



All Ears English Episode 198:

Are You an English Amateur or a Pro?

Lindsay: This is an All Ears English Podcast, Episode 198: “Are You an English Amateur or a Pro?”

[Instrumental]

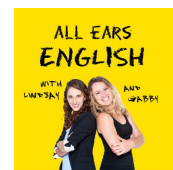
Gabby: Welcome to the All Ears English Podcast, where you’ll finally get real, native English conversation with your hosts, Lindsay McMahon, the ‘English Adventurer’ and Gabby Wallace, the ‘Language Angel,’ from Boston, USA.

[Instrumental]

Gabby: In today’s episode, we discuss author, Steven Pressfield’s books, and how they can inspire you to become a real pro in your English learning.

[Instrumental]

Gabby: Guys, we’ve asked you about your biggest challenges in learning English, and some of you’ve told us that you don’t have a native speaker to practice with, you live in a city where there are no native speakers or they’re hard to find, or maybe you’re busy, so you can’t find a native speaker to practice with. You just don’t have the time. But guys, there’s a solution. You can find a native speaker partner to practice with or a professional teacher online at italki. And because you can schedule one-



on-one classes that are convenient to your schedule and anywhere you have an internet connection, now you are empowered to learn anytime, anywhere.

Guys, you have to check out italki, especially because now, All Ears English listeners, get ten US dollars to use toward italki classes. You can claim your ten US dollars for italki classes at AllEarsEnglish.com/italki. That's i-t-a-l-k-i. So go claim that money for classes before it's too late.

[Instrumental]

Gabby: Every day All Ears English listeners download our transcripts, and they get to read along with every word on every episode that they download.

Lindsay: Yeah, so if you guys haven't gotten your transcripts yet, you're missing out on half of the experience of All Ears English. And don't forget that by November 1st, the prices on these transcript are going up. So go over there today and get your transcript to get the full All Ears English experience. Go to...

Gabby: AllEarsEnglish.com/conversations. That's c-o-n-v-e-r-s-a-t-i-o-n-s. See you on the inside at the transcripts.

[Instrumental]

Gabby: Hey, Lindsay. How are you?

Lindsay: I'm feeling good, and you?

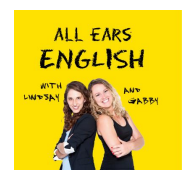
Gabby: I'm great. Thanks for asking.

Lindsay: Good. Glad to hear it, glad to hear it. So recently, I read a book by Steven Pressfield, who's an amazing author...

Gabby: Yes.

Lindsay: ...and the book was called *Turning Pro*.

Gabby: Oh, that sounds interesting.



Lindsay: Yeah, it really inspired me and I have a feeling it's going to inspire our listeners also because we're really on the same journey as our listeners, right?

Gabby: Yeah, that's right.

Lindsay: (I mean), we're here, (like) we're building All Ears English, we're putting everything out there to you guys, but you guys at the same time are building your English skills.

Gabby: That's right.

Lindsay: And we're on the same, we're on parallel journeys. So...

Gabby: Yeah, that's right, that's right. And what does it mean to be a pro? I think that's what we're gonna (going to) talk about today. But, (I mean)...

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: ...just, just what is, what is the word 'pro' mean? (I mean), I think we have to talk about 'pro' is a really common word just to say professional, right.

Lindsay: Professional. Yeah, yes. Yes.

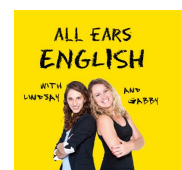
Gabby: But what does it mean to be professional in your work or professional in English learning?

Lindsay: Right. Yeah. Oh, go 'head (ahead), did you wanna (want to)...

Gabby: Yeah. Sure. So to be a pro as an English learner is to get past those kinds of, those kinds of mental blocks that many of us have. (Um), it's very common to have some doubts in yourself. Maybe, maybe you hear yourself saying or, or thinking in your mind, 'Oh, I can't speak English,' or 'My English is bad,' or, 'I'll never get this.' But that's the kind of mental block that keeps you from being an English pro.

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: So, it's actually within you to make that choice, make that change to start thinking like a pro. And, and also if you (sort of) make excuses like, (you



know), you're, you're thinking, 'Oh, well, I just don't understand English grammar, so (uh), so... Oh! So, whatever. I'll never get it.' And you throw your hands up and you say, "Oh, well, I can't do anything about it." But, you know what, you can. You can do something about it, can't you?

Lindsay: Yeah, and I wanna (want to) add something to that also. So, according to Steven Pressfield's definition of being pro...

Gabby: (Uh-huh).

Lindsay: ...it's, in addition to what Gabby said, it's also about showing up every single day.

Gabby: Yes.

Lindsay: So you think about the amateur artist and the pro artist. (Right).

Gabby: Yes.

Lindsay: The amateur artist – he talks a lot about artists and entrepreneurs – the amateur artist or entrepreneur will show up when they're inspired, (right).

Gabby: (Mm).

Lindsay: Or they will show up when they don't have writer's block, when they have something flowing through them.

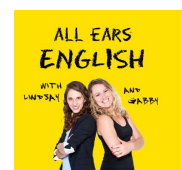
Gabby: (Uh-huh).

Lindsay: But the pro will show up every day, will sit down at the desk and regardless of how inspired they're feeling, regardless of how things are going or seem to be going, they'll do the work. And...

Gabby: I know he's... Sorry. (Uh), he's written about, (uh), well, one of his books is called *Do the Work*.

Lindsay: *Do the Work*.

Gabby: Yeah.



Lindsay: So, we're, we're going between two books here and we recommend that you guys go ahead and pick these books up. So the first one is *Turning Pro* and the second one is *Do the Work*. (Uh), he also has another one called *War of Art*, (um), which is very cool as well. But we wanna (want to)...

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...make an analogy here between the amateur and the pro artist and the amateur and the pro English learner. So what do you guys think? Are you a pro English learner or are you still an amateur English learner?

Gabby: (Mm). Yeah, and so how do we identify whether you're an amateur English learner or a pro English learner. And, so, as Lindsay said, you have to ask yourself 'Do I show up every day to do the work? Am I present in my English studies?' You can also ask yourself, 'Do I have any mental blocks? Am I repeating some negative ideas in my mind about, about my English abilities? Do I hear myself saying, "Oh, I can't speak English, my English is bad"'? (Um), do you make excuses? Do you say things like, "Well, I can't speak English because I don't understand the grammar." Or, even worse, "I can't speak English because I have a bad teacher." (Right). So, (um), it's time to take responsibility. A pro will take responsibility for his or her own learning. And, if you have a problem like you don't understand a grammar point, you have to ask yourself "Why." Ask yourself five times, "Why?"

Lindsay: Right.

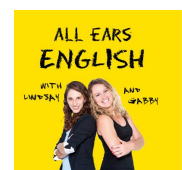
Gabby: Okay, I don't understand grammar? Why don't I understand grammar?

Lindsay: (Uh-huh).

Gabby: Is it, is it a problem with the method you're learning with? Perhaps you need to try a different way.

Lindsay: (Uh-huh).

Gabby: Is it a problem that you, you don't have the right resources or explanation. Ask yourself "Why" again. Maybe you'll come to the point where you ask yourself, 'Why am I so focused on grammar in the first place?'



Lindsay: Right.

Gabby: (Hm)?

Lindsay: I like that. I like that idea, Gabby, of dropping down into lower levels where by the fifth time you ask yourself “Why,” all of a sudden it’s about you. It’s not about your grammar books, it’s not about your teacher, it’s not about a lack of native speakers, it’s actually about you and that’s when you know that you’re not pro yet. (Right). So how can you become pro? (Um), I would like to share a quote. I think this is a quote directly from the book. It’s kind of intense about how to actually turn pro and if you wanna (want to), I can go ahead and say it and you guys can use this to turn pro. So here we go.

“The passage from amateur to professional is often achieved via an interior odyssey whose trials are survived only at great costs emotionally, psychologically, and spiritually. We pass through a (m-) membrane when we turn pro. It’s messy and it’s scary. We tread in blood when we turn pro.”

Gabby: (Uh).

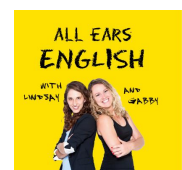
Lindsay: This is intense stuff, right.

Gabby: Yeah. Yeah, I really like that and I think, (you know), my strategy of asking yourself five times, “Why” is the way that you get on that journey or that odyssey from being an amateur to being a pro.

Lindsay: (Mm-hm). Yeah, I know. I think that that’s a good tool to use because in the end, once you get down to that fifth level, you really – it can’t be about the books, it can’t be about the resources, it’s really about you and your daily habits and the way you think about learning English, but if you don’t really wanna (want to) learn English, you won’t, you won’t turn pro. If it’s not that important to you...

Gabby: (Mm). That’s right.

Lindsay: ...you won’t turn pro. So...



Gabby: That's right.

Lindsay: ...you have to decide. (I mean), I've worked with students who have turned pro and I've worked with students who are still amateurs. How 'bout (about) you Gabby?

Gabby: Sure. Yeah. Well, it has to do with your motivation, your priorities. So you have to decide, again, by asking yourself, 'Why do I want to be a pro at English?' And then whatever your answer is, ask yourself again, 'Why?' and again, 'Why?' Five times 'why' and you'll discover your motivation for learning English and if you feel like it's a priority in your life, then you owe it to yourself to go pro. You only live once and you need to invest in yourself and your priorities and your goals.

Lindsay: Yeah, I think it comes down to whole-heartedness, (right). Whole-heartedness is something that I've really been trying to keep, (uh), (kind of) cultivate in my life, in my mind, and I think, I really admire it in people, to see someone fully, whole-heartedly into something.

Gabby: Yes.

Lindsay: And, so we want you guys to turn pro, so this is your opportunity. So come on over to this episode. Gabby what episode number is this? Any idea?

Gabby: AllEarsEnglish.com/198.

Lindsay: Okay. Come on over there and let us know if you're pro or if you're still amateur. And if you're still an amateur, what are you gonna (going to) do to turn pro?

Gabby: All right. Thanks for listening.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: If you wanna (want to) put your ears into English more often, be sure to subscribe to our podcast in iTunes on your computer or on your smartphone. Thanks so much for listening and see you next time.

