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Dear Dr Fingers,

Please could you help me with stative and non-stative verbs. What are they? Where does one find them? And how does one deal with them?

Yours, Mrs Windfarm.

Dear Mrs Windfarm,

Of course, I would be delighted to help you. OK, here goes.

There are some verbs in English that cannot be used in the continuous form. Many of these verbs are related to cognitive activities (mental processes) - what you hate, like, prefer, know, understand, believe, and how you analyse and create logic from the world. For example, you cannot say the following:

a) INCORRECT: I am knowing the answer. (Correct: I know the answer.)
b) INCORRECT: They are liking the food. (Correct: They like the food.)

The following verbs are not normally used in the continuous form. They are often referred to as “stative verbs” as they describe a fixed state. For example:

- Like: I really like this film.
- Love: She loves that story you told her.
- Hate: I hate this drink.
- Want: They really want to go.
- Need: We need a change of scenery.
- Prefer: I prefer this book to the other one.
- Know: We know what you are thinking.
- Realise: I didn’t realise what you meant.
- Suppose: I suppose it’s the right one.
- Mean: You don’t really mean that, do you?
- Understand: They understand what we said.
- Believe: I don’t believe this.
- Remember: Do you remember what I told you?
- Belong: This belongs to Sam.
- Contain: It contains a list of the most popular songs.
- Consist: What does it consist of?
- Depend: It all depends on your personal beliefs.
- Seem: She seems to be sad.
- Be: It is the best one yet.

**Stative and non-stative verbs**

There are a few verbs that can be both stative and non-stative. For example, when “think” refers to your beliefs, thoughts and ideas, it is stative. For example:

a) I think you are a good idea.

However, when “think” refers to the action and process of thinking, it can be used in a continuous sense. For example:

a) I was thinking about you.

When “to have” means “possess”, it is used as a stative verb. For example:

a) She has a house in the country.
b) We have a cat.

However, when “have” is part of a verbal structure, it can be used in the continuous form. For example:

a) We’re having a great time.
b) He’s having a bath.

When the verb “to be” refers to someone’s character, it is used as a stative verb. For example:

a) He is the most intelligent person I know.
b) She is really beautiful.

However, when “to be” refers to a temporary state, or an action in progress, it can be used in the continuous form. For example:

a) He is being silly.
b) She is being selfish.

Well, Mrs Windfarm, I hope that has helped you.

Yours, Dr Fingers.

Please send your questions or stories to: clinic@hotenglishmagazine.com
A look at what makes a good leader. This month, we’re looking at a few of the most famous leaders in history, and some who work in modern day business. So, what is it that makes a good leader? Have a look for yourself.

**Winston Churchill**
One of Winston Churchill’s strongest characteristics was durability. He was a major figure in British politics in total for sixty years. During this time, he served in many important positions in the government – the most important of which was his period as prime minister between 10th May 1940 and 27th July 1945. He eventually retired as a member of parliament in 1964 at the age of 89. However, Churchill’s most important leadership characteristic was his conviction. In one of the darkest moments in British history, on 4th June 1940, when a German invasion seemed imminent, he made a speech which characterised his strength and conviction. He said that if Britain was invaded, “We shall fight them on the landing ground. We shall fight them on the beaches. We shall fight in the fields and in the streets. We shall never surrender.” That was enough to unite the nation.

**Gandhi**
Gandhi is remembered by many for his ability to bring together people of all backgrounds. Indians like to refer to him as the “father of the nation” because of his success in bringing Indians of different religions and ethnic groups together in the political movement. Gandhi had a belief in collective disobedience and was against the use of violence in his attempt to evict the British colonialists. One of Gandhi’s strongest leadership characteristics was his ability to work towards a common cause. He spent much of his life campaigning for an independent India and even at the time of his death he was trying to unite Hindu and Muslim Indians.

**Christopher Columbus**
Columbus is generally regarded as the first European to discover the Americas. His most important leadership qualities include bravery and perseverance. Columbus had an idea to sail westwards across the “Ocean Sea” in order to find a better way to reach the Indies. This was after the defeat of Constantinople, which had made the old land route impractical. To make his idea work,
Little Jokes

Match each joke beginning (1 to 8) with its ending (A-H). Then, listen to check your answers. Answers on page 49.

1. What did the turkey say before it was roasted?  ____
2. Why did the police arrest the turkey?  ____
3. Which side of the turkey has the most feathers?  ____
4. Can a turkey jump higher than the Empire State Building?  ____
5. Why did the turkey cross the road?  ____
6. What “key” has legs and can’t open doors?  ____
7. Why do turkeys go “gobble, gobble”?  ____
8. What goes, “gobble, gobble, ha-ha-ha, plop”?  ____

A: Yes. A building can’t jump at all.
B: Because they never learned to talk.
C: It was the chicken’s day off.
D: They suspected it of foul play.
E: Boy, I’m stuffed.
F: A turkey laughing at its head off.
G: A turkey.
H: The outside.

Dog Matters  
By Daniel Coutoune

Mrs Lowdmowf, as your lawyer, I’m afraid I cannot represent you in your action for slander.

Why?

Well, you accuse your neighbour of calling you a two-faced, hypocritical liar. Correct?

Yes, that’s right.

Well, having met you on several occasions, I have to agree with your neighbour.

Glossary

a feather
- bird’s bodies are covered in feathers

a day off
- if you have a “day off”, you don’t go to work because you are sick

foul play
- criminal violence, or an action that causes someone’s death. “Foul” is pronounced the same as “fowl”, which is a bird that can be eaten (turkey, duck, chicken, etc)

to drown
- to die in water because you cannot breathe

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New Zealand couple are having some problems registering their new baby’s name. Paul and Sally Cheeka wanted to name their baby son “4real*”. However, they were told that “4real*” can’t be used on a birth certificate because numerals are not allowed. The government office has opened negotiations with the parents. This is because of a law that says all unusual names must be given case-by-case consideration. A government spokesperson said, “The name has not at this stage been rejected. We are currently in discussions with the parents to clarify the situation.” Under New Zealand law, all children must be registered within two months of birth. The baby will be registered as “Real” if no compromise is reached.

A taxi driver who tried to help some accident victims watched in horror as his cab was completely destroyed. “I was the first person to stop at the accident scene,” Sam Crier explained, “so I got out of my car and assisted the injured. It was minus 25ºC, so I let two slightly-injured victims sit in my Mercedes taxi while we waited for the rescue services to come. When the fire brigade arrived, they asked me where the victims were, so I pointed to my car. However, before I could explain to them that my taxi had not been involved in the crash, they took out their axes and started cutting the roof off, without asking the survivors if they could simply get out through the doors.” As a result, the taxi was completely destroyed, and now, poor Mr Crier is trying to convince the insurance company that he did not make up the story.

A golfer who hit a bad shot started a 20-acre fire. Jim Palo knocked his ball into the grass outside a golf course in New Mexico. However, when he tried to hit the ball back onto the course, his club struck a stone that created a spark that started the fire. After a few minutes trying to put out the fire, Jim gave up and called the fire service. “He was totally honest about it,” a fire chief told journalists. Within hours, about 50 fire fighters and fire trucks were in the area and spent hours putting out the blaze. “We had a lot of equipment out there,” the fire chief person said. “Eventually, we got the fire under control.”

For Real

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Bad Golfer

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Moore Attack

Michael Moore silences his critics.

Michael Moore. You either love him or hate him. He wins film awards, he has lots of fans. At the same time, there are also numerous anti-Michael Moore websites. However, some time ago, he managed to outmanoeuvre one of his greatest opponents. Find out how.

Desperate
Jim Kenefick spent years attacking Michael Moore. Kenefick's work consisted of trying to expose Moore's "deceptions and half-truths". He did this through the website www.moorewatch.com with the objective of "Watching Michael Moore's every move". But some time later Mr Kenefick found himself in a difficult situation.

The story began in 2006, when Mr Kenefick was struggling to pay for healthcare for his wife. She was recovering from a neurological disorder and had no medical insurance. In desperation, Mr Kenefick, whose site is one of the most popular anti-Moore blogs, posted a note on the homepage. "If you can help, I will be in your debt for all of time," it said.

Help
On 1st May, Mr Kenefick received a cheque from an anonymous individual. The 12,000 dollars was the equivalent to a year's medical fees for his wife. It was enough to ease the crisis and ensure the continuation of the website. So, Mr Kenefick banked the cheque and put up a thank-you note to the person he called his 'guardian angel'.

For a while, Kenefick had no idea who the mystery person was. But eventually, someone left a message on Mr Kenefick's answer machine. "I am the donor," he said, adding, "I wish you my best." And the mystery man's name was? Yes, you guessed it: Michael Moore. Later Mr Kenefick explained why he accepted the cheque. "I was led to believe this was a private individual who wanted to remain anonymous who just wanted to help me. What kind of moron turns down a free 12 grand?"

Oh, dear
Mr Kenefick soon got in touch with Mike, who was a private individual who wanted to help him. What kind of moron turns down a free 12 grand? But Mr Kenefick later softened his attitude.

In an interview with Newsweek, he said he had no issue with Moore as a human. "Mike's not the devil or anything. It's not like Joe Stalin made me an offer." Yeah, right.

Michael Moore
Michael Moore was born in Flint, Michigan April 23 1954. He studied journalism at the University of Michigan-Flint. His first film was Roger & Me (1989). His first big hit was Bowling for Columbine (2002), which was an attack on the gun lobby in the States and the NRA (the National Rifle Association), and the even bigger hit Fahrenheit 9/11 (2004), which made fun of President Bush.

Moore Attack
This month we are looking at some more phrasal verbs related to driving.

**Run out of petrol**
To have no more petrol in the petrol tank.

“Oh, no. We’ve run out of petrol. I told you to stop at that garage back there.”

**Write off a car**
To completely destroy a car so that it cannot be used any longer.

“We had a crash and completely wrote off the car.”

**Drop someone off**
To let someone get out of a car.

“Just drop me off at the train station, if that’s OK with you.”

**Set off on a journey**
To start a journey.

“We set off at 6am this morning and started the walk about 10 minutes ago.”

**Do up a seat belt**
To fasten a seat belt so it is fixed around your body.

“Even though you’re sitting in the back, you still have to do up your seat belt.”

**Caught up in traffic**
To be trapped on a road with lots of cars which are moving very slowly.

“I’m sorry I’m late. I’m caught up in traffic.”

**Let down (tyres)**
If you “let down” someone’s tyres, you open a valve and let the air out.

“He thinks that someone let his tyres down.”

**Turn off**
To leave a motorway or road as you are driving.

“You need to turn off at junction 36. Then, you need to take the first turning on the right.”

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(if we aren't already!)

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