sale of the right to show programs to more than one station. This is a way for the company who produces a show to continue making money from it. Syndication usually happens after a show is off the air, or no longer producing new episodes, or shows. Syndication can also be done with past seasons of a show. A “season” is a group of shows done in one year, usually 10 to 20. The current season of a show is usually not syndicated until all of the episodes of that season have been shown at least one time.

Many shows like Star Trek, for example, become even more popular after they have been syndicated. (“To syndicate” is the verb; “Syndication” is the noun). With syndication, TV shows can be shown for years after it was originally produced and shown. When a show is shown again on TV, it is called a “re-run.” Traditionally, in the U.S., the TV networks show re-runs during the summertime when there are fewer people watching TV. New shows usually debut, or begin, in the fall.

Comprehension Questions Correct Answers: 1 – c ; 2 – a



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast Number 182, “A Star Trek Convention.”

This is English as a Second Language Podcast Episode 182. I'm your host Dr. Jeff McQuillan coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California. Remember to visit our website at eslpod.com to get a Learning Guide for this podcast which includes the definitions, additional sentences that we don't talk about on the podcast, additional cultural information, and a complete transcript of this podcast. Today's podcast is a little different. Today we are going to talk about a famous television show in the United States and the conventions that people have with this television show. It's a very interesting part of American culture. It's called Star Trek. Engage.

[start of story]

Guido: Whoa. Check you out. That's a great costume. Are you going to the Star Trek convention?

Rita: Yeah. It's in town until Sunday. Have you ever been to one?

Guido: Me? No way. Don't get me wrong. I'm a fan of the shows and, no offense, but I thought only geeks went to the conventions.

Rita: Yeah, I thought that too until I went last year with my friend Claire and we had a great time.

Guido: Claire? Your gorgeous roommate Claire? That Claire?

Rita: Yeah. There were exhibitions from collectors and we got autographs from two of the show's stars. The highlight was when the stars came out and spoke to the crowd. Hey, do you want to come with us?

Guido: It actually sounds like fun but I can't make it today.

Rita: How come?

Guido: Um...well...I'm going to the comic book convention.



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Rita: Oh, I see. Well, maybe next year. Live long and prosper.

Guido: Uh, yeah. You, too. Hey, tell Claire I said “hi.”

Rita: Sure. See you later.
[end of story]

Our podcast today is about the Star Trek conventions. Now, I mentioned before the dialog that Star Trek which is spelled “Star Trek,” two words, was a popular television series here in the United States. It...the original series was back in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and they then made another version of Star Trek later in the 1980s and 90s and then they made another version a few years ago. So, there have been a couple of different versions and you may have seen the Star Trek movies and these movies were based upon or they used the television series. And, the idea for Star Trek is that there are people who have formed a government for all the different planets, the United Federation of Planets, I believe it was called, and this government has people from different planets. So, it has humans but it also has other people from other planets. This, of course, is all what we would call science fiction. “Science fiction” is stories or movies about things in the future. This television show is supposed to be in the future. a couple of hundred years from now, and it was very popular in the United States and many of the stars of this show became very famous, especially the original show.

Well, a lot of people are...liked the show, became fans of the show, and so they started having meetings. And, these meetings are called conventions and they're places where people sell things that are related to the television show. They may have posters, big pictures you put on your wall. Many people put on clothing that looks like the people from the television series. So, it's a very interesting cultural phenomenon, a cultural situation with these Star Trek conventions.

Well, let's get back to our dialog, and in our dialog, Guido begins by saying to Rita, “Whoa. Check you out.” The expression “Whoa” here is used to express surprise. When you're surprised or even shocked by something; it's very surprising. You may go, “Whoa.” You weren't expecting it. We also use whoa sometimes to mean to slow down, not go so fast. But here, it means a surprise. So, Guido says, “Whoa. Check you out.” The expression here, “Check you out,” means look at you, you are looking very perhaps beautiful or you are looking very strange. The expression “to check (something) out” means to look at it, to pay



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attention to it. So, Guido says, “Check you out. That’s a great costume.” A “costume” is clothing that usually an actor or an actress wears for a television show or a play or a movie. A costume can also be something that you wear to make you look like someone else. Little children, for example, on Halloween in...at the end of October, they put on costumes to make them look like ghosts and Superman and Spiderman and those are all costumes that people put on.

So, Guido says that Rita has a great costume and he asks her, “Are you going to the Star Trek convention?” So, obviously her costume must be from the television series. And, Rita says, “Yeah, it’s in town until Sunday.” When we use the expression “in town” we mean that a particular show or event is traveling from one city to another and when it comes to the city where you live, you say, “Well, it’s in town.” So, you could have, for example, a circus. A “circus” is when they have animals that do tricks, that can do special things, and people who do tricks. We call that a circus and the circus moves from town to town. So, when it comes to your town or your city, we say it’s “in town.” We don’t use the expression “in city” or “in metropolitan area.” We would just say “in town” and that means in the city or the town where you are.

Rita asks Guido if he has ever been to a Star Trek convention and Guido says, “Me? No way.” Notice that he doesn’t say, “I” he says, “Me.” In normal conversation people don’t use “I.” When someone says, “Are you going?” you don’t say, “I?” You would say, “Me?” If you were asking a question, “Do you mean me?” is what we are saying here. Guido says, “No way” meaning not at all, that is completely not something that I would do. Then he says, “Don’t get me wrong.” “Don’t get me wrong” is an expression you use with someone when you are saying something that they might not like or you are saying something that they might not understand or might be easy for them to misunderstand or to not understand. So you say, “Don’t get me wrong” and usually you are going to explain something more clearly to someone.

Guido explains that he’s a fan of the shows. A “fan” is somebody who likes something. You can be a fan of a soccer team. You can be a fan of certain kinds of music or certain singers. Well, he is a fan of the Star Trek television shows. He then says, “No offense, but I thought only geeks went to the conventions.” The expression “no offense” is also an expression you use when you are going to say something to someone that they probably will find insulting, when you are going to say something negative to someone that might hurt them or they might think that you are trying to insult them, to say something bad about them. So, he says,



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“No offense” meaning don't get mad, don't think I am insulting you and he goes on to say, “but I thought only geeks went to the conventions.” A “geek” a general term, an informal term we use for someone who is, usually someone who is intelligent, someone who is smart but also somebody who doesn't have a lot of friends, who likes to sit on their computer all day, who likes electronics or computers and they may not have a boyfriend or a girlfriend. That would be the idea of a geek. It's usually not a good thing to say to someone but some people say, “Oh yeah, well, I'm a geek” and they're proud of their being a geek. Well, Guido says that he thought only geeks went to the convention and Rita says, “Yeah. I thought that too,” that's what I used to think, “but last year I went to this convention with my friend Claire and we had a great time,” we really enjoyed ourselves. Guido then says, “Claire? Your gorgeous roommate Claire?” “Gorgeous” means very beautiful. It's especially a word that we would use to describe a very beautiful girl or woman. You can also use it to describe, for example, the weather. “We're having gorgeous weather” means we're having very nice weather. It's sunny. It's warm. That would be gorgeous weather for most people. A “roommate,” as you probably know, is a person that you share an apartment or a house with, someone that you live with and that you both pay part of the rent for the apartment or for the house. So, Guido wants to know if this is the same Claire that is...who is Rita's roommate.

Rita says, “Yeah. There were exhibitions at the convention from collectors.” “Exhibitions,” exhibitions are when you show something to someone else. The verb “to exhibit” means to show, to let someone else see something. Exhibitions would be, in this case, where people who are selling things show you what they are selling. And, in this case, the people who are selling things are collectors. “Collectors” is anyone who likes to collect or buy different things. Usually, they are things that are all about the same topic. For example, you could be a collector of stamps. You like stamps. You keep...collect old stamps. You find old stamps or stamps from different countries and you put them in a book. That would be a stamp collector. Well, in the Star Trek convention, the collectors are people who buy things related to Star Trek, in this case.

Rita also says that they got autographs from two of the show's stars. An “autograph,” an autograph is someone's signature. Usually, it's a famous person. And so, if you see, I don't know, Brad Pitt or Angelina Jolie or Jeff McQuillan walking down the street you may say, “Can I have your autograph?” Well, not Jeff McQuillan but the other two definitely. So, that's an autograph and they got the autograph, Rita and Claire got their autographs, from two of the show's stars.



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A “star” is a person who is very popular. They're the main person in that play or that TV show or that movie. So, for example, the star of Mission Impossible III is Tom Cruise. He's the main actor. He's the most important person. Rita also says that the highlight of the convention was when the stars came out and spoke to the crowd. The “highlight,” all one word, the highlight of something, of an event is the best part, one of the best parts, the thing that you liked the most or one of the things that you liked the most. In this case, one of the things that Rita and Claire liked was when the stars of the show, the actors, came out and they talked to the crowd. A “crowd” is a group of people, usually a group of people at a big event. You could have a crowd at a baseball game, a crowd at a soccer game, a crowd at a convention or a conference.

Guido says, well Rita asks Guido if he wants to come with them to the convention and Guido says, well he can't go because he's going somewhere else. He actually says, “It sounds like fun but I can't make it today.” “To be able to make (something),” to make the movie, to make the convention means that you are able to go. Someone says, “Would you like to come to my house for dinner on Thursday?” and you may say, “Oh, I'm sorry I can't make it that day. Can we make it another day?” Can we do it another day? So, I can't go. And Guido says he can't go. Rita asks him, “How come?” “How come” is the same as “why,” a little more informal. How come?

Guido says, “Well, I'm going to the comic book convention.” “Comic book,” two words, or comic books plural, are books that have drawings or pictures in them. Usually, they're of what we would call superheroes. “Superhero,” all one word, a superhero would be for example Superman, Spiderman, let's see, Batman. Those are some superheroes from American popular movies and television shows. And, comic books are very popular especially among children because they have nice pictures and they have interesting stories. Comic books actually are very good ways also to improve your English because you have the pictures to help you figure out the vocabulary and some of the vocabulary in comic books is quite difficult. So, even if you're an advanced student, comic books are popular, can be, I should say, useful. Well, Guido says he's going to a comic book convention which is kind of funny because he said that he thought only geeks went to a Star Trek convention, but a comic convention or a comic book convention is a meeting of people who like comic books and sell comic books. So, that's also considered by some people to be kind of a geeky thing, that only geeks would go to a comic book convention.



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Rita says, “Oh I see. Well, maybe next year. Live long and prosper.” The expression, “Live long and prosper,” “prosper” is from the television series, from the Star Trek television series, one of the sentences what we would call the lines, the lines, one of the things that the characters on the show say, at least one of the characters, is, “Live long and prosper.” If you watch Star Trek you know that this is what one particular group of people called the Vulcans say. Live long and prosper. “To prosper” means to do well, to make a lot of money or to be successful, that’s to prosper. Guido says, “Yeah. You too and say...tell Claire I said ‘hi.’” Guido, of course, is still interested in Rita’s roommate Claire because she is very beautiful. Rita says, “Sure. See you later.”

[start of story]

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Rita: Sure. See you later.
[end of story]

The script for today's podcast was written by Dr. Lucy Tse. Remember to visit our website at eslpod.com for more information and for a free copy of the transcript of the dialog itself or the story for each of our podcasts. If you have questions or suggestions you can email us at eslpod@eslpod.com. From Los Angeles, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thanks for listening. Live long and prosper. See you next time on ESL Podcast.

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