



ESL Podcast 49 – Preparing a Paper (for School)

GLOSSARY

I wonder if – I would like to know if; a polite phrase used to indirectly introduce a topic or ask permission

* I wonder if it's possible to visit my husband after hospital visiting hours.

to cite – to state from where or from whom one received information; to provide the source for a piece of information

* Tanisha used a quote from a recent news article, so she needed to cite that article.

source – where one gets information from; a person, book, or other publication one gets information from

* Mr. Valente returned the student's paper, telling her to list the sources she got information from before turning it back in to him.

footnote – a comment at the bottom of a page giving additional information or stating where one got a piece of information used on that page

* The footnote at the bottom of page four listed which book the quote on that page came from.

endnote – a comment at the end of a paper or article stating where one got multiple pieces of information used earlier in the paper

* Xenia got information from 12 different books, all of which were listed in endnotes at the back of the paper.

style sheet – a document with information about the form a paper should be in; instructions on how to list where one got information used in a document

* Antoine could not remember how to structure the list of references, so he looked at the style sheet to find out.

citation – a written statement explaining where a piece of information came from

* The citation explained that the statistics came from an article in a scientific journal.

cover page – the top sheet of paper on an essay, usually listing the title, author, and other basic information

* The cover page listed the name of the essay, the student who wrote it, the professor it was written for, and the date it was written.



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format – form or style; the details of how a paper or sections of a paper should look

* Margie did not follow the correct format, so her paper did not look like the other students' papers.

handout – a piece of paper given to students that explains information students need to know about a task

* Each student received a handout with specific instructions about how to complete the assignment and when to hand it in.

to pass out – to distribute; to give something or copies of something to a group of people

* Mrs. McCorvey passed out graded exams to the students in the class.

to miss – to fail to see; to not see something that one should be able to see

* Even though the wild deer walked directly in front of Lamar, he was not looking up so he missed it.



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CULTURE NOTE

The Return of Bingo

The game of Bingo “has been around” (existed) for more than 500 years in some form or another. In the American version, each player is given a card with five “columns” (rows running up and down) on it, with the letters B-I-N-G-O written on top, in the first row. Below the first row, there are more five rows, each with a set of numbers from one to 75. Each Bingo card is different, with different numbers in different positions. The game consists of the leader or organizer picking a small ball or card with a letter-number combination and “calling it out” (saying it out loud; announcing it). For example, the leader might say “B-71” or “G-15.” Players who have that combination – the number in the same column as the letter – can then “cover” the number (put something on it). The first player who gets a single row of covered numbers shouts “Bingo!” The game’s leader then checks the card to make sure it is correct, and, if it is correct, that person wins. Many language teachers use a “modified” (changed) version of this game replacing the numbers with vocabulary words, and there are many “variations” (different versions) of the game as well.

Most Americans associate Bingo with either old people who play it to “pass the time” (spend time doing something interesting) or with “charitable” (helping others) organizations that use the game to “raise” (get; collect) money for their group. Churches, especially Catholic churches in the U.S., often use this game as a way of raising money.

But Bingo is no longer just for old people and “churchgoers” (people who attend or go to religious services). The game has suddenly become popular on college campuses with the youngsters. (“Youngsters” refers to young people, but it is an old-fashioned word now used jokingly, since only a very older person would use such an out-of-date word.) Some U.S. colleges are using late-night (after 9:00 or 10:00 PM) Bingo as a way of keeping students “on campus” (on the physical grounds or location of the school) at night to prevent drinking and other problems. The Bingo games are “alcohol-free” (without drinking of alcoholic beverages), and in some places “draw” (have in attendance) more than 600 students a night. Prizes can include iPads and Xbox games, but also things like bags of “groceries” (food), a great parking space for your car on campus, and one semester’s worth of textbooks.



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 49 – Preparing a Paper for School.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 49. 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 hear a conversation between a student and his teacher. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Student: I wonder if I could ask you some questions about our paper, Professor. Do you want us to cite our sources in the footnotes?

Professor: You should use endnotes for longer explanations. Otherwise, just follow the style sheet I passed out for citations in your paper.

Student: I see. And what about the cover page? Is there a special format for that as well?

Professor: Do you have the handout I passed out with you? If you look at the bottom of that, you'll see that you should follow the format of the American Psychological Association, fifth edition.

Student: Okay, I guess I missed that.

[end of dialogue]

Our dialogue begins with the student saying to the professor, "I wonder if I could ask you some questions about our paper, Professor." A "professor" is a teacher at a college or university. We are listening to a dialogue between a student and a professor. We guess that the student has gone to talk to the professor after class or in her office.

The student says, "I wonder if." That expression "I wonder if" is a polite phrase used to introduce a topic or to ask permission to do something. You might say to your boss, "I wonder if I could leave early this afternoon, because I have a doctor's appointment." You are asking nicely and politely. The student is being polite to the professor, as students should be.



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He says, “Do you want us to cite our sources in the footnotes?” The student is asking about a paper – an essay, a written paper that the professor has given the class. The student asks the professor if she wants them to cite their sources. “To cite” (cite) means to state or to say where you found a certain piece of information. You are providing what we would call the “source” of the information – where you got it from.

So, if you are writing a paper for school and you make some statement about the topic, often the professor will ask you to cite your sources. “Where did you read that?” “What book did you read that in?” Or, “What article did you find that in?” Nowadays, it might be, “What website was that on?” Note that “cite” sounds the exact same as “sight,” which refers to your ability to see. We’re not talking about that kind of sight; we’re talking about “cite” as a verb meaning to name or to give details about where you got information.

A “footnote” (footnote) is a little note on the bottom of the piece of paper that you are writing your article on. We call that the “footer.” That’s the bottom of the paper. The top of the paper is called the “header” (header), just like your head is the top of your body and your feet are at the bottom of your body. Well, at the bottom of the page, you can have a “footnote.”

It’s a small note, usually with a little number on it that corresponds to a number somewhere in the main article in the main text. A “footnote” gives you additional information about what you are talking about, or it gives you the source of the information. Another word for a “source” in this case would be a “citation” (citation). A “citation” is when you list the source of your information.

Going back to our dialogue, then, we have the student asking the professor if he has to “cite” his sources in the footnotes. The professor says, “You should use endnotes for longer explanations.” The professor is saying that instead of putting the notes at the bottom of each page, she wants them at the end of the entire paper. When the notes are at the end of the paper, we call them “endnotes” instead of “footnotes,” which makes sense, I guess, since they’re at the end.

The professor says, “Otherwise, just follow the style sheet I passed out for citations in your paper.” At the university and in other places that publish things, you have a style sheet that tells you how you are going to write and format the things that you are publishing or printing. In a university, each academic department has a style sheet that it follows. There are a couple of popular style books that are used. There is the Chicago style. There is the American



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Psychological Association or “APA” style. Different academic areas use different style books, or different styles.

A “style sheet” would be a piece of paper or several pieces of paper that indicate how you should format the paper – where you should put the title, where you should put the footnotes or how the footnotes should be formatted, and so forth. The professor is telling the student to follow the style sheet she “passed out.” “To pass out” means to give, especially when a professor or teacher gives things to her students. You can also pass out pieces of paper to a large group of people even though you’re not in school. It’s not a phrasal verb we use only in school.

A “citation,” as I mentioned earlier, is a written statement explaining where you got your information. The student says, “I see” – meaning “I understand” – “and what about the cover page? Is there a special format for that as well?” This is not a very intelligent student, since the professor just told him to look on the style sheet. I think the professor should fail the student right now. Give him an F. He’s just not good enough, not smart enough, to be in this class.

So, the idiot student is asking about the cover page. The “cover page” is the top sheet of paper that goes in front of your essay. It usually lists the title, the author or the person who wrote the essay, and other basic kinds of information. In a class, it would include perhaps the name of the professor and the class that the student is in. The student is asking about the format of the cover sheet. The “format” is the form or the style in which the cover sheet or any other part of the paper is written.

The professor says, “Do you have the handout I passed out with you?” A “handout” (handout) is a piece of paper that a – typically, a professor or teacher gives to her students, that has information about what you are supposed to do. The term “handout,” as a noun, more generally can mean any kind of written information that is given to a group of people in a meeting or any other sort of situation where you are giving information to people on paper. The student is asked if he has the handout the professor passed out with him. That is, did he bring it with him? Does he have it there in the professor’s office? (If that’s where we are.)

The professor says, “If you look at the bottom of that, you’ll see that you should follow the format of the American Psychological Association, 5th Edition.” Remember we talked earlier about different kinds of style books or style sheets. One of them used in many different areas of the university is the APA or American Psychological Association style sheet or stylebook. The more technical term actually would be “style manual.”



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The student is asked if he has the sheet – the handout that the professor passed out or gave to the students. The student says, “Okay, I guess I missed that.” “To miss” something, as a verb, means not to see it, not to notice it. The student, of course, didn't look carefully, and therefore missed the information that the professor is talking about.

Now let's listen to the dialogue, this time at a normal speed.

[start of dialogue]

Student: I wonder if I could ask you some questions about our paper, Professor. Do you want us to cite our sources in the footnotes?

Professor: You should use endnotes for longer explanations. Otherwise, just follow the style sheet I passed out for citations in your paper.

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Professor: Do you have the handout I passed out with you? If you look at the bottom of that, you'll see that you should follow the format of the American Psychological Association, fifth edition.

Student: Okay, I guess I missed that.

[end of dialogue]

We'd like thank our wonderful scriptwriter, Dr. Lucy Tse, for her wonderful scripts, and we'd like to thank you for listening.

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

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