



NB: This is not a word for word transcript

Jennifer: Hello there and welcome to 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English. My name is Jennifer and with me in the studio today is Rob. Hi Rob!

Rob: Hello there! In this programme, we take a story from the news and use it to learn some new vocabulary. This one's all about noise.

Jennifer: What noises get on your nerves, Rob? Are there any noises that you can't stand?

Rob: I don't like very loud, repetitive noises – like drilling concrete in the street, for example. It really gives me a headache.

Jennifer: Oh me too! What about when you're indoors, though? Is noise still a problem?

Rob: Yes, it can be – particularly if you're trying to concentrate on working or watching something on TV or at the cinema.

Jennifer: Well, the story that we're going to look at involves a British actress who could not **tolerate** some loud noises she heard while performing in a London theatre. But more on that in a moment. First of all, though, a quiz question for you!

According to an EU publication, what percentage of people in Europe are exposed to road traffic noise levels which are higher than 55 decibels (dB)? Is it:

- a) 40%
- b) 50%
- c) 60%

Rob: Well, 55dB is quite loud, I think it's the sound of a normal street with quite a lot of cars and traffic, so I'll say... b) 50%

Jennifer: We'll find out if you're right at the end of the programme. But for now, back to our story about noise. What would you do, Rob, if a noise was really **disturbing**, or bothering, you? Would you complain?

Rob: I think I'm too polite to complain – I don't like to make a fuss. I'd probably put up with it and try to ignore it!

Jennifer: Well, that's not what British actress Dame Helen Mirren did! During a recent performance at the Gielgud Theatre in London, the actress was **interrupted** by some very loud drumming from a festival outside and so went out to **tell** the drummers **off**, or shout at them. Listen to this first part of a report from BBC correspondent Sarah Harris: how does she describe the language the actress uses?

BBC correspondent Sarah Harris:

It was all filmed on a resident's phone: Dame Helen Mirren, still dressed as the Queen, can be seen giving the drummers a piece of her mind during the interval of Saturday's performance of 'The Audience' at the Gielgud Theatre. The drummers were promoting a gay festival, and some who saw their conductor being given a lecture in less than royal language weren't happy.

Jennifer: So did you hear a phrase to describe the language Helen Mirren used?

Rob: The reporter referred to it as 'less than royal language'. Helen Mirren was portraying the Queen of England and was dressed in full costume when she **scolded** the drummers. Royal language would usually be very formal or polite, but here, 'less than royal language' suggests that she was angry – perhaps even swearing.

Jennifer: We heard that she went to give the drummers a piece of her mind. **'To give someone a piece of your mind'** means to speak angrily at them, or tell them off.

Rob: The noise was affecting the performance of the play and the audience couldn't hear very well. The actress received a round of applause and a **standing ovation** – where the audience stands up from their seats and claps - when she returned to the theatre, but what about the drummers?

Jennifer: Well they were drumming to promote a summer festival called At One in the Park. They stopped playing, but some weren't happy at seeing their conductor, or leader, being told off. Listen to this clip of some people in London: what did they think of the incident?

People in London

"I admire her gutsiness, actually. Good on her for going out there and saying something."

"I think it's hilarious that she went out and made the peace for a lot of other people."

"I think it's good on her; maybe a little too far, but I don't know. I guess she did what she had to do."

Rob: These people seemed to admire her for going and saying something. Some people, like me, would be too polite.

Jennifer: The first person we heard said she admired her 'gutsiness'. If you are **gutsy**, you're brave and aren't scared of doing something.

Rob: Another person said it was **'hilarious'** – or very funny, and the final person said she went 'a little too far'. So what has Helen Mirren said about the incident?

Jennifer: She has defended herself and admitted that she was very angry. Here's what she had to say: what adjective does she use to describe her anger?

Dame Helen Mirren:

I was, like, steaming. I literally walked straight off stage, straight up the stairs, straight out that stage door and they were right here, they were so loud. The irony is I love drumming and I love drummers and in another situation I would've been out here just enjoying it with all the punters. Unfortunately, I was having to do a play at the same time.

Jennifer: So, Helen Mirren said she was 'steaming'. If you're '**steaming with rage**', you are very angry indeed!

Rob: She also said that she actually loves drumming, and if she hadn't been on stage, then she would have been enjoying it with the other **punters**, or members of the public.

Jennifer: Well, she may get the chance, as she has added that she's now planning on going to the concert that they were promoting in the summer!

Rob: Perhaps their loud noise wasn't such a problem after all!

Jennifer: Maybe! Speaking of loud noises, we're nearly at the end of the programme, so it's time to find out the answer for the quiz question. I asked what percentage of people in Europe is exposed to road traffic noise levels which are higher than 55 decibels (dB). Is it:

- a) 40%
- b) 50%
- c) 60%

Rob: And I said 50%...

Jennifer: And you were wrong! Forty per cent of people living in Europe are exposed to traffic noise exceeding 55dB every day – so it's very noisy for lots of people!

Rob: Well, please join us again soon for more 6 Minute English from bbclearningenglish.com

Both: Bye!

Vocabulary and definitions

to tolerate	to put up with
disturbing	unsettling or bothering
interrupted	stopped (in the middle of doing something)
scolded	told off
to give someone a piece of your mind	to tell someone angrily what you think
standing ovation	a period of clapping from an audience on their feet
gutsy	showing courage
hilarious	very funny
steaming with rage	extremely angry
punters	members of the public or customers

Read and listen to the story online

http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/general/sixminute/2013/05/130509_6min_noise_tolerance.shtml

More on this story:

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