

He's a careless driver

Context: Tony never uses the indicator when he drives. He doesn't look in his mirror when he overtakes. He often drives over the speed limit. He sometimes looks in the mirror to see how he looks and takes his eye off the road.

Eliciting question: *How can we describe Tony, as a driver?*

Sample sentence: *He's a careless driver.*

Concept checking questions:

- a) Does he drive carefully? (No)
- b) Is he a bit dangerous when he drives? (Yes)
- c) Does he pay attention to the traffic? (Not always)

Personalisation: Do you know somebody who's a careless driver?

I don't know if I'm coming or going

Context: Maureen has had to teach all day and has just got home after doing the shopping at the supermarket. Such a busy day! Then her husband asks her for some help with their accounts, her son needs to ask questions about his homework, her daughter asks her for help on the computer ...and she hasn't even got round to thinking what to make for dinner! Or to checking her emails, or to marking homework or preparing the next day's lessons. She thinks: *Where on earth am I going to start?!!! I*

Eliciting question: *How can I say this in English?*

Sample sentence: *I don't know if I'm coming or going!*

Concept-checking questions:

- a) Is she very confused? (Yes)
- b) Why? (Because there were so many things to do)
- c) Does she know what to do next? (No)
- d) Is this a formal or informal expression (Informal)

Personalisation: Do you sometimes feel you don't know whether you're coming or going?

She was dithering about what to wear

Context: Carol couldn't decide what to wear for the party. She tried on one dress but wasn't happy with it. Then she tried on another: at first it looked fine .. but then she changed her mind. So she tried a third: maybe ..but she was still not happy. Then she tried the first one again. *Mmm, let me see...* she thought. But she was still undecided.

Eliciting question: *How can we say this in English? The fact that she couldn't come to a decision?*

Sample sentence: *She was dithering about what to wear.*

Concept-checking questions:

- a) Could she decide quickly? (No)
- b) Did she keep changing her mind? (Yes)
- c) Was it difficult for her to decide? (Yes)
- d) Did she take a long time to decide? (Yes)
- e) Is this a formal or informal expression? (Informal)

Personalisation: Do you ever dither about decisions? Or do you know someone who does?

The play was a flop

Context: A play was put on at the West End – it was planned to be on for six months. There was lots of publicity. The first week the theatre was full, the second week only half full. The rest of the first month was a disaster! The theatre was almost empty. Very few people went to see it and so it stopped running.

Eliciting question: *How can we say this in English? The fact that very few people went to see the play?*

Sample sentence: *The play was a flop.*

Concept-checking questions:

- a) Was the play a success or a failure? (Failure)
- b) Was it a big failure? (Yes)
- c) Is this a formal or informal expression? (Informal)

Personalisation: Can you think of a play or a film that was a flop?