

# www.**Breaking News English**.com

Ready-to-use ESL / EFL Lessons

**The Breaking News English.com Resource Book**

"1,000 Ideas & Activities For Language Teachers"

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/book.html>

## **Voting opens on year's oddest book title**

URL: <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0703/070312-books.html>

### **Contents**

The Article	2
Warm-ups	3
Before Reading / Listening	4
While Reading / Listening	5
Listening Gap Fill	6
After Reading / Listening	7
Discussion	8
Speaking	9
Language Work	10
Homework	11
Answers	12

**12<sup>th</sup> March, 2007**

## THE ARTICLE

### **Voting opens on year's oddest book title**

You've heard of the Nobel Prize for Literature, but have you heard of the Diagram Prize for the Oddest Title of the Year? The latter literary award has been given annually since 1978 by Britain's book industry magazine *The Bookseller*. The prize celebrates the odder titles authors give to their books. This year's shortlist has just been announced, selected by publishers, booksellers and librarians from across the globe. The list offers the usual array of unlikely-to-be bestsellers, and again will get the world's bookworms holding their breath over what might be between the covers of such offerings. Apart from having an odd title, the other main criterion in being shortlisted is that the book be non-fiction. Joel Rickert, deputy editor of *The Bookseller*, told the BBC that: "It's the only literary prize where the content of the book doesn't matter a jot."

So just what do avid readers have to look forward to from this year's crop of odd titles? There is no current frontrunner, although the stakes are high for the winner, who receives nothing less than a free bottle of champagne. This year's nominees include "Tattooed Mountain Women and Spoon Boxes of Daghestan", for ocean lovers there's "Proceedings of the Eighteenth International Seaweed Symposium" and for shoppers in the USA and Canada, "The Stray Shopping Carts of Eastern North America: A Guide to Field Identification". Mr. Rickert is proud to offer the prize. He said: "It continues to celebrate the bizarre, the strange, and the simply odd. This year's shortlist shows that despite publishers cutting back their lists, literary diversity continues to flourish." All will be revealed in London on 13 April, just ahead of the London Book Fair.

## WARM-UPS

**1. READING:** Walk around the class and find out about the kinds of books other students read. Do they like to read books in their own language or books in English? Share what you found out with your partner(s).

**2. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

*Nobel Prize / literature / magazines / authors / libraries / bestsellers / non-fiction / champagne / tattoos / seaweed / shopping carts / the bizarre*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

**3. BOOKS:** With your partner(s), talk about which of these books you like reading. Which would you take on vacation with you?

- autobiographies
- encyclopedias
- dictionaries
- thrillers
- books for dummies
- grammar books
- mysteries
- atlases
- guide books
- romance

**4. MY BOOK:** Imagine you have just written a book. It will be published tomorrow. Write down the title. What's the cover like? Walk around the classroom and talk to the other "authors" in the class about writing, books and being published.

**5. ODD BOOKS:** These are the nominees to win the oddest book title prize. Talk with your partner(s) about what they might be about. Which one(s) would you most/least like to read?

- a. Tattooed Mountain Women and Spoon Boxes of Daghestan
- b. How Green Were the Nazis?
- c. D. Di Mascio's Delicious Ice Cream: D. Di Mascio of Coventry -- An Ice Cream Company of Repute, with an Interesting and Varied Fleet of Ice Cream Vans
- d. The Stray Shopping Carts of Eastern North America: A Guide to Field Identification
- e. Proceedings of the Eighteenth International Seaweed Symposium
- f. Better Never To Have Been: The Harm of Coming Into Existence

**6. LITERATURE:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with literature. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

## BEFORE READING / LISTENING

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- a. A new Nobel Prize will be awarded this year for oddly-titled books. T / F
- b. The shortlisted books for the odd title prize will be bestsellers. T / F
- c. Only books on non-fiction can be considered for the award. T / F
- d. The judges aren't at all interested in the content of the books. T / F
- e. There is a very strong contender for this year's top prize. T / F
- f. The winning author receives one free bottle of champagne. T / F
- g. A book industry expert said he was embarrassed to offer the prize. T / F
- h. The award is a sign that linguistic diversity is in decline. T / F

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| a. latter      | blockbusters   |
| b. annually    | variety        |
| c. array       | keen           |
| d. bestsellers | selection      |
| e. criterion   | range          |
| f. avid        | yearly         |
| g. crop        | prosper        |
| h. symposium   | last-mentioned |
| i. diversity   | conference     |
| j. flourish    | specification  |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- |   |                                |
|---|--------------------------------|
| a. The latter literary award has been     | high for the winner            |
| b. The prize celebrates                   | current frontrunner            |
| c. will get the world's bookworms         | a jot                          |
| d. the other main                         | the odder titles authors give  |
| e. the content of the book doesn't matter | continues to flourish          |
| f. this year's crop                       | criterion in being shortlisted |
| g. There is no                            | given annually since 1978      |
| h. the stakes are                         | bizarre                        |
| i. It continues to celebrate the          | holding their breath           |
| j. literary diversity                     | of odd titles                  |

## WHILE READING / LISTENING

**GAP FILL:** Put the words into the gaps in the text.

### Voting opens on year's oddest book title

You've heard of the Nobel Prize for Literature, but have you heard of the Diagram Prize for the Oddest Title of the Year? The \_\_\_\_\_ literary award has been given annually since 1978 by Britain's book industry magazine *The Bookseller*. The prize celebrates the \_\_\_\_\_ titles authors give to their books. This year's shortlist has just been announced, \_\_\_\_\_ by publishers, booksellers and librarians from across the globe. The list offers the usual \_\_\_\_\_ of unlikely-to-be bestsellers, and again will get the world's bookworms \_\_\_\_\_ their breath over what might be between the covers of such \_\_\_\_\_. Apart from having an odd title, the other main \_\_\_\_\_ in being shortlisted is that the book be non-fiction. Joel Rickert, deputy editor of *The Bookseller*, told the BBC that: "It's the only literary prize where the content of the book doesn't \_\_\_\_\_ a jot."

*array*  
*odder*  
*criterion*  
*holding*  
*latter*  
*matter*  
*selected*  
*offerings*

So just what do \_\_\_\_\_ readers have to look forward to from this year's \_\_\_\_\_ of odd titles? There is no current frontrunner, although the stakes are high for the winner, who receives nothing \_\_\_\_\_ than a free bottle of champagne. This year's nominees include "Tattooed Mountain Women and Spoon Boxes of Daghestan", for ocean \_\_\_\_\_ there's "Proceedings of the Eighteenth International Seaweed Symposium" and for \_\_\_\_\_ in the USA and Canada, "The Stray Shopping Carts of Eastern North America: A Guide to Field Identification". Mr. Rickert is \_\_\_\_\_ to offer the prize. He said: "It continues to celebrate the bizarre, the strange, and the simply odd. This year's shortlist shows that \_\_\_\_\_ publishers cutting back their lists, literary diversity continues to flourish." All will be \_\_\_\_\_ in London on 13 April, just ahead of the London Book Fair.

*lovers*  
*proud*  
*crop*  
*revealed*  
*avid*  
*shoppers*  
*despite*  
*less*

Voting opens on year's oddest book title – 12<sup>th</sup> March, 2007

## LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

### Voting opens on year's oddest book title

You've \_\_\_\_\_ Nobel Prize for Literature, but have you heard of the Diagram Prize for the Oddest Title of the Year? The \_\_\_\_\_ has been given annually since 1978 by Britain's book industry magazine *The Bookseller*. The prize celebrates \_\_\_\_\_ authors give to their books. This year's shortlist has just been announced, selected by publishers, booksellers and librarians from across the globe. The list offers \_\_\_\_\_ unlikely-to-be bestsellers, and again will get the world's bookworms \_\_\_\_\_ over what might be between the covers of such offerings. Apart from having an odd title, the other main criterion in being shortlisted is that the \_\_\_\_\_. Joel Rickert, deputy editor of *The Bookseller*, told the BBC that: "It's the only literary prize where the content of the book doesn't \_\_\_\_\_."

So just what do avid readers have to look forward to from this year's \_\_\_\_\_? There is no current frontrunner, although the \_\_\_\_\_ for the winner, who receives nothing less than a free bottle of champagne. This year's nominees include "Tattooed Mountain Women and Spoon Boxes of Daghestan", \_\_\_\_\_ there's "Proceedings of the Eighteenth International Seaweed Symposium" and for shoppers in the USA and Canada, "The Stray Shopping Carts of Eastern North America: A Guide to Field Identification". Mr. Rickert is proud to offer the prize. He said: "It continues to \_\_\_\_\_, the strange, and the simply odd. This year's shortlist shows that despite publishers cutting back their lists, \_\_\_\_\_ continues to flourish." All \_\_\_\_\_ in London on 13 April, just ahead of the London Book Fair.

## AFTER READING / LISTENING

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'odd' and 'title'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. GAP FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. STUDENT "LITERATURE" SURVEY:** In pairs / groups, write down questions about literature, writers and literary prizes.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

**6. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• heard</li><li>• annually</li><li>• selected</li><li>• breath</li><li>• criterion</li><li>• matter</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• avid</li><li>• less</li><li>• lovers</li><li>• proud</li><li>• odd</li><li>• revealed</li></ul>
---	---

## DISCUSSION

### STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What do you think of having a prize for books with odd names?
- c) Have you ever read a book with a strange name?
- d) Are you a bookworm?
- e) Do you prefer fiction or non-fiction?
- f) Are you interested in which book wins the more famous literary prizes?
- g) What do you feel when you walk into a bookshop or library?
- h) Do you like reading bestsellers?
- i) What would be your criteria for judging an award-winning book?
- j) Do you hold your breath waiting for a winner to be announced?



### STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Who is the most avid reader you know?
- c) How long ago did you start reading books in English?
- d) Do you think a bottle of champagne is a suitable prize to give the winning author of the most odd book title?
- e) Which of the books mentioned in the article would you be most and least interested in reading?
- f) What kind of book would you like to write?
- g) How important is literature to you?
- h) What differences are there between books written in English and those written in your own language?
- i) The first award, given in 1978, went to "Proceedings of the Second International Workshop on Nude Mice". What do you think this book is about?
- j) Did you like this discussion?

**AFTER DISCUSSION:** Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a) What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- b) Was there a question you didn't like?
- c) Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- d) What did you like talking about?
- e) Which was the most difficult question?



Voting opens on year's oddest book title – 12<sup>th</sup> March, 2007

## **SPEAKING**

### **THE ODD BOOK TITLE AWARDS:**

Conduct your own class survey of the Odd Book Title Awards. Ask your classmates whether or not they'd want to read each book.

The Nominees	Who wants (doesn't want) to read it and why not
Tattooed Mountain Women and Spoon Boxes of Daghestan	
How Green Were the Nazis?	
D. Di Mascio's Delicious Ice Cream: D. Di Mascio of Coventry -- An Ice Cream Company of Repute, with an Interesting and Varied Fleet of Ice Cream Vans	
The Stray Shopping Carts of Eastern North America: A Guide to Field Identification	
Proceedings of the Eighteenth International Seaweed Symposium	
Better Never To Have Been: The Harm of Coming Into Existence	

Sit down with a new partner and discuss your findings. Which book proved most/least popular?

## LANGUAGE

**CORRECT WORD:** Put the correct words from a–d below in the article.

### Voting opens on year's oddest book title

You've heard of the Nobel Prize for Literature, but have you heard of the Diagram Prize for the Oddest Title of the Year? The (1) \_\_\_\_\_ literary award has been given annually since 1978 by Britain's book (2) \_\_\_\_\_ magazine *The Bookseller*. The prize celebrates the odder titles authors give to their books. This year's shortlist has just been announced, selected by publishers, booksellers and librarians from across the globe. The list offers the usual (3) \_\_\_\_\_ of unlikely-to-be bestsellers, and again will get the world's bookworms holding their (4) \_\_\_\_\_ over what might be between the covers of such offerings. Apart from having an odd title, the other main (5) \_\_\_\_\_ in being shortlisted is that the book be non-fiction. Joel Rickert, deputy editor of *The Bookseller*, told the BBC that: "It's the only literary prize where the content of the book doesn't matter a (6) \_\_\_\_\_."

So just what do (7) \_\_\_\_\_ readers have to look forward to from this year's crop of odd titles? There is no current frontrunner, although the (8) \_\_\_\_\_ are high for the winner, who receives nothing less than a free bottle of champagne. This year's nominees include "Tattooed Mountain Women and Spoon Boxes of Daghestan", for ocean (9) \_\_\_\_\_ there's "Proceedings of the Eighteenth International Seaweed Symposium" and for shoppers in the USA and Canada, "The Stray Shopping Carts of Eastern North America: A Guide to Field Identification". Mr. Rickert is proud (10) \_\_\_\_\_ offer the prize. He said: "It continues to celebrate the bizarre, the strange, and the (11) \_\_\_\_\_ odd. This year's shortlist shows that despite publishers cutting back their lists, literary diversity continues to flourish." (12) \_\_\_\_\_ will be revealed in London on 13 April, just ahead of the London Book Fair.

- |     |                 |                |                 |                |
|-----|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 1.  | (a) latter      | (b) letter     | (c) later       | (d) latest     |
| 2.  | (a) industry    | (b) industrial | (c) industrious | (d) industries |
| 3.  | (a) arises      | (b) array      | (c) arrange     | (d) arrears    |
| 4.  | (a) breath      | (b) breathe    | (c) breathing   | (d) breather   |
| 5.  | (a) critic      | (b) critter    | (c) criterion   | (d) criteria   |
| 6.  | (a) job         | (b) jog        | (c) jots        | (d) jot        |
| 7.  | (a) morbid      | (b) cupid      | (c) avid        | (d) rabid      |
| 8.  | (a) stocks      | (b) stakes     | (c) steaks      | (d) stacks     |
| 9.  | (a) lovey-dovey | (b) loving     | (c) lovers      | (d) love       |
| 10. | (a) to          | (b) of         | (c) at          | (d) in         |
| 11. | (a) simplify    | (b) simpleton  | (c) simple      | (d) simply     |
| 12. | (a) Call        | (b) All        | (c) Ball        | (d) Hall       |

## **HOMEWORK**

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find more information about the Nobel Prize for Literature. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

**3. LITERATURE POSTER:** Make a poster about your favourite books and writers. Show your poster to your class in the next lesson. Vote on the best one(s).

**4. MAGAZINE ARTICLE:** Write a magazine article about the importance of reading. Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Which article was best and why?

**5. LETTER:** You are a bookworm. Write a letter to the judges of the Diagram Prize for the Oddest Title of the Year. Tell them what you think of the nominees. Give them advice on which book should win and why. Ask them three questions. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

Voting opens on year's oddest book title – 12<sup>th</sup> March, 2007

## ANSWERS

### TRUE / FALSE:

a. F      b. F      c. T      d. T      e. F      f. T      g. F      h. F

### SYNONYM MATCH:

a. latter	last-mentioned
b. annually	yearly
c. array	range
d. bestsellers	blockbusters
e. criterion	specification
f. avid	keen
g. crop	selection
h. symposium	conference
i. diversity	variety
j. flourish	prosper

### PHRASE MATCH:

a. The latter literary award has been	given annually since 1978
b. The prize celebrates	the odder titles authors give
c. will get the world's bookworms	holding their breath
d. the other main	criterion in being shortlisted
e. the content of the book doesn't matter	a jot
f. this year's crop	of odd titles
g. There is no	current frontrunner
h. the stakes are	high for the winner
i. It continues to celebrate the	bizarre
j. literary diversity	continues to flourish

### GAP FILL:

#### Voting opens on year's oddest book title

You've heard of the Nobel Prize for Literature, but have you heard of the Diagram Prize for the Oddest Title of the Year? The **latter** literary award has been given annually since 1978 by Britain's book industry magazine *The Bookseller*. The prize celebrates the **odder** titles authors give to their books. This year's shortlist has just been announced, **selected** by publishers, booksellers and librarians from across the globe. The list offers the usual **array** of unlikely-to-be bestsellers, and again will get the world's bookworms **holding** their breath over what might be between the covers of such **offerings**. Apart from having an odd title, the other main **criterion** in being shortlisted is that the book be non-fiction. Joel Rickert, deputy editor of *The Bookseller*, told the BBC that: "It's the only literary prize where the content of the book doesn't **matter** a jot."

So just what do **avid** readers have to look forward to from this year's **crop** of odd titles? There is no current frontrunner, although the stakes are high for the winner, who receives nothing **less** than a free bottle of champagne. This year's nominees include "Tattooed Mountain Women and Spoon Boxes of Daghestan", for ocean **lovers** there's "Proceedings of the Eighteenth International Seaweed Symposium" and for **shoppers** in the USA and Canada, "The Stray Shopping Carts of Eastern North America: A Guide to Field Identification". Mr. Rickert is **proud** to offer the prize. He said: "It continues to celebrate the bizarre, the strange, and the simply odd. This year's shortlist shows that **despite** publishers cutting back their lists, literary diversity continues to flourish." All will be **revealed** in London on 13 April, just ahead of the London Book Fair.

### LANGUAGE WORK

1 - a    2 - a    3 - b    4 - a    5 - c    6 - d    7 - c    8 - b    9 - c    10 - a    11 - d    12 - b