

Listening

- 1 Work with a partner. Read the definition of the word *con*. Then look at the pictures (1–4) and discuss what con they might illustrate.

con¹ /kɒn/ noun [C] ★

1 *informal* a dishonest plan or method for making someone give you money = TRICK: *The insurance scheme was just a big con.*

2 *very informal* a PRISONER

con² /kɒn/ verb [T] *informal* to make someone believe something that is not true, especially in order to get money from them = TRICK: *He conned them into believing he was ill.* ♦ *She was conned out of her life savings.*



- 2 🎧 1.30–1.33 Listen to the four stories of the pictures (1–4). Were you correct?

- 3 Listen again and answer these questions for each person (1–4) in the stories.

- What deception is described?
- Why did the person fall for it?
- How did they feel about being conned?

What would you have done in the situations described? Tell your partner.

Vocabulary

- 1 Work with your partner. Complete the sentences with words or phrases from the box. Use a dictionary if necessary.

a cock and bull story	end of story	a long story	an old wives' tale
a sob story	tales	the story of my life	to cut a long story short

- They say that eating carrots helps you see in the dark, but personally I think it's just _____.
 - I said you can't borrow my car, and I mean it. _____.
 - We lost our luggage at the airport, and had to fill in various forms and keep phoning up the airline. But anyway, _____, we managed to get it back in the end.
 - 'Mummy, Ella hit the cat.' 'Don't tell _____ about your sister, Mia.'
 - I'm afraid you can't believe everything Karen says. She's always got _____ about how badly people have treated her.
 - When he arrived late he told me _____ about being trapped in a lift and then being rescued by a news reporter and being interviewed on television.
 - I didn't get the job – they told me I didn't have enough experience. But that's _____, I'm afraid.
 - 'So how come you managed to persuade your father to lend you the car?' 'Well, it's _____.'
- 2 Work with your partner. Discuss which expressions (a–h) in Exercise 1 relate to ...
- a myth or superstition.
 - a silly story that is hard to believe.
 - a story told to get someone else into trouble.
 - a sad story designed to elicit sympathy.
 - a story that you don't want to tell in detail.
 - a detailed or complicated story.
 - an attempt to stop discussion or argument about something.
 - something unfortunate that often happens to someone.
- 3 Work with your partner. Write a short conversation containing one or more of the expressions in Exercise 1. Read it aloud to the class, missing out the expression(s). Can other people guess what they were?

Pronunciation

Weak and strong forms of auxiliary verbs

Have (/həv/) you ... ?
Yes, I **have** (/hæv/). / No, I **haven't** (/hævənt/).

Do (/də/) you ... ?
Yes, I **do** (/du:/). / No, I **don't** (/dəʊnt/).

Can (/kən/) you ... ?
Yes, I **can** (/kæn/). / No, I **can't** (/kɑ:nt/).

Are (/ə/) you ... ?
Yes, we **are** (/ɑ:/). / No, we **aren't** (/ɑ:nt/).

See *Phonetic symbols* on page 159.

1 Read these extracts from the conversations in Listening, Exercise 2. How are the underlined words pronounced?

- 1 Q: So, have you ever been conned? 2 Q: Do you have any experiences of being conned?
A: I'm ashamed to say I have, actually. A: I do, actually.

1.34 Listen and check your ideas. Then answer these questions.

- a) Which words carry the main stress in each sentence? Why are the words pronounced differently in each exchange?
b) What is the pronunciation of *actually*?

Practise reading the exchanges aloud with a partner.

2 Work with your partner. Decide how the auxiliary verbs are pronounced in these exchanges.

- a) A: So, do you ever go in for competitions? c) A: So, can you cook well?
B: I have to say I don't, actually. B: I'm proud to say I can.
b) A: So, are you good at managing your time? d) A: Can you speak Chinese?
B: I'm pleased to say I am, actually. B: I'm afraid I can't, actually.

1.35 Listen and check your answers. Practise reading the exchanges with your partner.

3 Ask your partner the questions in Exercise 2. Give true answers. Then ask more questions beginning *Do you ever ... ?*, *Have you ever ... ?*, *Are you ... ?*, *Can you ... ?*

Vocabulary & Speaking

Deception and belief synonyms

gullible	=	naïve
swallow	=	fall for
unscrupulous	=	dishonest
trick	=	con
make out	=	pretend
astute	=	streetwise
plausible	=	credible
sceptical	=	cynical



1 Read the situations and complete the sentences with words and phrases from the box.

con fall for fishy get taken for a ride naïve plausible sceptical unfaithful

- a) I let the second-hand car salesman _____ me into believing that the sound that the engine makes was in fact a fault. I shouldn't have been so gullible.
b) You can't take Laura in – she's too streetwise to _____ any cock-and-bull story.
c) He made out he was a police officer and just needed to check my passport. How was I to know he was a con-man? His story seemed completely _____ to me.
d) You have to be really on the ball and astute if you don't want to _____. There are some really unscrupulous people out there.
e) Did you really swallow that sob story about his daughter? I can't believe you were so _____.
f) He led me to believe he wanted to marry me. Little did I realise he already had a wife and children back home. It's made me more _____ about men, I'm afraid.
g) 'I thought that investment deal sounded a bit _____.' 'Yes, I should have realised. The trouble with me is, I'm too trusting – I take everyone at their word.'
h) Unbeknownst to Tim, his girlfriend is two-timing him. He can't seem to find a woman who isn't _____ to him.

2 Underline the correct alternatives.

- a) Are you a(n) gullible / plausible / unfaithful person or are you more sceptical?
b) Have you ever been tricked / made out / swallowed into handing over money to a stranger?
c) Can you think of a trusting / plausible / naïve excuse for forgetting an appointment?
d) Have you ever made out / taken in / conned you were ill when you didn't want to go somewhere?
e) Would you ever fall for / make out / two-time a boyfriend or girlfriend behind their back?
f) Can you remember being taken in / swallowed / led to believe by a sob story?
g) Do you tend to take politicians for a ride / at their word / in when they make promises?
h) Were you more naïve / fishier / more plausible when you were younger?

Work with your partner. Ask and answer the questions.

Reading

- Look at the cartoons on page 43. Do you get the jokes? Do you have similar jokes in your country?
- Read an extract from a book on humour. Choose the best title, *a*, *b* or *c*.
a) Elements of humour b) Humour across frontiers c) The world's funniest jokes

W

e often hear it said that 'the -ese have no sense of humour'. Strictly speaking, this must be untrue, since all people laugh, therefore something must have tickled their sense of incongruity. What is obvious is that different peoples laugh at different things. The dry, subtle, humorous English professor could be regarded as eccentric or weird by an Arab or a Japanese. The cleverest of French puns is lost on a Burmese. A Swiss friend of mine was offended by an earthy Spanish joke that had me in stitches.

So, is there such a thing as a 'national' sense of humour? It is certainly the case that there is such a thing as 'international' humour – that is to say, some types of humour and some jokes gain international acceptance. In particular, this is true of slapstick, age-old in its use and laughed at by Europeans, Americans, Africans and Asians alike. It is very much in evidence, for example, on Japanese television. There seems, too, to be a general love of witnessing violence, and visual humour seems to cross frontiers well. There are also 'international' jokes, repeated across borders, such as the one about who must jump first out of an aeroplane, elephant jokes, restaurant jokes, and hilarious stories about golfers.

Even in the area of international jokes, however, a distinct national flavour emerges. Take, for example, the old gag about the journalists who organised a competition to write an article about elephants. The titles were as follows:

ENGLISHMAN: Hunting elephants in British East Africa

FRENCHMAN: The love life of elephants in French Equatorial Africa

AMERICAN: How to breed bigger and better elephants

RUSSIAN: How we sent an elephant to the moon

SWEDEN: Elephants and the welfare state

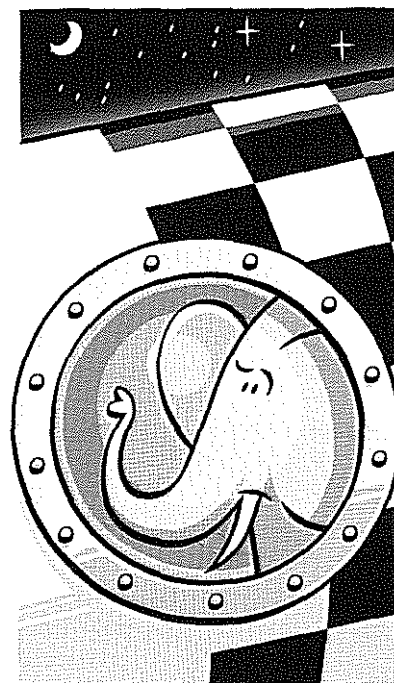
SPANIARD: Techniques of elephant fighting

FINN: What elephants think about Finland

This joke, which pokes fun at various national characteristics or weaknesses, has as its punchline the Finns' preoccupation with what other people think of them. In Helsinki, however, an alternative punchline was suggested:

NORWEGIAN: Norway and Norway's mountains

The Finns, Swedes and Danes find this absolutely side-splitting, whereas the Norwegians, who consider themselves a humorous people, simply cannot see the joke. Can you?



Glossary

- _____ adj: saying funny things in a serious way
- _____ adj: having a sense of humour
- _____ noun [C]: jokes involving a play on words
- _____ adj: direct and possibly offensive
- _____ verb phrase: make someone laugh
- _____ noun [U]: humour based on physical actions, e.g. falling over
- _____ noun [C]: joke
- _____ verb phrase: make unkind jokes about s.o. / s.th.
- _____ noun [C]: last line of a joke
- _____ adj: very funny

3 Find evidence from the extract to support these statements. What examples does the writer give?

- All nations have a sense of humour.
- Jokes from one country are sometimes not understood in another.
- Sometimes jokes from another country can be seen as rude.
- Some elements of humour are universal.
- Different nationalities prefer different types of humour.
- Some jokes involve laughing at foreigners.

4 Complete the glossary using words in the extract.

5 Work with your partner. Discuss these questions.

- Do you agree with the writer's opinions on international humour?
- What sort of sense of humour do people of your nationality have?

Grammar

Discourse markers in writing

I love TV comedy shows, particularly *The Simpsons*, for example, *Friends*, or at any rate, cartoon shows, and film comedies, too.



'Waiter, what's this fly doing in my soup?'

'I think it's the breast stroke, sir.'



'Waiter, what kind of soup is this?'

'It's bean soup.'

'Never mind what it's been. What is it now?'

- 1 Match each discourse marker in the box with one highlighted in the extract on page 42 with a similar meaning.

then in addition to be accurate say particularly in other words

- 2 Where in the sentences could you put the discourse markers in brackets? Change the punctuation where necessary.

- Why do different nationalities laugh at different things? (so)
- Some writers, Oscar Wilde, are famous for their wit. (for example)
- Many nationalities enjoy puns, the English. (in particular)
- What is universal about humour? (then)
- The Americans love slapstick. Europeans find it hilarious. (too)
- Slapstick leaves me cold. I don't find it in the least amusing. (in other words)

- 3 Look at these pairs of sentences. What is the difference in each pair?

- Some nationalities, **such as** the Finns, find this joke absolutely side-splitting.
 - Some nationalities, **namely** the Finns, find this joke absolutely side-splitting.
- The dry English professor could be regarded as eccentric, **or at least** slightly weird.
 - The dry English professor could be regarded as slightly weird, **not to say** eccentric.
- The Danes find this hilarious; the Norwegians, **by contrast**, simply do not see the joke.
 - The Danes find this hilarious; the Norwegians, **likewise**, are vastly amused by it.

Match each discourse marker in bold with one in the box with a similar meaning.

or at any rate including similarly viz on the other hand or even

- 4 Underline the best discourse marker.

- I find puns, **particularly** / **that is to say** / **such as** jokes involving a play on words, very amusing.
- I love classic comedies, **in other words** / **on the other hand** / **in particular** the films of Woody Allen.
- I don't often tell jokes – **at any rate** / **on the other hand** / **namely**, not in a group.
- I like subtle jokes rather than more earthy ones; my family, **say** / **similarly** / **by contrast**, tend to have a rather dry sense of humour.
- I can only tell jokes in two languages, **including** / **in particular** / **namely** my own language and English.

Are any of the statements true for you? Compare your answers with a partner.

- 5 **Grammar Extra 4, Part 2** page 136. Read the explanations and do Exercise 2.

Listening & Speaking

- 1 1.36–1.39 Listen to the four jokes and write down the punch line. Did you get the joke?

- 2 Listen again and respond to each one using the expressions in the box.

It's hilarious. It's quite funny. I find it a bit offensive.
It leaves me cold. I find it mildly amusing. I don't get it.

- 3 Work with your partner. Student A: look at page 130. Student B: look at page 131. Read the joke and try to remember it. Then close your book and tell it without looking. Does your partner get the joke?

- 4 Do you think the jokes are funny? Do you have any similar jokes in your country? Tell a joke you know to your partner. Do they get it?