



ESL Podcast 443 – Having a Slumber Party

GLOSSARY

slumber party – a sleepover; an event where many children sleep at one child’s house, staying up late, eating a lot of food, talking, and playing games

* Ina wants to have a slumber party to celebrate her birthday.

sleepover – a slumber party; an event where many children sleep at one child’s house, staying up late, eating a lot of food, talking, and playing games

* At the sleepover, the boys ate pizza and stayed up playing videogames until almost 3 a.m.

none of (one’s) business – not something that a person needs to know about; not relevant or important for someone

* It’s none of his business how much money you make. You don’t need to tell him.

don’t be like that – a phrase used to ask someone to change his or her behavior, usually because he or she is being very defensive, aggressive, or angry

* When I offered to help you clean your room, you said that I was trying to control your life. Please don’t be like that. I’m just trying to help.

to pull pranks – to do something to trick another person, especially if it is silly

* When they were kids, they used to pull pranks, like ringing doorbells and then running away so that nobody was there when the neighbors answered the door.

to giggle – to laugh in a quiet, high voice, usually because something is silly and funny or because one is embarrassed or nervous

* The young boys giggled as they watched two actors kiss each other in the movie.

sleeping bag – a large, warm, thick piece of fabric usually filled with feathers that zips on one side so that one can lie inside it and stay warm when sleeping, especially when sleeping outdoors

* The weather was beautiful last night, so we slept in sleeping bags outside where we could see the stars.

to get (something) out of (someone) – to get information, especially a secret, from someone; to do something that makes another person tell one what one wants to know

* I think Polly knows his secret, but I couldn’t get anything out of her.



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to see right through (someone) – to understand someone’s plans; to understand what a person is trying to do, especially when he or she is trying to hide it

* Somehow his parents saw right through him and knew that he was lying.

pajamas – clothes worn to bed, usually a loose-fitting, long-sleeved shirt and pants

* Last night I had a dream that I wore my pajamas to work and I was really embarrassed about it.

pillow fight – a game where people hit each other with pillows (the soft pieces of fabric filled with feathers or another material that one rests one’s head on while sleeping)

* The twin boys have a pillow fight almost every night, but they never hurt each other.

no way – absolutely not; a phrase used to show that something is impossible or unacceptable

* - Can I drive your new car?

- No way! You’ve been in three accidents in the past year!

to stay up all night – to be awake all night and not fall asleep

* Takahiro is really tired today because he stayed up all night taking care of their new baby.

to tease – to laugh at someone or make jokes about someone, often to embarrass or annoy that person

* The other kids are teasing Jacquie about the way she dresses.

right – a word used sarcastically to show that one does not believe what another person is saying

* The car salesman said that he wanted to help me find a good price on a new car, but I said, “Yeah, right! You just want to make as much money as possible.”

to wreck – to ruin; to destroy

* The bad weather wrecked their outdoor wedding.

to hurt (someone’s) feelings – to make someone feel bad; to make someone feel sad

* It really hurt my feelings when I found out that you were saying bad things about me to my friends.



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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What does Irene mean when she says, “I can see right through you”?
 - a) Russ isn’t wearing any pajamas.
 - b) She understands what Russ is trying to do.
 - c) She thinks Russ is a ghost.

2. What does Irene think Russ is trying to do?
 - a) He’s trying to ruin her sleepover.
 - b) He’s trying to stay up all night with her friends.
 - c) He’s trying to hurt her feelings.

WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

to pull

The phrase “to pull pranks,” in this podcast, means to do something to trick another person, especially if it is silly: “Zeke got in trouble for pulling pranks on his teacher, leaving spiders in her desk.” The phrase “to pull (one’s) leg” means to try to make someone believe something that isn’t true: “Were you really an astronaut or are you just pulling my leg?” The phrase “to pull some strings” means to use one’s connections with important people to make something happen: “Normally she wouldn’t be accepted at that university, but her father was able to pull some strings, since the university’s president is his friend.” Finally, the phrase “(something) is like pulling teeth” means that it is very difficult to get someone to do something: “Getting a building permit from the city is like pulling teeth!”

to wreck

In this podcast, the verb “to wreck” means to ruin or destroy: “The earthquake wrecked most of the homes in the city.” A “wreck” is also a car that has been in an accident: “The police didn’t know if they would find any survivors in the wreck.” The phrase “to look a wreck” means to look very unattractive, tired, stressed out, or unhealthy: “The doctor looked a wreck after having worked in the hospital for 30 hours without a break.” A “nervous wreck” is a person who is very worried and anxious about something: “She was a nervous wreck before she had to make her presentation.” Finally, if a place is “a wreck,” it is very disorganized and unclean: “Our apartment is a wreck! We need to clean it this weekend.”



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CULTURE NOTE

Most young American girls go to sleepovers at their friends' home, but the name sleepover is "misleading" (gives the wrong idea or impression), because the girls usually don't sleep very much at all. Sleepovers are filled with fun activities "beyond" (in addition to) the ones mentioned in this dialogue.

At many sleepovers, girls play a game called Truth or Dare. The girls sit in a circle on the floor. One at a time, they are asked to choose whether they will answer a question truthfully or "take a dare" (do something that one doesn't want to do, but will do to show that one is not scared). If the girl chooses truth, her friends might ask her who she "has a crush on" (who she likes romantically). If she chooses to take a dare, her friends might dare her to run around the house without her shirt on, or eat something "disgusting" (very bad; revolting).

Many girls at sleepovers also like to tell "ghost stories," which are scary stories about "ghosts," or people who have died but are still on earth and scare living people. Often the girls turn off the lights and the one who is telling the story has a "flashlight" (a small device held in one's hand that produces light from batteries) that she holds under her "chin" (the part of one's face between one's mouth and neck) to make her face look scarier.

Sometimes girls at sleepovers like to give each other "makeovers" (changing the way one looks by changing one's hair and makeup). They might give each other "manicures" (shaping and coloring one's fingernails), "pedicures" (shaping and coloring one's toenails), or "facials" (using special creams and lotions to make the skin on one's face healthier, cleaner, and more beautiful).

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



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 443: Having a Slumber Party.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 443. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

Visit our website at eslpod.com. You know what you'll find there: a Learning Guide that can help you improve your English even faster.

This episode is called "Having a Slumber Party." It's a conversation between Russ and Irene about a party that the girl, Irene, is going to have with her friends. It's a particular kind of party that is very popular especially among young girls in the United States. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Russ: Mom says you're having a slumber party next Saturday.

Irene: I'm just having a few friends over for a sleepover and it's none of your business.

Russ: Don't be like that. How many people did you invite?

Irene: I'm not telling you anything. I know what you're thinking. You want to pull pranks on us.

Russ: No, I don't. I just want to know how many giggling girls in sleeping bags I'll have to step over to get to the kitchen.

Irene: You're not going to get anything out of me. I can see right through you.

Russ: Are you going to wear your pajamas with feet?

Irene: Don't be stupid! I haven't worn those since I was six!

Russ: Can I be part of the pillow fight?

Irene: No way! You're not invited!



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Russ: But you're going to stay up all night and watch movies, aren't you? I want to do that, too.

Irene: You'd better stop teasing me or I'm going to tell Mom.

Russ: I'm not doing anything. I'm only trying to help you plan your party.

Irene: Right! You want to help me? It's more like you want to wreck my party.

Russ: Ah, you've hurt my feelings.

Irene: I doubt it. Now leave me alone!

[end of dialogue]

The title of this episode is "Having a Slumber (slumber) Party." A "slumber party" is also sometimes called a "sleepover" (one word). A slumber party or sleepover is when many children sleep at one of their friend's houses. Usually, they do this on the weekend, on a Friday or Saturday night, and the kids all come over, maybe three, four, five, or more kids come over and they bring something to sleep in, a sleeping bag, and they have lots of food and stay up late at night, and so forth. The term "slumber party" is usually one more associated with girls than with boys, although it's possible for both boys and girls to have this kind of party – this sort of sleepover. When I was in, oh, fourth or fifth grade, I remember going over and sleeping at my friend's house with a couple of other friends, and we would stay up late at night and watch movies. In fact, I think even once we stayed up all night, talking and watching movies and eating. It's a very popular event for children growing up in the U.S.

Irene is going to have a slumber party and Russ, her brother, says, "Mom says you're having a slumber party next Saturday." Irene says, "I'm just having a few friends over (meaning I'm having some friends come to our house) for a sleepover and it's none of your business." The expression "none of your business" means it's not something that you need to know about, it's not important for you. But, we use this expression in a somewhat hostile or negative sense. If someone says, "it's none of your business," that's not a nice thing to say. They're saying that you have no reason or right to know this, and it is often said after someone has, perhaps, tried to get information out of you that you don't want to give them that you think is private.

Russ says, "Don't be like that," to his sister. "Don't be like that" is a phrase we use to ask someone to change his or her attitude – his or her behavior, usually



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when they are angry. Russ says, “Don’t be like that. How many people did you invite?” Irene says, “I’m not telling you anything.” Of course, they’re brother and sister so sometimes they don’t get along, they don’t play nice with each other, they’re not friendly to each other.

Irene says, “I know what you’re thinking. You want to pull pranks on us.” To “pull pranks” (pranks) means to do something to another person, usually something that would be funny or something that would be embarrassing. It’s playing a joke on someone, often a physical sort of thing. So for example, when I was growing up it was sometimes common for my friends and I to run around in our neighborhood and go up to a house and knock on the door or ring the doorbell and then run away and wait for the person to come out, and of course, no one would be there. Now, that’s not very funny to me now, but I guess when I was younger it was funny. That would be a prank that you would pull on someone. So we use the verb “to pull” with this particular expression. “Pull” has many different meanings in English; take a look at our Learning Guide for some additional explanations.

Russ says, “No, I don’t,” meaning I will not pull pranks on you and your friends. He says, “I just want to know how many giggling girls in sleeping bags I’ll have to step over to get to the kitchen.” To “giggle” (giggle) means to laugh, usually to laugh in very high voice [Jeff giggles]. I can’t do it very well because I’m not a girl. But girls, especially young girls are often seen or heard giggling. Usually it’s because you are embarrassed or because there’s something funny that’s happened. It’s something we associate mostly with young girls. Giggling girls, in this case, will be in sleeping bags. I mentioned sleeping bags a few minutes ago; a “sleeping bag” is a long, warm, thick piece of material (a fabric) that is filled often with feathers, and it allows you to sleep on the ground and still stay warm. So, it’s like a big blanket that has a zipper on the side so that you can stay warm. It’s often used for camping outdoors, but it could also be used at someone’s house. When you are sleeping on the floor, you could sleep in a sleeping bag. So all the kids, when they came over for the slumber party, would bring their own sleeping bag. So, Russ says, “I just want to know how many giggling girls in sleeping bags I’ll have to step over to get to the kitchen.” The idea here is that the girls will be sleeping probably out in the main, or in what we would call the “living room,” and since the kitchen is often next to that, if he wants to go to the kitchen he’ll have to step over these girls in the sleeping bags to get there.

Irene says, “You’re not going to get anything out of me.” To “get something out of someone” means to get information, especially secret information from someone, to do something to make the other person tell you something that they don’t want to tell you, or that you want to know that is a secret. Irene says, “I can



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see right through you.” The expression “to see right through someone” means that you understand someone’s plans; you understand what a person is trying to do, even though the person is trying to hide it from you – is trying to keep it a secret.

Russ says, in response, “Are you going to wear your pajamas with feet?” “Pajamas” (pajamas) are clothes that you wear to bed, usually there’s a shirt and there are pants. For very young children, sometimes there are pajamas that are one piece – that the whole thing is one piece of clothing, and that on the bottom there are little feet, like shoes, so that the young child doesn’t get cold. Of course, Irene is older than that, and so she would not still be using something like that, so Russ is making a joke: are you going to wear your pajamas with feet, just like you did when you were a younger girl. Irene says, “Don’t be stupid! I haven’t worn those since I was six!”

Then Russ asks, “Can I be part of the pillow fight?” A “pillow” is something that you put your head on when you sleep. So, a “pillow fight” is when people hit each other with pillows. It’s something that might happen at a slumber party or a sleepover. Irene says, “No way!” meaning absolutely not, completely impossible. “You’re not invited!” – you’re not invited to the party. Russ says, “But you’re going to stay up all night and watch movies, aren’t you? I want to do that, too.” To “stay up all night” means to stay awake all night, never to go to sleep. Once again, Russ is joking – is kidding with Irene, he doesn’t really want to do that.

Irene says, “You’d better stop teasing me or I’m going to tell Mom.” To “tease” someone means to make jokes about someone, to laugh at someone, or make other people laugh at someone. It’s not considered a nice thing to do. Russ says, “I’m not doing anything. I’m only trying to help you plan your party.” Of course, he isn’t!

Irene says, “Right!” When we use the word “right” in that way, with that intonation – that sound, “oh, right!” – what you’re really saying is that you don’t believe what the other person is saying. Normally, “right” means that you agree with someone, or that someone is telling you something that is true. But here, when used with that particular tone it is the opposite; it means I don’t believe you. Irene then says, “You want to help me? It’s more like you want to wreck my party.” To “wreck” (wreck) here means to ruin or to destroy. “Wreck” has a couple of different meanings; once again, take a look at the Learning Guide for this episode.



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Russ then says, once again joking, “Ah, you’ve hurt my feelings.” To “hurt someone’s feelings” means to make someone feel bad, to make someone feel sad about something.

Now let’s listen to the dialogue again, this time at a normal speed.

[start of dialogue]

Russ: Mom says you’re having a slumber party next Saturday.

Irene: I’m just having a few friends over for a sleepover and it’s none of your business.

Russ: Don’t be like that. How many people did you invite?

Irene: I’m not telling you anything. I know what you’re thinking. You want to pull pranks on us.

Russ: No, I don’t. I just want to know how many giggling girls in sleeping bags I’ll have to step over to get to the kitchen.

Irene: You’re not going to get anything out of me. I can see right through you.

Russ: Are you going to wear your pajamas with feet?

Irene: Don’t be stupid! I haven’t worn those since I was six!

Russ: Can I be part of the pillow fight?

Irene: No way! You’re not invited!

Russ: But you’re going to stay up all night and watch movies, aren’t you? I want to do that, too.

Irene: You’d better stop teasing me or I’m going to tell Mom.

Russ: I’m not doing anything. I’m only trying to help you plan your party.

Irene: Right! You want to help me? It’s more like you want to wreck my party.

Russ: Ah, you’ve hurt my feelings.



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Irene: I doubt it. Now leave me alone!

[end of dialogue]

The script for this episode was written by someone who would never hurt your feelings, Dr. Lucy Tse.

From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thanks for listening. Come back and listen to us next time on ESL Podcast.

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