



ESL Podcast 54 – A Trip to the Jewelry Store

GLOSSARY

present – gift; something one gives to someone else, usually given to show affection and/or to celebrate an event

* Darren wanted to give his mother a present for her birthday, so he bought her a new TV.

to splurge – to pay a large amount of money for something; to buy something expensive

* Even though Kiersten did not have much money, she decided to splurge and buy the expensive dress that she really wanted.

to pull out all the stops – to do everything one can to achieve a goal; to use all of one's effort to get something done

* Collin pulled out all the stops to finish college while working two jobs.

jewelry store – a shop that sells small items one wears for decoration, usually made of expensive metals and gems (valuable stones)

* Jeanna wanted to impress the other women at the party, so she went to a jewelry store to look for something special she could wear with her dress.

display case – a locked box made with clear glass, which is used to hold and show items while protecting them from dirt or theft

* The expensive items were kept inside a locked display case to prevent anyone from breaking them or trying to steal them.

bracelet – a band or thread worn around the wrist for decoration

* The bracelet was very pretty, but it was too small to fit around Mrs. Thompson's wrist.

gold – an expensive metal that is usually yellow in color but can also be white, and often used to make jewelry or coins

* The customer wanted a piece of jewelry made with gold because he liked the yellow color.

platinum – a valuable metal that is light white-gray in color and often used to make jewelry

* The watch looked like it was made of silver, but it was actually made from platinum.



ESL Podcast 54 – A Trip to the Jewelry Store

style – the way something appears; a type of appearance or design

* Tammie preferred shoes with a high heel, so the flat shoes were not her style.

ring – a thick band of metal or other material worn around a finger for decoration

* Joseph bought a beautiful ring for his girlfriend to celebrate their one-year anniversary.

diamond – an expensive stone that is colorless and very hard, usually used in jewelry

* This piece of jewelry includes many diamonds, making it very lovely and very expensive.

to fit the bill – to match what one is looking for; to be appropriate

* Carlene wanted to eat something sweet, and the chocolate candy fit the bill.

necklace – a string or thin rope worn around the neck as decoration

* Gonzalo was happy when he saw the necklace he bought his wife around her neck.

pearl – a small round bead, usually white in color, that is often used for jewelry

* A small white pearl hung on the delicate chain necklace.

clasp – a piece of metal used to hold two ends of a metal chain or string together

* The clasp broke on the bracelet, and it fell to the ground.

to gift wrap – to cover a present (an item one gives to someone else) in colorful or decorative paper

* Scottie planned to give the book to his brother, so he gift wrapped it in nice blue paper.

to be proud of (oneself) – to be happy with oneself because of something one did or achieved

* Dianna was proud of herself for scoring a high grade on her exam.



ESL Podcast 54 – A Trip to the Jewelry Store

CULTURE NOTE

Give the Gift of Guiltlessness

What makes a good gift?

You may think that the best gifts cost a lot of money or are fancy and of high quality. You may think that the best gifts involve the good “intentions” (motives; the reasons for something) of the “giver” (the person giving something).

However, the answer may be one that many people would agree with: “A good gift is something that you really want but feel guilty about buying for yourself.” “To feel guilty” means to feel like you did something wrong, to feel responsible for a bad action.

For example, you really want a new television, but the price seems too high. You would feel guilty spending that much money on yourself. Then your wife or boyfriend gives you that “exact” (same) television for Christmas. Are you happy? Of course you are! You now have the gift you wanted without having to feel guilty about spending the money on it.

This is probably why gift cards have become so popular in the U.S. A “gift card” is money in the form of a plastic card, like a credit card, that you must use at a “particular” (specific) store. “Assuming” (if it is true) it is a store you like, you can now buy those things you would not have bought for yourself but really wanted to. Many Americans like this freedom to buy what they want, without feeling like they’ve been “self-indulgent” (doing what one wants, usually without caring about the consequences or its effect on other people).



ESL Podcast 54 – A Trip to the Jewelry Store

COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 54 – A Trip to the Jewelry Store.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 54. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

In this episode, we're going to discuss shopping for jewelry at a jewelry store. Let's get started.

[start of story]

My wife's birthday was coming up and I wanted to get her a special present. She always tells me not to splurge on gifts for her, but for once, I decided to pull out all the stops.

I went to the jewelry store and began looking at all of the display cases. I started by looking at the bracelets. The sales clerk asked me if I was looking for a bangle or a chain bracelet. I told her that I wasn't sure, and she showed me some in yellow gold, white gold, and platinum. None of them seemed like my wife's style, so I moved on to the rings.

The clerk asked me if my wife liked diamonds, and I told her that she did but that she also liked other stones, like emeralds, rubies, or sapphires. I looked at a lot of anniversary bands, but none really fit the bill.

Finally, I walked over to the display case with the necklaces. There was a pearl necklace with a really beautiful clasp. I had never seen anything like it before and I was sure my wife was going to like it. I told the clerk that I would take it.

The clerk placed the necklace in its box and gift wrapped it. I have to say that when I left the store, I felt pretty proud of myself. I knew my wife would like the present, and I picked it out all by myself. Now, I can't wait to see the look on her face when she opens it!

[end of story]

Today we are talking about why I am such a good husband, because I went to the jewelry store to buy my wife a gift. I said that my wife's birthday was "coming up." When we say an event or a date "is coming up," we mean that it will be here



ESL Podcast 54 – A Trip to the Jewelry Store

soon. Sometimes you hear that on the television when a person reading the news announces a story that they are going to talk about in a few minutes. They'll say, "Coming up: a story about birds," or whatever the story is.

Anyway, my wife's birthday was coming up and so I wanted to give her a special "gift," or "present." "Gift" and "present" mean the same thing. My wife always tells me not to "splurge." "To splurge" (splurge) means to spend a lot of money on something. "I'm going to splurge on dinner tonight and order the filet mignon or the New York steak." You can splurge on anything: a television, a computer, even an iPad.

I said that "for once" I decided to "pull out all the stops." "For once" here means "for this one time." "For once, I want to see a good movie" means this one time, I want to see a good movie. Usually we use this expression when we don't normally expect to do a certain thing. For example, "Normally I go jogging every morning, but for once, I'm going to try swimming." That would be an example of using "for once."

"To pull out all the stops" means to do the maximum possible, to do as much as possible. If you throw a party for a friend, and you hire an orchestra with dancers and order wine and food, this would be "pulling out all the stops" – doing the maximum or most that you could do. It would also be very expensive. Now, the expression "to pull out all the stops" actually comes from music. On an organ, like an organ in a church, the "stops" are things that help control the volume of the organ, and pulling them out makes the organ louder. So, "to pull out all the stops" means to do the most you can do.

I said I went to the "jewelry store," and the "jewelry store," you probably know, is where you buy "jewelry" – things like rings and necklaces and bracelets and so forth. I started by looking at the "display cases." When you walk into a jewelry store, usually there is a counter or a glass case where they have all of the jewelry. A "case" is like a box where they keep the jewelry so you can see it but you can't touch it. A "display case," then, is a case in a store that displays or shows something.

"I started by looking at the bracelets." "Bracelets," you probably know, are things that go around your wrist. Both men and women can wear bracelets. The sales clerk asked me if I was looking for a "bangle" or a "chain bracelet." There are two kinds of bracelets, basically. A "chain bracelet" is made up of little pieces. We call those little pieces of a chain "links" (links). So, a "chain bracelet" is flexible and it has little pieces that go all around your wrist. A "bangle bracelet" is solid. It's one piece. You can put it on and it isn't flexible like a chain bracelet is.



ESL Podcast 54 – A Trip to the Jewelry Store

The clerk showed me some bracelets “in yellow gold, white gold, and platinum.” “Yellow gold” is, you could say, normal gold. It’s a gold color. “White gold” is also gold, but it is a silver or a silver-white color. And “platinum” is one of the most expensive types of metal. It is also silver-white in color. Gold, silver, platinum, white gold, yellow gold – these are all “precious metals.” “Precious” here means somewhat rare, and because they are rare, they are expensive: precious metals.

I decided none of the bracelets were my wife’s “style,” or the kind of look that she would like. So, “I moved on,” or I went to look at, the display case with the rings. “Rings,” of course, are things that you put on your finger or your toes. We call a ring on your toe a “toe ring.” But if we just say “ring,” we usually mean for your fingers. When you get married, you put a ring on. Rings have different types of “stones.” Diamonds, emeralds, rubies, sapphires – these are all stones that you can put on a ring.

A “diamond” is one of the hardest stones and is very expensive. “Emeralds” are green stones, usually. “Rubies” are sort of a red or purple-red stone. “Sapphires” are usually blue. These are all expensive stones that you can put on your ring or somewhere else. You also call these “gems” (gems). A “gem” is an expensive stone that’s used usually for jewelry. A “precious gem” or a “precious stone” is like a precious metal – a rare and, therefore, usually expensive type of stone.

I said I looked at a lot of “anniversary bands.” A “band” here is another word for a ring, and an “anniversary band” is often just a plain ring with no stones on it. Usually, in the United States anyway, when a man gets married, he gets a “wedding band.” It’s a ring that usually doesn’t have any stones in it, but it can. Mine doesn’t.

I said that none of these really “fit the bill.” When we say something “fits the bill,” we mean it is appropriate, it is correct, it is right for this situation. “To fit the bill” can be used for lots of different things. “I interviewed three people today, but none of them had sufficient experience – none of them fit the bill.” None of them was what I was looking for.

I finally went over and looked at the “necklaces.” A “necklace” is a chain that goes around your neck. There was a “pearl necklace.” “Pearls” are not stones, but they are a very hard substance that you find in an oyster. If you have an oyster and you open it up, it will often have a pearl inside. The “pearl necklace” – the necklace made of pearls – that I was looking at had a “very beautiful clasp.” A “clasp” (clasp) is what you use to connect a necklace or sometimes a chain bracelet. It’s usually in the back and usually very difficult to do, at least for me.



ESL Podcast 54 – A Trip to the Jewelry Store

So, that's the "clasp." It holds the necklace together so you can put it on and take it off easily.

I told the clerk that I "would take" the pearl necklace. "I would take it." This is an expression we can use when we buy something. The salesperson says, "How do you like this television?" and you say, "That's a nice television. I'll take it," meaning I want to buy it. The clerk puts the necklace in a box and then "gift wrapped it." "To gift wrap," as a verb, means to put wrapping paper, usually colored paper, on the box to make it look nice. We call that "gift wrapping."

I said that I was feeling "pretty proud of myself," which means I thought I did a good job, because I picked out the gift "all by myself," meaning with no one else helping me. I ended by saying, "I can't wait to see the look on her face when she opens it." When we say "the look on your face," usually it's because you are surprised or you're scared. For example, "I threw a surprise birthday party for my friend. You should've seen the look on his face when he came in the door and everyone yelled, 'Surprise!'" That would be an example of using this expression.

Now let's listen to our story, this time at a normal speed.

[start of story]

My wife's birthday was coming up and I wanted to get her a special present. She always tells me not to splurge on gifts for her, but for once, I decided to pull out all the stops.

I went to the jewelry store and began looking at all of the display cases. I started by looking at the bracelets. The sales clerk asked me if I was looking for a bangle or a chain bracelet. I told her that I wasn't sure, and she showed me some in yellow gold, white gold, and platinum. None of them seemed like my wife's style, so I moved on to the rings.

The clerk asked [me] if my wife liked diamonds, and I told her that she did but that she also liked other stones, like emeralds, rubies, or sapphires. I looked at a lot of anniversary bands, but none really fit the bill.

Finally, I walked over to the display case with the necklaces. There was a pearl necklace with a really beautiful clasp. I had never seen anything like it before and I was sure my wife was going to like it. I told the clerk that I would take it.

The clerk placed the necklace in its box and gift wrapped it. I have to say that when I left the store, I felt pretty proud of myself. I knew my wife would like the



ESL Podcast 54 – A Trip to the Jewelry Store

present, and I picked it out all by myself. Now, I can't wait to see the look on her face when she opens it!

[end of story]

Thanks to our great scriptwriter, Dr. Lucy Tse, for all of her hard work. And thanks to you for listening.

From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Come back and listen to us again here on ESL Podcast.

ESL Podcast is produced by the Center for Educational Development in Los Angeles, California. This podcast is copyright 2006.