



TOPICS

Ask an American: childhood obesity; besides vs. furthermore vs. moreover; wink-wink; thrill

GLOSSARY

to be doing – to be making; to be producing; to be creating

* We're doing the recording for next week's show.

veggie – vegetable; vegetarian; relating to vegetables or being made from only vegetables

* Ollie makes veggie burgers from oats, lentils, and mushrooms.

grass-fed – a term used to describe meat from animals that eat only grass and no chemicals or artificial foods

* Are these eggs from grass-fed chickens?

organic – grown naturally, without any chemicals

* Organic fruits and vegetables are much more expensive than regular fruits and vegetables.

salad bar – a place in a restaurant or cafeteria where customers can get many different kinds of vegetables to create their own salad

* My favorite restaurant has a great salad bar with two kinds of lettuce, lots of different vegetables, and four different kinds of dressing.

to line up for (something) – to stand in a single-file line, with each person behind another person, waiting for one's turn to do something

* When the new movie began playing in the movie theaters, people lined up for tickets.

to segue from (something) to (something) – to transition or move from one thing to another

* The speaker segued from talking about the Mexican-American War to discussing the current U.S.-Mexican border.



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processed food – foods that has been produced or manufactured by companies and aren't very natural anymore

* My doctor said that processed foods like chips, crackers, and cookies aren't very good for you.

refined – made more pure by a manufacturing process, but usually less healthy than the natural version of the same thing

* Candy is full of refined sugar that has a lot of calories but not very many nutrients.

high fructose corn syrup – an unhealthy kind of liquid sugar made from corn

* Meghan doesn't let her children eat anything that is made with high fructose corn syrup.

whole food – a food that is not processed or that is processed very little; a food that is natural or very close to natural

* He buys only whole foods like whole-wheat bread and fresh fruits and vegetables.

with an eye in the long run toward (something) – so that something will happen in the future; planning or expecting something to happen in the future

* They bought an old home with an eye in the long run toward fixing it and then making money by selling it for more than they paid for it.

furthermore – a formal word often found in writing, used to signal or show that additional information will be provided; in addition

* To get admitted to a really good university, you need to have good grades. Furthermore, you need to submit an outstanding application.

moreover – a formal word often found in writing, used to signal or show that additional information will be provided; what's more

* We will not renew the contract because that company never finished their projects on time. Moreover, they did poor quality work.

besides – an informal word often used while speaking, used to signal or show that additional information will be provided

* What other sports do you like besides baseball?



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to give (someone) the wink-wink – to suggest something without stating it directly; to communicate that one does not really mean what one says

* John's coworkers no longer trusted him because they had seen him give several people the wink-wink.

thrill – a feeling of great happiness or excitement; a pleasant feeling caused when something good happens

* Some people enjoy sports because they get a thrill from competition.

WHAT INSIDERS KNOW

In the United States, during summer vacation, many parents send their children to “summer camp.” Camp is time spent away from home, usually for a week or two, but sometimes longer. Children spend time with other children who are the same age and they do fun activities together, spending the night in small houses called “cabins.”

Most summer camps have a lot of outdoor activities, like swimming, sports, and boating, as well as “arts and crafts,” where the children can make things. Other camps have “themes” (special topics) like tennis camp, science camp, music camp, and football camp. But in recent years, “weight loss camps” that are designed to help children lose weight and become healthier are becoming popular.

All the children who go to a weight loss camp are “overweight,” meaning that they weigh more than they should to be healthy. This helps, because they are surrounded by other children who are similar to them, so hopefully they won't “be made fun of” (laughed at) by other kids.

At a weight loss camp, children are given special “low-calorie” (without very much food energy) foods with a lot of fruits and vegetables and few or no desserts. They also have a lot of activities for exercise. Most weight loss camps don't let children watch television or movies. The children have to be “physically active” (move their bodies a lot). Many weight loss camps have gyms with exercise equipment for the children.

Weight loss camps also have an educational “component” (part) where the children learn how to eat more healthily and why having a healthy weight is important. This education is important, because it helps the children continue to follow the good “behaviors” (ways of doing things) after they return home.



COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

You're listening to ESL Podcast's English Café number 157.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast's English Café episode 157. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

Our website is eslpod.com. On it, you can visit our ESL Podcast Store, which has some additional courses in business and daily English I think you'll enjoy. You can also download the Learning Guide for this episode, and every current or recent episode. The Learning Guide contains a lot of additional information, including a complete transcript of this episode, vocabulary words, definitions, sample sentences, cultural notes, comprehension questions, and a free ticket to Hawaii. It's really true – except for the part about the ticket to Hawaii!

On this Café, we're going to have another one of our Ask an American segments, where we listen to other native speakers talking at a normal rate of speech, or a normal speed. We're going to listen to them and explain what they are talking about. Today we're going to talk about a problem that is considered serious here in the United States, childhood obesity, or children who weigh much more than they should. We're also going to talk about what the schools are trying to do about this problem. As always, we'll answer a few of your questions as well. Let's get started.

Our topic for this Café's Ask an American segment is childhood obesity. "Obesity" is when someone is very overweight; they weigh too much. In fact, they weigh so much that it's bad for their health. This is a problem here in the United States; there are many Americans who are obese. In recent years, it has become a problem with children here in the U.S. as well. In fact, one survey found that about 35 percent, more than a third of American children are overweight, and many of those children have health problems because of it. There are different organizations that have been trying to fight this problem. One of those organizations would be the school system – the public schools where children, in addition to having their classes, usually eat their lunch, and most of the schools provide a lunch for the students.

We're going to listen today to some people talking about what one particular school is doing to try to change the way that kids eat, and try to fight against this problem of childhood obesity. We're going to start by listening to the manager in the kitchen where this one particular school, in Berkeley, California, has changed



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its offerings – has changed what it gives kids for food. And he’s going to describe the different kinds of food that are available. Now, he does speak somewhat fast, and because they’re in a kitchen there’s a lot of other noise in the recording. So listen, try to understand as much as you can, and then after we’ll go back and explain everything he said. Here we go:

[recording]

Right here, we’re doing hamburgers and hot dogs and veggie burgers. It’s all grass-fed beef. On this station, we’re doing egg rolls with, uh, Asian noodle salad. This side over here is, uh, all organic salad bar. On the other side of that is gonna be, uh, teriyaki meatballs with rice and vegetable.

[end of recording]

He begins by saying, “Right here, we’re doing hamburgers.” The expression “we are doing,” or “we’re doing,” means we’re making, in this case, we’re cooking hamburgers, hot dogs and veggie burgers. If you ask your wife or husband, “What are you cooking for dinner?” they could say, “Oh, we’re going to do pizza tonight,” meaning we’re going to prepare – cook – make pizza.

So, some of things the kids eat at lunchtime in an American school would be hamburgers, hot dogs and, at this school, veggie burgers. “Veggie” (veggie) is an informal way to say vegetables. A “veggie burger” is a food that is like a hamburger, it looks like a hamburger, but it doesn’t have any meat in it. Sounds a little strange, but that’s very popular in many restaurants, and at this school they have veggie burgers. Many “vegetarians,” people who don’t eat meat, eat veggie burgers instead of hamburgers. I can’t say I like them.

Then he says that the hamburgers are made with grass-fed beef. He says, “It’s all grass-fed beef.” “Fed” is the past tense of to feed. If you say something is “grass-fed,” you mean that the cows ate grass, that was the only thing they had for their food. Sometimes cows are given chemicals and artificial foods to make them grow more quickly. Cows that are used to make hamburgers at this school, however, are fed only grass. The idea is it’s healthier.

The man speaking then points to a particular station. When we talk about a “station” in a restaurant or in a kitchen, we’re talking about a particular space, a place where you have one kind of food. We use this term when are talking about self-serve buffet-type restaurants. “Self-serve” means you get up with a plate and you go to the food and you put the food on your own plate. A “buffet” (buffet)



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is a restaurant that has that kind of arrangement, where you can go and get your own food.

So, at this particular school, at one station they're making "egg rolls," which is a type of food that is popular in different countries in Asia. They're also making Asian noodle salad. Notice, once again, that he says at this station we're "doing" egg rolls. Once again, using "doing," here, to mean preparing, making, cooking. He says, "with, uh, Asian noodle salad." "Uh" is a very common conversation filler; you'll hear Americans, in particular, say "um," "uh," "you know." Those are ways that they fill up time while they are trying to think of what they want to say.

Then he says, "On this side over here," pointing to a different part of the kitchen, "is, uh, all organic salad bar." Something that is "organic" (organic) is something that is grown naturally, without any extra chemicals. It's become very popular in the United States for people to prefer organic food. The idea is that food with chemicals might be dangerous – might be bad for your health. So, all of the vegetables found in the salad bar are organic – grown naturally. A "salad bar" is a place where you can get different kinds of vegetables and prepare your own salad. It's called a "salad bar," but there are no alcoholic drinks there like a normal bar would be; you can't get a beer at a salad bar.

He ends by saying that on the other side of the table there's "gonna be (there is going to be)" teriyaki meatballs with rice and vegetable. "Teriyaki" is a particular kind of sauce – a Japanese sauce that is used to make different kinds of meats or fish, and this is a teriyaki meatball with rice and vegetables. Let's listen again:

[recording]

Right here, we're doing hamburgers and hot dogs and veggie burgers. It's all grass-fed beef. On this station, we're doing egg rolls with, uh, Asian noodle salad. This side over here is, uh, all organic salad bar. On the other side of that is gonna be, uh, teriyaki meatballs with rice and vegetable.

[end of recording]

In this next section, where going to hear from the director at the school district, the person who's responsible for this new approach of giving kids healthier food to eat in hopes that they won't become as fat as they do when they eat other kinds of food. Well, the Director of Nutrition, the person who's responsible for feeding the children, describes why she's doing what she's doing, and what are some specific things that she was trying to do in creating this new menu. She's



going to talk about several different kinds of unhealthy food, and how she tried to get rid of it. Let's listen:

[recording]

When I came to Berkeley, my goal was to really change the food we were serving the kids. I wanted to segue from a system where we had almost all processed foods to one where we're serving fresh foods. We wanted to reduce and eliminate, uh, where possible, refined sugars and refined flours, eliminate trans-fats and high fructose corn syrup, eliminate desserts, fried foods. And really try and increase fresh fruits and vegetables and whole foods, with an eye really in the long run towards more locally produced foods and more organic foods.

[end of recording]

This was a little longer quote. She begins by saying, "When I came to Berkeley (to work in the Berkeley school system), my goal was to really change the food we were serving the kids (we were giving the kids)." She says, "I wanted to segue (segue) from a system where we had almost all processed foods to one where we're serving fresh foods." To "segue from one thing to another," or simply to "segue to something" means to transition, to move from one thing to another. So, I'm going to segue, in a few minutes, from talking about obesity to talking about your questions that you've asked. It can also be used as a noun; when there's a transition, we can call that a "segue."

So, the director wanted to segue from a system where they had almost all processed foods. "Processed" foods are foods that have been produced or manufactured by companies that aren't very natural anymore; there are a lot of chemicals, a lot of changes in the food. Tomatoes, for example, are natural food, but ketchup is a processed food. Ketchup is made from tomatoes, but the company puts a lot of other things in there besides just the tomato.

The director also wants the school to reduce and eliminate, where possible, refined sugars. To "reduce" or "eliminate," to make less or to completely get rid of these refined sugars. In general, food that is "refined" has been made somehow different by the manufacturing process. Often, this means taking away the healthier parts of the food. For example, refined flour is white and has very few vitamins and minerals, because the healthiest part of the grain, from which we get flour, has been removed – has been eliminated. So, refined sugars would be sugars that have been processed – that have been changed somehow.



Next she says she wants the school to eliminate or stop using trans-fat and high fructose corn syrup. “Trans-fat” is a very unhealthy kind of fat, and there have been many places, including here in California, where the government has said that you have to stop making your food with this unhealthy fat – this trans-fat. “Trans” is short for transaturated fat. “High fructose corn syrup” is extremely common in many different kinds of processed foods in the U.S. It’s a unhealthy kind of liquid sugar that is made from corn; that’s why it’s called “corn syrup.” “Syrup” (syrup) is a thick liquid. “Fructose” is another word for sugar, so “high fructose” means a high sugar corn liquid. She also wants to eliminate, or to get rid of, desserts and fried foods. “Desserts” refers to anything sweet that you eat at the end of a meal, typically. “Fried” foods are foods that you put in hot oil and you cook them. Many people think that the desserts – which typically have a lot of sugar in them, they’re very sweet – and fried food are the best tasting foods, or least some Americans think that. Unfortunately, they can also make you fat – they can make you obese.

Then she says that she has tried to increase fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole foods. So, “fresh” fruits would be fruit that is not in a can. “Whole” foods is the opposite of processed foods. Whole foods are natural or very close to the natural state – how they were grown. For example, brown rice is a whole food; white rice is a processed food. The brown rice still has most of the original material, if you will. White rice has had that healthy part removed and eliminated.

She ends by saying that she’s doing all this with an eye in the long run toward more locally produced foods and more organic foods. To do something “with an eye toward” something else means to do something in order to achieve another goal – in order to reach a certain goal. “In the long run” means eventually; could be a year, could be two years, could be 20 years. One famous British economist said, “In the long run, we’re all dead,” meaning you can’t just focus on the long run, by that time some of us may not be here anymore – like me, I’m too old! But, in the long run, they want to move toward, or change to, more “locally produced” foods – foods that are produced close to where they are eaten, in this case, Northern California, I guess – and organic foods, or more natural, healthier foods. Let’s listen one more time:

[recording]

When I came to Berkeley, my goal was to really change the food we were serving the kids. I wanted to segue from a system where we had almost all processed foods to one where we’re serving fresh foods. We wanted to reduce



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and eliminate, uh, where possible, refined sugars and refined flours, eliminate trans-fats and high fructose corn syrup, eliminate desserts, fried foods. And really try and increase fresh fruits and vegetables and whole foods, with an eye really in the long run towards more locally produced foods and more organic foods.

[end of recording]

We've heard from the Kitchen Manager and the Director of Nutrition at the school. Now let's hear from the kids themselves. Do they like this new healthier food? We're actually going to listen to four or five different kids give their opinion. They are teenagers, so it's a little more difficult to understand them sometimes; they also speak very quickly. We'll listen and go back and explain what they're saying:

[recording]

Boy: It's disgusting.

Girl: Um, I don't know, I guess it's the way they cook it. So, 'cause they try to be too healthy, I don't really like it.

Girl: I think they can improve the food, more people can go there by – by having food we like.

Girl: Probably like pizza, nachos...

Girl: Yeah, like French fries...

[end of recording]

Now we hear what the kids think about this new food. The first boy says, "It's disgusting." This is a very strong word to say it tastes really bad, it tastes terrible: "it's disgusting."

The next girl says, "um, I guess it's the way they cook it (it's the manner in which they cook it). 'Cause (which is a short, informal form of because) – 'cause they try to be too healthy, I don't really like it." The next girl says, "I think they can improve the food, more people can go there by having food we like." Another girl gives some examples; she says, "Probably like pizza, nachos," and then the final girl says, "Yeah, like French fries."



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So, the kids want things like pizza, “nachos,” which are a type of tortilla chip that is fried and usually covered with cheese. It’s a popular Mexican, or Mexican American food. And, of course, “French fries,” which are deep-fried slices of potatoes. So basically, the kids don’t really like this food at all. Let’s listen again:

[recording]

Boy: It’s disgusting.

Girl: Um, I don’t know, I guess it’s the way they cook it. So, ‘cause they try to be too healthy, I don’t really like it.

Girl: I think they can improve the food, more people can go there by – by having food we like.

Girl: Probably like pizza, nachos...

Girl: Yeah, like French fries...

[end of recording]

Our thanks to the Voice of America, from which we took those recordings from a story that they published last year.

Now let’s answer a few of your questions.

Our first question comes from Maxim (Maxim) in Russia. Maxim asks about the words “furthermore,” “moreover,” and “besides.” What are the differences in use among these three words?

Well, all of the words – all three of the words can be used to show that you are going to give someone additional information – more information. You give them one piece of information, or two pieces of information, and now you’re going to give them something in addition. In fact, you could also say “in addition” or “additionally” to mean the same thing.

“Furthermore” and “moreover” are both considered more formal and are common in writing. The words “furthermore” and “moreover” also suggest that the information that you are giving them – the additional information – is a little more important than the information you already gave them.



For example, you might say, “We have to fire this employee. He has missed several days of work, and furthermore he lied to us several times.” What you are saying here is that you have different reasons for firing this person. One reason is that he missed several days of work. An additional reason is that he lied to us, which is even more serious.

The word “moreover” is used similarly. I could say, “This is not a good place to rent. The building is not clean. Moreover, it looks like it might fall down soon.” So I have a couple of reasons here. One, the building isn’t clean, so I don’t want to rent there. And, an additional reason is that the building might fall down; it’s not very well built.

The word “besides” has the same meaning as “furthermore” and “moreover,” but it’s a little less formal – a little more informal. You will hear “besides” a lot in spoken English. You might hear someone say, for example, “I asked that beautiful woman to dance with me. She looked at me and said, ‘No, you’re not a very good dancer. And besides, I’m married.’” So two reasons why she didn’t want to dance with me: one is that I’m not a good dancer and the other one is that she already has a husband. That’s “besides.”

Gilbert (Gilbert) in France asked us a question that has to do with the meaning of the expression “the old wink-wink.” He read an article that said, “Former U.S. President Clinton accused Obama of doing the old wink-wink on trade.”

The verb “to wink” (wink) means to close your eye very quickly. We often wink to show affection, perhaps we’re attracted romantically to the other person, but sometimes we use it to show that we aren’t really serious about what we are saying. To “give someone the wink-wink” or to “give someone the old wink-wink” means that you are suggesting that what you are saying is not something you really believe, and that’s the meaning of that particular phrase. We sometimes use “wink-wink” to indicate that you mean the opposite of what you are saying.

Finally, Bill from China wants to know the meaning of the expression “What a thrill!” A “thrill” (thrill) is a feeling of happiness – of great happiness, of excitement. It’s a pleasant thing; it’s a good thing.

“What a thrill” means how exciting, how wonderful. You may be watching a game – a baseball game or football game or any other kind of sports – and it’s a very good game, and you may say, “What’s a thrill!” – it was an exciting game.



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We commonly form these kinds of expressions in English by saying “what a” plus a noun. If someone has a great idea, you may say “What an idea!” meaning that’s a great idea. Or, if it’s a beautiful day, the sun is shining as it is here today in Southern California, you may say, “What a day!” Or, “What a episode, Jeff. Good job!” Well, thank you!

If you have any questions or comments, email us. Our email address is eslpod@eslpod.com.

From Los Angeles, California, I am Jeff McQuillan. I thank you for listening, and hope you’ll come back in listen to us next time on the English Café.

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