

Students: Choose a partner and read these conversations to the group. Then explain what the underlined words and phrases mean. Then lead a class discussion to answer the question.

1. Jeff: Hi, I'm your neighbor from downstairs. I don't want to break up the party, but we have a baby. We are trying to get her to sleep, but the noise from your apartment is really loud. Do you think you might turn it down a bit?

Roger: Sure thing. Sorry we bothered you.

Would you be embarrassed to knock on a neighbor's door and tell them to turn down the noise? Would it be better or worse if you knew them? What would Jeff have done if Roger said he wouldn't turn it down?

2. Jan: Sue is bringing up her daughters in a way that I don't approve. She let them wear make-up when they were ten. And they started dating at 14. She allows boys to go into the girl's rooms without a chaperone. I just think she's asking for trouble.

Megan: I don't approve either, but there isn't much we can do about it. She is their mother and has the right to make her own decisions.

Would you ever offer advice to a friend who you thought was making a big mistake in the way they raised their kids? Would it make any difference if it was your sister instead of a friend?

3. Jan: I don't think we should be discussing Sue's parenting skills in front of our kids.

Sue: Well, you are the one who brought it up.

Is it OK to talk about other people in front of your kids?

4. Sally: I'm going to bed early tonight. I really must catch up on my sleep. I've worked overtime all week, then had to come home and take care of the kids. Doug is still out of town and I'm exhausted.

Jen: It sounds like you are burning your candle at both ends. Better slow down a bit.

Describe a time in your life when you felt like you were burning your candle at both ends. Do you think life in the U.S. is more stressful than your life before coming here?

5. Ben: People wouldn't have been so mad at Lance if he hadn't lied and tried to cover up his cheating. When he realized he was caught, he should have just admitted it. People would have been more forgiving of him then.

Jane: You're probably right. My first thought was that he was being set up by some of his enemies. I was in sympathy with him. But my sympathy was undeserved. I have no use for him now.

Did you follow the Lance Armstrong controversy? How did you feel about it? One of the European cyclists who won the Tour de France in previous years said Lance's title's should not be stripped from him because everyone back then was cheating. How do you feel about that? Was his punishment too severe or not severe enough?

6. Kim: Guess who turned up in our exercise class today?

Les: I have no idea.

Kim: Gary Parks. Remember him. He is that guy who was arrested for peeping into people's windows.

Les: Oh no. How creepy. How did everyone react.

Kim: No one said anything. We just tried to stay away from him. What a creep!

How would you feel in Kim's situation? Would you continue coming to the exercise class if the "peeping Tom" kept coming? Do you think it would be fair to ask the teacher to ban him from the class?

7. Dan: I need to get these pants taken up. Do you know a good tailor?

Sam: There is one in the mall, but I don't know if he's any good or not. My wife might do it for you if she is able to wrap up the project she is on now. She sews as a hobby. She actually enjoys doing clothing repairs.

Dan: That would be really great. I'll pay her, of course. But are you sure she wouldn't mind? I feel funny asking her to repair my pants.

Sam: No. She does repairs for half of the people on our street. Like I say, she enjoys it. Sewing is a stress-reducer for her. It's so different from her day job.

Do you think Dan is right to be uneasy about having his friend's wife work on his pants? Do you think Sam was right to volunteer his wife to do it? What should Sam have done?

Grammar Questions

Should you use "above" or "over" in these sentences?

1. You have to be (above/over) 18 to see this film.
2. The truck was going (above/over) 110 mph when it went off the road.
3. There were (above/over) 50,000 people at the concert.
4. The (above/over) rules apply to all students.
5. For prices on all online items, see (above/over).

The first three sentences should be over and the last two, above. Generally in English over, not above is used to talk about numbers; as in speeds, ages, currency. Above is used to mean "written before" in websites or papers.

Try these sentences:

1. There is a thunderstorm (above/over) the eastern part of the state.
2. He put on a coat (above/over) his pajamas.

Both of these sentences should use over. The meaning of over here is "covering".