

English Champions | Business English | Term 1 2020/2021 – 8

<https://englishchampions.fr/business-english-class-materials/>
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A sad day

November 23, 2020 20h30 - 21h30

Copy this link into a browser: <https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/83557612942> to join the Zoom meeting.

Pronunciation of 'th' at the start of words

Voiced

'Th' is 'voiced' in the following words: *than, that, the, their, them, then, thence, there, these, they, this, those, though, thus, therefore.*

Unvoiced

It is 'unvoiced' in other words, e.g. *thin, thistle, throw, theft, thigh, thermonuclear, thumb, third, theory, thing, theatre.*

Silent

Many names starting with 'Th' are pronounced as 'T', e.g. *Thomas, Theresa* etc Others are pronounced with the unvoiced 'th' sound, e.g. *Theo, Thelma*. For some it is unclear, e.g. *Thalia, Thandie*.

Also, note that with the names Nathan, Nathaniel, the 'th' is pronounced with the unvoiced 'th' sound

Vocabulary

Vet: veterinary surgeon. (USA) Ex-serviceman.

Listless: lacking energy or enthusiasm.

Put to sleep/put down: euphemism for animal euthanasia. (Also, to have an animal destroyed.)

Nap: sleep

Urn: a rounded vase.

Whimper: make a series of low, feeble sounds expressive of fear, pain, or unhappiness.

To relieve oneself: euphemism for urinate.

Sob: cry noisily, making loud, convulsive gasps.

Rheumy eyes: watery eyes (especially for an old person or animal).

Goodbye Falmouth

Mr Tufty's corgi dog, Falmouth, had been unwell for some time. Some days were better than others but it had been difficult for Mr Tufty to see his beloved pet gradually losing interest in food, losing weight and becoming increasingly listless.

Mr Tufty had taken him to the vet's a few weeks ago and it had become immediately obvious that treatment options were few and far between. To make matters worse, any possible treatment would have been impossibly expensive. Mr Tufty knew that Falmouth would have to be put to sleep one day soon.

That day had arrived.

Early on Thursday morning Mr Tufty succeeded in getting Falmouth into his travel basket. This was usually not something he would do willingly, but today was different. The little dog whimpered a little and then lay down and started to nap.

It was a typical winter's day in Squirrel's Wood: depressing, cold, damp and grey.

Mr Tufty carried him to the car just after nine. Mrs Tufty waved them goodbye and they left a few

minutes later.

Once at the vet's, the nurse at the front desk took Mr Tufty's credit card. She asked him whether he would like the platinum option which included a small, alabaster urn for Falmouth's ashes. Mr Tufty explained that he would be spreading the Falmouth's ashes under one of the trees in his garden where he had especially liked to relieve himself, Falmouth, that is, not Mr Tufty! A small cardboard box would be fine.

Mr Tufty and Falmouth were lead into an examination room and the vet arrived a few seconds later. He and Mr Tufty were in a rather sombre mood. Frowning, the vet examined Falmouth carefully and said:

"I will leave you with Falmouth for a few minutes to say your goodbyes to the little 'fella.' Take as much time as you like."

Falmouth stood on the table looking at his master. Mr Tufty stroked him gently behind his ears and rather lost track of time.

"You have been a very good dog. You even saved my life. Thank you. I will miss you."

Falmouth's little rheumy eyes glanced up at Mr Tufty.

Eventually the vet returned and asked if he was ready for him to take Falmouth. Falmouth barked a couple of times, rather half heartedly and was carried out by the vet.

Mr Tufty was left on his own and memories of all the years that Falmouth had spent by his side came flooding back. He didn't want to become emotional but eventually he wept. A veterinary nurse came to check he was alright which added to Mr Tufty's embarrassment.

He left the vets at about ten and returned home. His sadness was somewhat tempered by the anticipation of meeting his new-born granddaughter, Thandie, for the first time that afternoon...

Questions for discussion

1. Have you had to have a pet put down? Was the timing of this a difficult decision for you?
2. Would you have paid extra for the urn if it were your pet?
3. Are you surprised about where Mr T. was planning to scatter the ashes?
4. Were you surprised by Mr Tufty's reaction after he said goodbye to Falmouth? Why/why not?
5. What could Mr Tufty do to cheer himself up? Should he get another pet?
6. How do vets maintain a level of sympathy for their human clients while encountering the same situations all day long?

NEXT WEEK: The pronunciation challenge

The pronunciation challenge has been recorded and posted to the English Champions web site:

<https://englishchampions.fr/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Pronunciation-challenge.mp4>

Dates des cours

	septembre	octobre	novembre (on-line)
Intermédiaire / avancé lundi 20h30 - 21h30	21, 28	5, 12	2, 9, 16, 23, 30