



ESL Podcast 209 – Extreme Sports

GLOSSARY

snowboarding – a sport where you use a snowboard, which is a small board that looks like a small surfboard, to go down hills with snow

* We tried to go snowboarding last weekend, but it was too warm and the snow was melting too quickly.

bungee jumping – a sport where you jump off from very high up, usually an airplane or a bridge, while attached to a strong elastic rope, called a bungee cord, that pulls you back up

* She's scared of heights so I don't think she'll go bungee jumping with us tomorrow.

cave diving – to go underwater for long periods of time and explore caves, or deep holes, in the ocean or sea

* Cave diving is considered a dangerous sport because it's not easy getting back up to the surface of the water if you have trouble breathing.

extreme sport – a type of sport that is more dangerous than regular sports, usually involving great heights or speed, and taking chances on getting hurt

* Extreme sports are popular with people who want to do something exciting and a little dangerous.

adrenaline rush – a chemical reaction in the body that makes you excited and causes your heart to beat faster, sometimes caused by a very exciting experience

* The snowboarder got an adrenaline rush from the jumps he made.

to push (oneself) to the limit – to go beyond what one can normally do

* I've been pushing myself to the limit by working two jobs and only getting five hours of sleep every night.

to get hurt – to get injured; to feel pain

* When you learn to dance, don't worry about getting hurt or you'll be afraid to try the more difficult steps.



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danger – the possibility of being harmed or being in pain; something that may cause harm or pain

* When I get off work at 10 p.m., I walk home with a friend to avoid any danger on the streets.

competitively – in a way that tries to win something by defeating others, sometimes to prove that you are better than others

* He used to play video games for fun but now he plays competitively.

stunt – a difficult or dangerous action

* I'm sure that the people in the movies who perform stunts, like falling off a horse or jumping off a building, are professionals.

to push the boundaries – to test or to try to go past the limits of something

* When he got fired from his job, Danny realized that it was not a good idea to push the boundaries of his position.

adventurous – someone or something that is exciting and daring; someone willing to do something not considered safe or normal

* She was an adventurous child and liked to jump off high places and run at high speeds.

climbing – a sport where you go up something, usually a mountain, using your hands and feet and special equipment

* They were planning on going climbing Mount Fuji this Sunday, but she broke her arm and couldn't go.

ice climbing – a sport where you go up large ice blocks, like frozen waterfalls, using your hands and feet and special equipment

* Do you think we can do some ice climbing when we go to Alaska this winter?

to pass – to decline; to say 'no' to something

* I asked her if she wanted a piece of cake, but since she's on a diet, she politely said, "No thanks, I'll pass."



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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What is Ryan doing this weekend?
 - a) He is going cave diving.
 - b) He is going ice climbing.
 - c) He is going snowboarding.

 2. Which sport has Celeste done before?
 - a) climbing
 - b) bungee jumping
 - c) ice climbing
-

WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

to pass

The verb “to pass,” in this podcast, means to say ‘no’ to something or to decide against doing something: “I told Mary that I’m going to have to pass on dinner this weekend because I have to go visit my mother.” As a verb, “to pass” can also mean to go around something, usually a car or vehicle on the road: “I had to pass the truck on the one-lane highway because it was going so slowly.” We can also use “to pass” to mean to be successful on a test or a challenge: “He was worried that he wasn’t going to pass the final exam so he studied all weekend.” Or, “He passed the driving test even though he made several small mistakes on the road.”

to get hurt

In this podcast, the phrase “to get hurt” means to get injured or to be in pain: “Being the smallest person on the team, he faced the biggest risk of getting hurt.” The phrase is used in this podcast to refer to physical pain that people feel on their bodies, like a broken arm. But, we can also use “to get hurt” to mean mental or emotional pain, like being sad or having hurt feelings: “She didn’t want to get into another relationship and get hurt again.” Or, “He wanted to reach out to his daughter and to tell him he cared for her, but he was afraid of getting hurt.”



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CULTURE NOTE

Extreme sports are activities that are different from traditional or normal types of sports. These sports are more dangerous and usually played by individuals rather than teams. Sometimes extreme sports are called adventure sports or action sports. Some examples include: skateboarding, riding a board that has wheels on the bottom; roller derby, racing around a track wearing skates (shoes with wheels on the bottom); windsurfing, riding a surfboard with a sail in the water; and BMX racing, riding a bicycle over dirt paths. Extreme sports have always been popular among younger people, but now, other people are getting interested in them. The “X Games,” which is the unofficial Olympics of extreme sports that is broadcasted on ESPN, a sports cable channel in the U.S., is extremely popular. American extreme sports players like Tony Hawk, Shaun White, and Kelly Clark have become household names in the U.S. Some extreme sports, like skateboarding and surfing, have actually become “mainstream,” and they are now considered as ordinary as soccer and baseball.

Extreme sports are getting more attention than ever. In 1998, snowboarding was included as an event in the Olympic Winter Games in Nagano, Japan. The sport got a lot of attention in the 2002 Olympics in Salt Lake City, Utah, and in 2006 in Turin, Italy. American athletes have taken home the most medals in this event so far. Many people say that including snowboarding in the Olympics has been a big success. It has attracted a lot of attention, competitors, and fans, especially younger viewers. This has meant that the sport is making more money, too. Extreme athletes are getting “endorsement deals,” or contracts to be in the advertising for companies, and TV advertisement involving these sports has increased a lot in the past several years as well. This success is opening the way for other extreme sports to be considered as contests in future Olympic games.

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



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 209, “Extreme Sports.”

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 209. 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. We have several new things you'll want to take a look at, and of course, to download the Learning Guide for this podcast. The Learning Guide contains all of the vocabulary that we talk about, as well as additional words and explanations and a complete transcript of this pod cast.

Today's podcast is called, “Extreme Sports.” Let's go.

[Start of story]

Celeste: I'm so glad it's Friday. Are you doing anything this weekend?

Ryan: I'm going snowboarding with James.

Celeste: Didn't you guys go bungee jumping last weekend?

Ryan: Yeah, and we plan to go cave diving in a couple of weeks.

Celeste: I didn't know you were into extreme sports. I guess it's a big adrenaline rush.

Ryan: It is. But for me, it's about pushing myself to the limit.

Celeste: Aren't you afraid of getting hurt?

Ryan: Sure. There's always a danger of getting hurt, but we don't do these sports competitively. It's just for fun. I like trying new stunts and seeing how far we can push the boundaries of the sport. Do you want to come with us sometime?



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Celeste: Me? I'm not really the adventurous type.

Ryan: You never know. You might like it. After cave diving, we'll probably try climbing.

Celeste: Oh, that doesn't sound too bad. I've done some climbing before.

Ryan: I should tell you that we plan on going ice climbing.

Celeste: Oh. In that case, I think I'll pass. Have fun this weekend.

Ryan: Thanks and let me know if you change your mind.

[End of story]

The title of our podcast is "Extreme Sports." Extreme, "extreme," as an adjective is used when we are describing something that is far beyond normal, something that is very high or very serious. Extreme temperatures would be very high temperatures. Extreme danger would be something that is very dangerous, something that you could get hurt by. Extreme sports refers to sports that are dangerous.

Our dialogue is between Celeste and Ryan, and Celeste says that she is glad that "it's Friday," and asks Ryan if he is "doing anything this weekend," meaning what are you doing this Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Ryan says, "I'm going snowboarding with James." To snowboard, "snowboard," all one word, means to ride on the snow, the cold snow on a mountain or on a hill, sort of like skiing. So, to snowboard is similar to ski, except you don't use two long pieces of wood or plastic as skis, but you have a board that is just one piece and you put both feet on the board. Snowboarding, as a sport, is fairly new. It comes, I think, originally from skateboarding. A skateboard, "skateboard," again all one word, is using the same kind of board as you do on a snowboard, except it has wheels on it. This is very popular, especially among teenagers.

Ryan is going snowboarding with his friend, and Celeste says, "Didn't you guys go bungee jumping last weekend?" Bungee, "bungee," jumping is another extreme sport, meaning it could be dangerous. Essentially, a bungee is a long rope or cord that is like a rubber band. It stretches, and you go to a very high place, such as on a bridge, and you tie the cord to the bridge and then you jump



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off the bridge, and this cord or rope will bounce like a rubber band, and you'll be able to get back up or have someone pick you up at the bottom. That is bungee jumping.

Ryan says, "Yeah, and we plan to go cave diving in a couple of weeks." Again, cave, "cave," diving is another extreme sport. A cave is a large hole, usually in a hill or in a area close to water many times you'll find caves. Sometimes in mountains you find caves. They're like big holes, almost like a room inside a hill. Well, cave diving is actually for caves that are underwater, and what happens is you go into the water and then you go into these caves that are either all underwater or partially underwater. That is cave diving.

Celeste says that she "didn't know' Ryan was "into extreme sports." To be into something means that you are interested in it, that you like it, that you participate in it. So, you could say, "I'm into playing chess." I like to play chess, as an example. I don't, but that would be an example.

Celeste says, "I guess it's a big adrenaline rush," doing these extreme sports. Adrenaline, "adrenaline," is the chemical that your body releases when you are excited or when you are very stressed, you have a lot of problems, or perhaps you are in danger and you need to run quickly. The body produces this chemical, what we would call this hormone, "hormone," that makes your heart beat faster. The expression, adrenaline rush, means that you get this sudden burst of, or sudden increase in adrenaline. The word rush is sometimes informally used to mean a very exciting or very intense experience, and so adrenaline rush would be the feeling you get when you have a lot of the adrenaline in your body. Ryan says that it is an adrenaline rush, but for him "it's about pushing" himself "to the limit." To push yourself to the limit means that you try to do as much as you can, as much as you physically can, to do the maximum amount that is possible for you and for your body.

Celeste says, "Aren't you afraid of getting hurt," meaning aren't you afraid that you will get an injury, "injury." An injury is when you when you break your leg or you cut your arm. These would be things that hurt you. These are injuries. So, she says, "Aren't you afraid of getting hurt?" - of having pain? Ryan says, "Sure. There's always a danger of getting hurt," meaning it's always possible that you will get hurt. The expression, "a danger of," is when we are talking about something that is a risk, something that may cause us to be hurt.



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Ryan says that they “don’t do these sports competitively.” Competitively is an adverb that comes from the verb to compete, “compete.” To compete is when you have a contest against someone else, when two or more people are trying to win a prize or be the best at something. So, Ryan says he doesn’t do extreme sports competitively, he means that he’s not part of a team or he’s not trying to win something. “It’s just for fun,” he says, “I like trying new stunts.” A stunt, “stunt,” is something that requires usually a lot of skill, you have to be good at it, and it is often something that is somewhat dangerous. In a movie, for example, there may be many different stunts. In the movie Mission Impossible, with Tom Cruise, there are many different dangerous things that happens: cars go very fast and people jump off of buildings. These are all stunts. People aren’t actually getting hurt, but they have someone who can make it look like they’re doing some of these things. These people, by the way, are called stuntmen and stuntwomen.

Ryan says that he likes to “push the boundaries of” a sport. To push the boundaries is similar to pushing yourself to the limit. A boundary is the same as a limit or a border. So, to push the boundaries means to do as much as is possible, to do something with a maximum effort, with a great effort.

Ryan asks Celeste if she wants to come with them, and Celeste says, “I’m not really the adventurous type.” Adventurous is an adjective that comes from the noun adventure, and an adventure is when you do things that are new, do things that are different, perhaps do things that are dangerous, but not necessarily. Someone who is adventurous likes to try new things, to go to new places.

Ryan says that they are going to be “going ice climbing.” To climb, “climb,” means to go up something. So, you can climb a wall, if you have a rope. You can go up a wall. You can climb a mountain. Mountain climbing - you have a rope or you just use your hands and you go up the rock, the mountain. This is ice climbing, so they’re obviously going somewhere cold where they can climb on ice. Celeste says well, “In that case,” because it’s ice climbing she says, “I think I’ll pass.” When we say we are going to pass, “pass,” on something, we mean we’re going to say no, we’re not going to do it this time.

Now let’s listen to the dialogue, this time at a native rate of speech.



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Celeste: Oh. In that case, I think I'll pass. Have fun this weekend.

Ryan: Thanks and let me know if you change your mind.

[End of story]

The script for this podcast was by Dr. Lucy Tse.



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That's all we have time for today. From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thanks for listening. We'll see you next time on ESL Podcast.

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