

# THE HINDU

**KNOW YOUR ENGLISH**

## Know your English

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“You look really fresh. Did you sleep for a long time this afternoon?”

“I catnapped, actually. It did me a world of good. You see...”

“Catnap? Does it mean to sleep for a long time?”

“It means the exact opposite. When you have a catnap, you sleep or doze for a very short period of time. Usually, not more than fifteen minutes.”

“So ‘catnap’ has the same meaning as ‘forty winks’?”

“That’s right! People usually have a catnap during the daytime. After he finishes reading the paper, my father catnaps for ten minutes.”

“I read somewhere that taking a catnap in the afternoon is good for health.”

“Several people in my office have a catnap during their lunch break.”

“Good for them. Did you manage to go to bed early on New Year’s Eve?”

“I couldn’t this year, unfortunately. A friend of mine dropped in unexpectedly. His two kids were under my feet all evening, and....”

“Why would they be under your feet? Were they...?”

“When you say that someone is ‘under your feet’, you mean that the person is always near you. He hovers around you; so it becomes difficult for you to do what you want to.”

“So this individual constantly gets in your way and becomes a source of annoyance.”

“Exactly! He becomes a nuisance. Here’s an example. There are days when my colleagues at the office get under my feet.”

“When my nephew was young, he used to get under everyone’s feet. Like most kids, he showed no regard to other people’s feelings.”

“You don’t show ‘regard to’ other people’s feelings, but ‘regard for’. The expression ‘regard for’ in this context has the same meaning as ‘respect for’. Today’s students have very little regard for their teachers.”

“That’s true! Sharmila has very little regard for her husband’s scholarship.”

“There are times when my mother has little regard for our feelings. Whenever she makes something special, she doesn’t allow us in the kitchen. She says we get under her feet.”

“You were earlier complaining about your colleagues being under your feet. Hope they’re not ruining your project.”

“The project is progressing quite nicely, actually. Ever since we decided to crowdsource on Facebook and the other social media...”

“Crowdsource? I’ve heard of outsourcing something, but what does crowdsource mean?”

“Crowdsourcing is actually a combination of two words – crowd and outsourcing. The word is normally used to refer to the practice of obtaining the services of a large number of people – it could be the general public.”

“So you take a project and outsource it to a whole lot of people. These individuals help you with the content, right?”

“It could be anything – content, ideas, opinions, etc. Very often, the people involved in the project don’t get paid at all. To find out what features young people wanted in their cars, our company crowdsourced on Facebook.”

“Crowdsourcing enables you to gather a lot of information very quickly.”

“So true!”

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*“My grandkids think I’m the oldest thing in the world. And after two or three hours with them, I believe it too.” – Gene Perret*

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