



Knowledge is power

(scene from The Fresh Prince of Bel Air)

Level: High. Language: Orders, Jokes, Education, Insults

Task 1: Watch the scene once (or twice if necessary) and make some notes to answer the questions below.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pBoOTZbl02M&feature=related>

a. Hillary has four instructions which she needs to follow at the dinner table. What are they?

b. Why does she need to follow these instructions?

Task 2: Watch the scene again. Explain the context and the meaning of these expressions (the numbers refer to the time on the video):

00.05 "just to be on the safe side"

00.28 "let me off the hook"

02.15 "mid-terms"

02.20 "the scum of the Earth"

02.48 "What's with Hillary?"

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**Answers:****Task 1 -**

- a. When Will's uncle Phil (Hillary's father) takes a drink, Hillary needs to compliment Will. Any time anyone says the name "Hillary", she needs to bark like a dog. When Carlton (Hillary's brother) hits his glass with his spoon, Hillary needs to insult her cousin Will. Any time Carlton clears his throat, Hillary needs to "smack Will upside the head" (this means that she needs to hit him on the back of his head).
- b. Will and Carlton know Hillary's secret: she has dropped out of school (this means that she has permanently stopped going to school). If she doesn't follow their ridiculous instructions, they will reveal her secret to her parents.

Task 2 -

00.05 "just to be on the safe side"

This means "just in case". Will wants to review Hillary's instructions just in case she has forgotten.

00.28 "let me off the hook"

This means to let a person escape from their punishment. Hillary tells Will that if he has any compassion, he'll forget about his ridiculous instructions.

02.15 "mid-terms"

The exams which students do in the middle of the term. Hillary's mother says "Look, I know that everyone gets a little silly around mid-terms but not at the dinner table" (she thinks that Hillary is acting strange because of the stress of her exams).

02.20 "the scum of the Earth"

This is a strong insult. If you describe a person as "the scum of the Earth" it means that they are the most horrible thing on the planet. Hillary says that "Will Smith is the scum of the Earth" because she was following Carlton's instructions.

02.48 "What's with Hillary?"

This means "What is Hillary's problem?". Hillary's little sister asks this question because she doesn't understand her older sister's strange behaviour.

