

Weekly English Practice



5th February 2015

English Coaching Projects

weeklyenglishpractice.wordpress.com

STEPHEN FRY* CALLS GOD AN EVIL, MONSTROUS MANIAC'

Fry is one of Britain's leading actors, comedians and intellectuals

maniac: a person with wild, violent behaviour

voice-overs: narration

utterly: completely, absolutely

deity: a god or goddess

How dare you!: a phrase used to express indignation

the pearly gates: the entrance to heaven

to burrow: to make a tunnel by digging through something

to banish: to exile or remove, to get rid of s.t. unwanted

Stephen John Fry is an English comedian, actor, writer, presenter, and activist, who studied English literature at Queen's College, Cambridge. While at university he met his long-time collaborator Hugh Laurie (Dr. House). As half of the comic double act Fry and Laurie, he co-wrote and co-starred in *A Bit of Fry & Laurie*.

Fry's acting roles include a Golden Globe Award-nominated lead performance in the film *Wilde, Melchett* in the BBC TV series *Blackadder*, a guest role as Dr. Wyatt on *Bones*, and as Gordon Deitrich in the thriller *V for Vendetta*. He is also host of the BBC quiz show *QI*.

Besides working in television, Fry has contributed articles for newspapers and written four novels and three volumes of autobiography. He also appears frequently on BBC Radio 4. Fry is also known for his **voice-overs**, reading all seven of the Harry Potter novels for the UK audiobook recordings.

Stephen Fry has denounced God as "utterly evil, capricious and monstrous", if he were to exist. The comedian's attack on the notion of a **deity** will be heard on an Irish religious affairs programme on Sunday night.

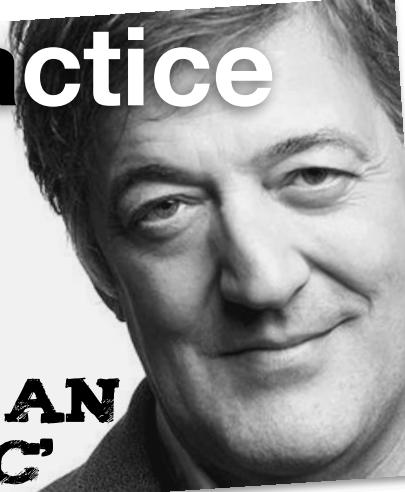
A brief clip of Fry on RTE television's *The Meaning of Life* on Sunday has already caused a storm on YouTube with over 2m views even before broadcast. On the short clip, Fry is asked by veteran Irish TV presenter Gay Byrne what he would say to God if he died and had to confront him.

In his imaginary conversation with God, Fry says he would tell him: "**How dare you** create a world in which there is such misery that is not our fault? It's not right. It's **utterly, utterly** evil. Why should I respect a capricious, mean-minded, stupid God who creates a world which is so full of injustice and pain?" Pressed by Byrne over how he would react if he was locked outside **the pearly gates**, Fry says: "I would say: 'bone cancer in children? What's that about?'

"Because the God who created this universe, if it was created by God, is quite clearly a maniac, utter maniac. Totally selfish. We have to spend our life on our knees thanking him?! What kind of god would do that?" On how to explain the wonders of the world, Fry then launches another attack on all seeing, all knowing God creator.

"Yes, the world is very splendid but it also has in it insects whose whole lifecycle is **to burrow** into the eyes of children and make them blind. They eat outwards from the eyes.

Why? Why did you do that to us? You could easily have made a creation in which that didn't exist. It is simply not acceptable.



It's perfectly apparent that he is monstrous. **Utterly** monstrous and deserves no respect whatsoever. The moment you **banish** him, life becomes simpler, purer, cleaner, more worth living in my opinion."

This story was adapted from:

<http://www.theguardian.com/culture/2015/feb/01/stephen-fry-god-evil-maniac-irish-tv>

Watch the video here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-suvkwNYSQo>

“ Something to chat about ”

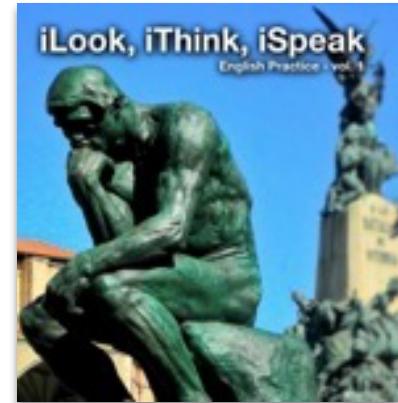
- Have you ever heard of Stephen Fry or seen/heard him on a TV/radio programme or film?
- Do you believe in (a) god, or any spiritual creator?
- What do you think about Fry's comments? Do you think he was being funny or serious?
- Do you think that it is fair that some people, who have done nothing wrong in their lives, have terrible diseases, and other corrupt people live in perfect peace and tranquility?
- Would life be better without god? Why/Why not?



“iLook, iThink, iSpeak” Express yourself better!



Stephen Fry is one of the most popular personalities on British TV. He has appeared in almost every kind of TV programme imaginable. Can you describe different types of TV shows? Here's some practice.



Soap

Makeover

Talk/Chat Show

Lifestyle

Sitcom

Documentary

Children's/
Kids'

Reality TV

Drama

Game Show

Match the explanation below with the types of TV programmes shown. Give some examples.

1. A fictional series about people's daily lives.
2. A show that helps people change an aspect of their life.
3. A programme hosted by a TV personality where guests answer questions about their lives or promote their latest film/album/book.
4. A television show featuring topics such as fashion, diet, exercise, health and leisure pursuits.
5. A TV programme with competitive activities or quizzes. You can often win money.
6. A fictional TV story that isn't a comedy.
7. A "fly on the wall" show, that follows the lives and adventures of real people.
8. An amusing TV series about fictional characters.
9. Produced especially for youngsters.
10. A TV programme that documents real life events.

Writing/Speaking practice

- Think about a TV series you have seen recently or one that you saw when you were younger.
- Give a brief description of what it was about.
- Describe the main characters and why they were important.
- Describe an important moment from the series.
- Why did you like it?

Activity adapted from:
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