



ESL Podcast 210 – A Family Road Trip

GLOSSARY

road trip – a trip using a car to get from one place to another, usually with a lot of driving

* Barry and I are going on a road trip from Vegas to Florida next summer.

to navigate – to find out which way to go or how to get somewhere

* I'm very bad with directions, so someone else should navigate.

road map – a map that shows a lot of detail, including the streets and roads in an area

* Road maps are really helpful when you get lost in a certain city and need to find your way back home.

route – a path of travel; a way to get from where you are now to where you want to go

* When I drive to work, I like to take a longer route around the mountains so that I can see the nice view.

points of interest – things or places that are famous; usually why tourists visit an area

* One of main points of interest in Los Angeles is the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

camper – a large vehicle (truck) that has beds, a place to cook, and other equipment for camping

* When my cousin visits my house, she sleeps in her own camper because she feels more comfortable there.

to behave – to be good, usually used with children; to be quiet and to not cause problems

* Ben doesn't like to spend time with his sister's kids because they don't know how to behave.

car sick – feeling sick because of the movement of the car

* I would love to go on a road trip, but I need to be careful so I don't get car sick.

to act up – to be bad; to misbehave; to be loud and to cause problems

* Can you go outside to see why the dogs are acting up again?



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rest stop – an area near a freeway or highway where people can stop for a short time to use the bathroom, get something to drink or eat, or to rest, usually not near towns or cities

* I drive so much for my job that I know where all the rest stops are in this state.

mile marker – signs along a freeway or highway showing the number of miles, usually from the state's border

* The mile markers said that we were 60 miles from the border, but I didn't think we had been driving that long.

to explode – to feel a violent emotion; to blow apart

* She didn't want to go home and tell her father that she had failed her math class because she knew that he would explode.

photo op – short for "photograph opportunity"; a chance to take a good picture

* Mickey Mouse walks around Disneyland to give kids a lot of photo ops.

to question the wisdom – to doubt how intelligent or sensible something is

* I'm beginning to question the wisdom of eating six hamburgers for dinner.

to recover – to get better from an illness or from a stressful or worrying situation

* Wow, that movie is really scary. I think it'll take me a few days to recover!



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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Who felt car sick?
 - a) The man's wife.
 - b) The man's oldest son.
 - c) The man's daughter.

 2. Why was the man in the story unhappy?
 - a) His wife wanted to stop many times along the way.
 - b) They didn't have a camper.
 - c) The car ran out of gas.
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WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

to behave

The verb “to behave,” in this podcast, means to be good or to not create problems: “I was surprised that the group of young school kids behaved so well in the museum.” “To behave” can be used more generally to describe how people are acting in a situation: “Mary behaved so foolishly when she gave her credit card information to the man on the street!” Here, “to behave” is used to describe her behavior. Another example would be: “Why does he behave like a policeman every time there are other people around?” It’s very common to use the word “behave” to compare people to other people or things. A teacher may complain: “These students are behaving like monkeys!”

to recover

In this podcast, the verb “to recover” means to feel better after an illness or a stressful or worrying situation: “The operation was a success and the doctor said she should recover within four weeks.” We can also use “recover” to mean to return to normal after being surprised or upset: “While he was giving his speech, he forgot part of it but then recovered at the end.” “To recover” can also mean to find or to have something returned to you that was lost or stolen: “My car was stolen last week but the police recovered it after only two days.” Or, “She lost her luggage on the train but recovered it after she reported it missing.”



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CULTURE NOTE

There are many historical places to visit in the United States. At some historical places, visitors can even experience life the way it was lived in earlier times. Colonial Williamsburg, in the state of Virginia in the eastern part of the U.S., is a place where people can see how people lived in the 1700's. Williamsburg used to be the capital city before the U.S. became a country. This site "recreates" or tries to rebuild the city as it was at that time, so that people today can see the lifestyle of those who lived 300 years ago. Colonial Williamsburg has a large number of people working there who "reenact," or play a role showing what people did on a day-to-day basis during that time in history. Visitors can also participate in activities and do things in the old way, like make their own butter or flour for baking.

Other historical places to visit include the Pennsylvania State House, in the northeastern part of the U.S. It is the place where the two most important governmental documents were created and signed that made the United States a country. It was where the Declaration of Independence was adopted and the United States Constitution was written and signed. Also in this area is the Liberty Bell, the famous cracked bell that was used to call people together for meetings during the time of Revolution War, the war with Britain to make the U.S. its own country.

Another historical site to visit is the Alamo, in San Antonio, Texas, in the southern part of the U.S. The Battle of the Alamo was an important event in a war with Mexico in 1836 to make the land that is now the state of Texas independent. Even though the battle only lasted 13 days, Americans think of the battle as one that shows the courage of a small group of fighters who wanted their freedom. If you visit this site today, you'll see an old "mission," or church building where the small group of fighters lived and fought.

Comprehension Questions Correct Answers: 1 – c; 2 – a



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 210, “A Family Road Trip.”

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 210. I am your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

Remember to visit our website at eslpod.com and download the Learning Guide for this podcast. It contains all of the vocabulary, as well as additional words, explanations and a complete transcript of this episode.

This episode is about a family taking a vacation trip in their car. Let's go!

[Start of story]

Our family decided to take a road trip across the country this year. The kids were really excited and my oldest son wanted to help navigate. Before the trip, we looked at the road maps and decided on our route and the points of interest we would try to see. Since we wouldn't be taking a camper, we needed to make hotel reservations along the way. After a little planning, we were ready to go.

The kids were behaving themselves the first day. My daughter was a little car sick in the morning, but we made it to our first stop without any major problems. On the second day, though, the kids were really acting up. They kept asking, “Are we there yet?” and they wanted to stop at every rest stop. My youngest son, who is only four, kept calling out the mile markers as we passed them, and I thought my head would explode if he didn't stop. On top of that, my wife wanted to stop every few miles for a photo op and I thought we'd never get to the next town.

By the third day, I was really questioning the wisdom of taking three young children on the road for 10 days. I suspect that after this vacation, I'll need another one to recover from it.

[End of story]



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Today, we take a road trip. A road trip is when you take your car, travel in your car, on a short vacation or it could be a long vacation. Many families like to visit historical places. In our Learning Guide for this episode, we talk about some of the most popular places where Americans visit on their vacation.

The family in our story - not my family, I should say - goes on a road trip. The story begins by the narrator saying that, "Our family decided to take a road trip across the country this year." Usually when we say across the country, we mean a very long distance in the United States. "The kids were really excited," the story says, and the "oldest son wanted to help navigate." To navigate, "navigate," means to guide, to give people directions on where they should go. We use that term, navigate, for a plane. There is usually one person on a plane that is the navigator; that would be the noun from the verb to navigate. You would also have someone who navigates a ship. Here we use it for a car, to show or to indicate where you should go.

"Before the trip, we looked at the road maps." The road maps, are, as you could guess, maps that tell you where the freeways, the highways, the streets are. "We looked at the road map and decided on our route and points of interest." To decide on something means that you made a decision to do something. You could say, "We decided to take" a certain route, and there we would use the verb in the "to" form, decide to do something. But, if we are using a noun or a noun phrase, then we use the preposition "on." So I decided on the blue car instead of the red car. That means I decided to buy the blue car instead of the red car.

Well, in this story, the family decided on the route. The route, "route," is the path or the roads and streets, in this case, that you are going to go on to get to your city or wherever you are going. The place where you are going we usually call the destination, "destination." That's the place where you are going. Well, the destination could take you on different routes. So if I was going from Los Angeles to San Francisco in Northern California, I could take the freeway number five, or I could take the highway number one. Those will both get me to San Francisco. So there are different routes. Points of interest are places where you want to stop and see something. That might be a park, it might be a monument, it might be a interesting place for you, those would be points of interest.

Well, since we were not "taking a camper, we needed to make hotel reservations." A camper, "camper," is like a big truck or vehicle that has places for you to sleep in. Often, the car pulls this vehicle. That would be called a



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camper. Well, we're not having a camper, we're not taking a camper on this trip, so we made hotel reservations.

The first day, the children “were behaving themselves.” To behave, “behave,” means to act nicely, and this is usually a verb we use when we are talking about children or young students. The opposite of to behave is to misbehave, “misbehave.” So, when we say, “the kids were behaving themselves,” we mean they were acting nice; they were being good. There are other ways to use that verb, to behave, and we talk about those in today's Learning Guide.

“My daughter was a little car sick,” the story says. To be carsick usually is a type of motion sickness, where when you move in the car, some people, the motion of the car - the movement of the car - makes their stomach a little sick. They start to feel a little sick. That happens to people in the plane, or on a ship or boat.

Well, “we made it to our first stop without any major problems.” Our first stop would be the first place where we were going to sleep overnight somewhere. “On the second day,” the kids began to misbehave. Another way of saying misbehave is to act up, “act up,” two words. To act up means to misbehave, especially for children. The children “kept asking, 'Are we there yet?'" meaning have we arrived, because, of course, children don't like to wait. They want everything right away, and so if you if you have a long trip, they may say, “Are we there yet?” - have we arrived?

“And they wanted to stop at every rest stop.” A rest stop is a place on a big highway or freeway where you can stop and use the bathroom, and usually there are places where you can eat, and these are on the side of the big freeways. Usually, between large cities, you will find some rest stops every 40, 50 miles.

“My youngest son,” the story says, “kept calling out the mile markers.” To call out means to say out loud, and in this case, the son is calling out the mile markers. On most U.S. highways and freeways there's a little sign for every mile that tells you the mile number of that particular freeway. It can sometimes be the number of miles from the border of the state. When you have a highway or a freeway that goes between two states, the mile markers usually start at one again at the border. Well, they start at zero. The border would be zero, and the first mile into the state would be one.



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The mile markers, then, were being called out, or announced out loud, by the youngest son, “and I thought my head would explode if he didn’t stop.” To explode, “explode,” means literally, actually that something blows apart. For example, if you had a tire for your bike - the round piece of rubber that goes around the wheel - and you kept putting air into the tire and you didn't stop. Eventually the tire would explode, it would break open. And, that's the idea of the verb, to explode. We usually use that verb to talk about bombs such as you would find in a war, but the expression, my head would explode, means that I was getting a headache. My head was starting to hurt. “On top of that,” or in addition to that, “my wife wanted every few miles for a photo op.” A photo op is short for a photograph opportunity. In other words, my wife wanted to take a picture every few miles in our trip.

“By the third day, I was really questioning the wisdom of taking” my young children on a trip “for 10 days.” To question the wisdom is the same as to doubt, or “I was thinking this is a bad idea.” When you question the wisdom of something you begin to doubt if it is a good idea or not.

The story ends by the narrator saying, “I suspect that after this vacation,” meaning I think, I believe that after this vacation I'm pretty sure “I’ll need another” vacation “to recover from it.” To recover, “recover,” means to get better. We usually use that verb when we are talking about being sick. But here, in the story, he's sort of making a joke, saying he needs to recover from this vacation, meaning he needs to get some rest, to get better after the difficult vacation. To recover means something different if you are talking about a thing or an object, and that's something we talk about in today's Learning Guide.

Now let's listen to the story, this time at a native rate of speech.

[Start of story]

Our family decided to take a road trip across the country this year. The kids were really excited and my oldest son wanted to help navigate. Before the trip, we looked at the road maps and decided on our route and the points of interest we would try to see. Since we wouldn't be taking a camper, we needed to make hotel reservations along the way. After a little planning, we were ready to go.

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[End of story]

Our script today was written by Dr. Lucy Tse.

That's all we have time for. From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thanks for listening. We'll see you next time on ESL Podcast.

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