

## Travel disasters by Nicholas Whitley

**Age:** Teens and up  
**Level:** Upper Intermediate  
**Time:** Approx. 60 minutes  
**Objective:** To practise phrasal verbs related to travel  
**Key skills:** Listening; speaking  
**Materials:** One copy of the two worksheets for each student; one copy of the pictures per pair of students or one copy for an overhead projector.

### Procedure:

#### A) Warmer (5 minutes)

Put students into groups and ask them this question:

*What are the three worst things that can happen to you when you're travelling?*

Give students time to discuss the question. After a few minutes, elicit suggestions from each group and put them on the board, correcting as necessary.

**Note:** If your students have a lot of different ideas about what could happen, you could then ask them as a class to choose the three worst things from all the ideas on the board.

#### B) Listening (5-10 minutes)

1. Show students the three pictures. Elicit descriptions of each picture – where are they, what are they doing, how do they feel, etc.

2. Tell students to listen to the story you're going to read (see below). Try not to put any extra emphasis on the words in bold type.

John and David's flight home from Amsterdam was at eight in the morning. John's friend Pieter **picked them up** at their hostel in his car. They had agreed to meet at half past five but Pieter arrived almost half an hour late – that, however, was just the beginning of their problems.

On the way from the hostel to the airport, a car **broke down** in the middle of a busy intersection, causing a traffic jam. Then, David realized that he had left his mobile phone in the hostel, but it was too late for them to **turn back**.

John and David didn't know it, but Pieter was a horrible driver. When they **got to** the main highway, he was driving so slowly that John screamed at him,

telling him to **speed up**. He then went so fast that David begged him to **slow down**.

When they arrived at the airport, Pieter **dropped** them **off** at the terminal, and they **checked in**, passed the security controls without being **held up** and **got on** the plane. Seconds later, the plane **took off**.

Eight hours later, they landed in New York, but they couldn't **get off** the plane because there was a problem on the runway. Finally, forty-five minutes after landing, they got off.

3. Ask the students to put the pictures in the correct order. If done using a handout, students can write a number in the corner of each picture; if done at the board, the teacher can write them.

**Answers:** 3, 2, 1

4. Tell the students to listen to the story again and write down all the phrasal verbs they hear.

5. Read the story again and, afterwards, ask students to read back the phrasal verbs they have written down. Write these down – in the order they appear in the story – in a vertical list on the board. If they don't have all the phrasal verbs, try to elicit or supply the ones that are missing (this is important for part 7 below!).

### C) Focus on form: Phrasal verbs (30-35 min)

6. Give students page one of the worksheet. Focus on the box with information on phrasal verbs.

With the whole class, ask students to give you examples of each type of phrasal verb from the story.

Insist that the students record the verbs with sentences or phrases - otherwise, the point of the exercise is lost.

#### **Answers:**

Intransitive: *check in, break down, turn back, take off*

Separable: *drop off, pick up, slow down, speed up, hold up* (it may be necessary to point out here that *hold up* appears in the story in passive voice)

Inseparable: *get to, get off, get on*

7. Put the students in pairs. Tell them to turn over or cover up their worksheet. Using the list of phrasal verbs on the board from part 3, students take turns with their partner using each phrasal verb to tell the story. For example:

A: Pieter picked the boys up at the hostel.

B: When they were going to the airport, a car broke down and caused a traffic jam.

A: ...

When the students have finished, tell the story again as a class by asking them one by one.

8. Show the students the pictures again. Elicit the phrasal verbs for pictures one and three (i.e. for picture one: *Pieter picked them up at the hostel*; and for picture three: *They couldn't get off the plane*).

Explain that you're going to play a drawing game.

Divide the class into two groups. Draw a picture illustrating the phrasal verb and give a point to the group who answers first by using the correct phrasal verb and the correct structure (separable, inseparable, etc.). Don't allow the students to see what you are drawing before you have finished!

Optionally, you can have the student who answers first come up and draw the next one.

**Note:** Some phrasal verbs are more difficult to draw than others. For example, *speed up* and *slow down* can be displayed by a simple drawing of a car, with two speedometers drawn above indicating the change in speed.

#### D) Speaking (10-15 min)

9. Give the students page two of the worksheet and tell them to fill in the gaps to complete the questions. When they finish, check the answers as a class and have them ask each other the questions, changing partners and moving about the room to finish out the class. If there's time at the end, encourage the students to share their findings with the group.

**Answers:** 1. *breaks down*; 2. *held up, hold up*; 3. *drop off*; 4. *pick up*; 5. *takes off*; 6. *turn back*

## Travel disasters: Page one

John and David's flight home from Amsterdam was at eight in the morning. John's friend Pieter **picked them up** at their hostel in his car. They had agreed to meet at half past five but Pieter arrived almost half an hour late – that, however, was just the beginning of their problems.

On the way from the hostel to the airport, a car **broke down** in the middle of a busy intersection, causing a traffic jam. Then, David realized that he had left his mobile phone in the hostel, but it was too late for them to **turn back**.

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When they arrived at the airport, Pieter **dropped them off** at the terminal, and they **checked in**, passed the security controls without being **held up** and **got on** the plane. Seconds later, the plane **took off**.

Eight hours later, they landed in New York, but they couldn't **get off** the plane because there was a problem on the runway. Finally, forty-five minutes after landing, they got off.

The phrasal verbs in the above story can be divided into three categories.

1. **Intransitive**. Verbs with no object: *They **checked in**.*
2. **Separable**. Verbs than can be separated by their object: *He **picked them up** at the hostel* or *He **picked up** John and David at the hostel.*
3. **Inseparable**. Verbs that can't be separated by their object: *They couldn't **get off** the plane* (NOT *They couldn't get the plane off*).

1. Put the phrasal verbs from the story in the chart below. Use phrases or short sentences similar to the examples.

<u>Intransitive</u>	<u>Separable</u>	<u>Inseparable</u>
<i>They <u>checked in</u>.</i>	<i>He <u>picked them up</u>.</i>	<i>They couldn't <u>get off</u> the plane.</i>

## Travel disasters: Page two

**2. Complete the questions with a phrasal verb. Please note that some phrasal verbs appear more than once.**

1. What should you do when your car \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_?
2. Have you ever been \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ in traffic for a long time and missed an important event? Or \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ by customs or passport control in the airport? Why did they \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_?
3. When you go to the airport, does someone usually \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_? Who?
4. And when you come back from a trip, does someone usually \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_ at the airport?
5. How do you usually feel when the plane \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_? Do you ever feel nervous or scared?
6. Have you ever gone on a trip and forgotten to take something very important with you? What was it? Did you \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ to go and get it?

**3. Ask these questions to another student in your class. When you have finished, change partners.**

## Travel disasters: Pictures

Listen to the story and number the pictures in the correct order.

