



CLEAN UP

your

ENGLISH

DAY 2

STRESS-FREE SMALL TALK
HOW TO CHAT NATURALLY
AT WORK

SCAN THE INTERACTIVE EXERCISES



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SMALL TALK REFERS TO LIGHT CONVERSATION. IT IS AN IMPORTANT ASPECT OF SOCIALISING IN ENGLISH. IN THIS WEBINAR WE WILL LEARN AND REVISE SOME USEFUL EXPRESSIONS AND SUITABLE TOPICS TO USE WHEN MAKING SMALL TALK.

LET'S START!

Warm-Up Weather

Instructions: One of the most common subjects of small talk is weather. Think about how you would strike up a conversation about today's weather.

Note:

To strike up means 'to begin' (often suddenly).

Here are some things we strike up:

a conversation
a friendship / relationship

Ways to begin Small Talk

Look at some common phrases to begin small talk:

- Nice day, isn't it?
- Long time no see
- How's it going?
- How are the kids?
- What have you been up to?
- How's work?
- What's new?
- Did you watch the game last night?
- Still keeping busy?
- How was last weekend?
- Any big plans for this weekend?

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Subjects for Small Talk

There are certain subjects that are suitable for Small Talk.

There are also some subjects to avoid.

Dos:

weather	pets
current events	school
celebrities	hobbies
sports	holidays
food	hometown
family	work

Don'ts:

politics
religion
finance
pregnancy
weight
personal problems

The purpose of Small Talk

The subject of small talk may be unimportant or light, but the purpose is important. Here are the three main reasons people make small talk:

1. to be friendly
2. to fill an uncomfortable silence or to make a situation feel more comfortable
3. to lead into a more serious matter or discussion

Situations for Small Talk

People often make Small Talk when they are waiting for something to happen. It is also common to make Small Talk when you first see or meet someone on a specific day. Here are some locations where Small Talk often takes place:

- 🚌 at bus stops
- 🪑 in waiting rooms
- 🧹 in staff rooms
- 📁 at conferences
- 👯 at parties and get-togethers
- 🏊 in gyms or recreation centres

If you see the same person later in the day, it is not necessary to make small talk again. However, you can do one of the following:

- say 'Hi!' again
- say 'Bye.'
- say 'Nice chatting with you.'
- smile or wave

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Practice Dialogues

Instructions: Read the following dialogues and answer the questions below.

Dialogue 1

A: Nice day, isn't it?

B: Sure is.

A: Is Paris home, or are you from Toronto?

B: I'm going to Paris for work. How about you?

A: I'm visiting family.

B: Nice. Let's hope the weather is like this in Paris.

A: It's supposed to be hot and sunny all week.

B: Good to know!

Dialogue 2

A: Hey! Long time no see!

B: Hi there! How are things?

A: Pretty good. How are the kids?

B: Good. They're happy that school is almost out.

Hey, did you get a new puppy?

A: Yes, he's a golden retriever

B: Ah. He's so cute. What's his name?

A: Jack. He's cute, but he's a lot of work!

Questions:

1. Do these people know each other?
2. What is the subject of the conversation?
3. Where do you think this conversation takes place?

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Complete the dialogue between two people at a bus stop.

A: Nice day, (1) _____ ?

B: Sure (2) _____ !

A: Any (3) _____ for the weekend?

B: I'm going golfing. (4) _____ you?

A: My in-laws are coming over.

B: Let's hope the (5) _____ stays like this.

A: Yes. I hear it's (6) _____ to be sunny all weekend.

Pronunciation Practice Stress

In English, we place more emphasis on important words in a sentence.
This gives our language rhythm and helps us understand each other better.

Let us look at one of the dialogues from the previous exercise again.
Practise reading the conversation with the correct stress.

Dialogue 1

A: Nice **day**, **isn't** it?

B: **Sure** is.

A: Is **Paris** home, or are you from **Toronto**?

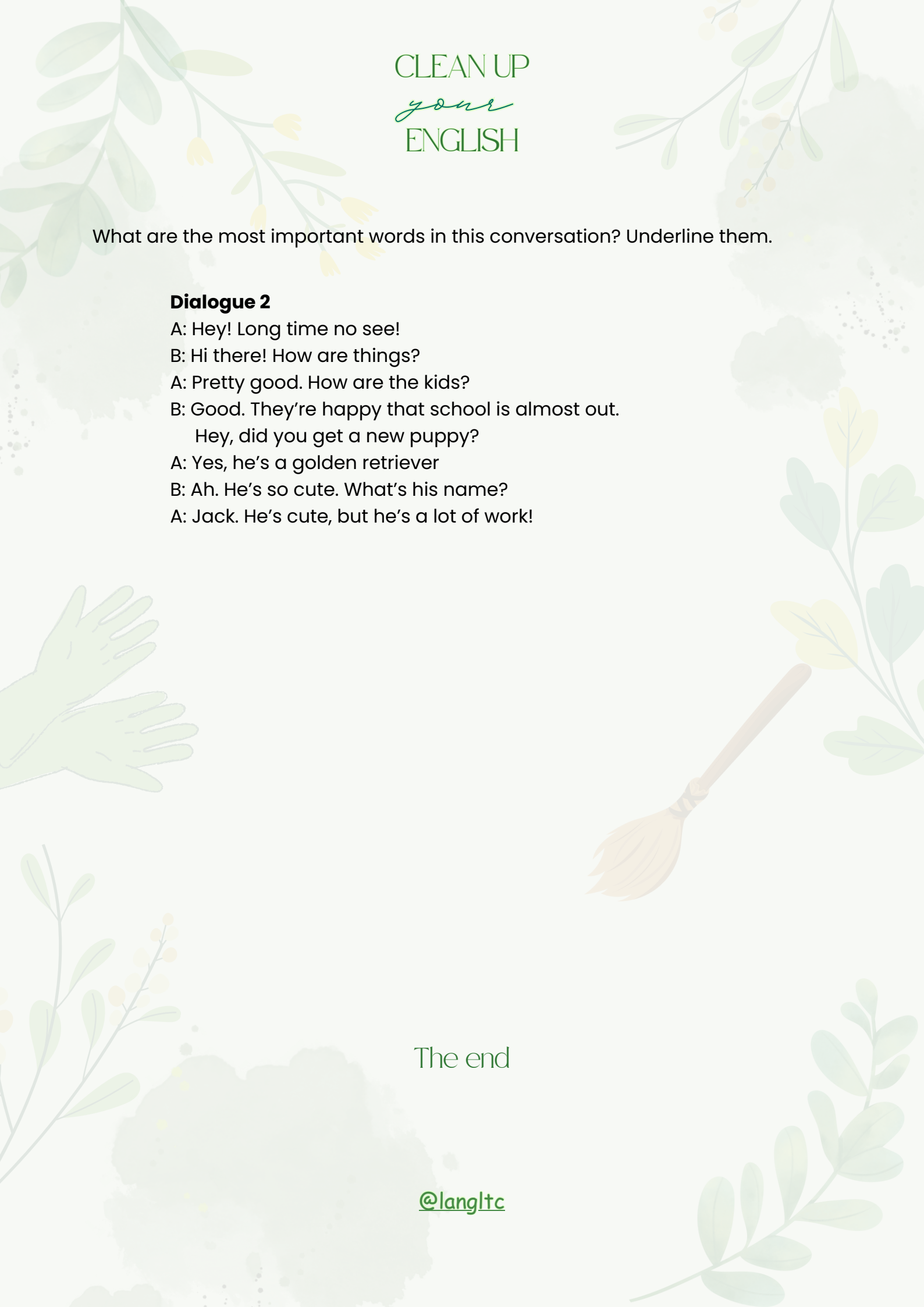
B: I'm going to Paris **for work**. How about **you**?

A: I'm visiting **family**.

B: **Nice**. Let's hope the **weather** is like this in **Paris**.

A: It's supposed to be **hot** and **sunny all** week.

B: **Good** to know!



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What are the most important words in this conversation? Underline them.

Dialogue 2

A: Hey! Long time no see!

B: Hi there! How are things?

A: Pretty good. How are the kids?

B: Good. They're happy that school is almost out.

Hey, did you get a new puppy?

A: Yes, he's a golden retriever

B: Ah. He's so cute. What's his name?

A: Jack. He's cute, but he's a lot of work!

The end

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