



**Learn English Through Stories**

**G Series**

**G67**

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## 1. ILLNESS AND MEDICINE

John woke up each morning feeling as though an invisible weight pressed against his chest. At thirty years old, he was in the prime of his life, fit, active, and never a smoker, yet for the past few days, breathing had become a laborious task. Each inhale felt shallow, each exhale incomplete. It was an unsettling sensation for someone who'd always taken his health for granted. Initially, he dismissed it as a passing cold or perhaps the result of a dusty apartment, but when the difficulty persisted into the third day, he knew it was time to seek answers. With a mix of curiosity and mild concern, John called his doctor's office and was relieved to secure an appointment later that week.

The waiting room at Dr. Spetzel's office was a sterile, quiet space, filled with the soft hum of an air purifier and the occasional rustle of magazines. John had brought along a novel, hoping to distract himself, but his breathing troubles made it hard to focus. The words on the page blurred as his mind wandered to his symptoms. Was it something serious? His age and clean health record made that seem unlikely, but doubt gnawed at him. After twenty minutes, a sharp headache began to pulse at his temples, adding to his discomfort. Thankfully, John was prepared. He stepped out to his car, retrieved a bottle of over-the-counter pain relievers from the glove compartment, and swallowed two tablets with a gulp of water from the office's fountain. As he returned to his seat, the cool water and the promise of relief calmed him slightly.

Finally, a nurse called his name, leading him to room 107. She was efficient, her movements practiced as she ran through the standard check-up routine. She wrapped a cuff around his arm to measure his blood pressure, which was normal, and recorded his height and weight—unchanged from his last visit. "Any family history of health issues?" she asked, her pen hovering over a clipboard. John shook his head. His family was fortunate: no heart disease, no cancer, no diabetes, no arthritis. Nothing to raise red flags. When she inquired about medications, John confirmed he wasn't taking any, not even supplements. The nurse jotted down his responses, gave him a polite smile, and left, promising the doctor would be in soon.

Dr. Spetzel entered the room with a warm grin, his presence immediately putting John at ease. He was a middle-aged man with kind eyes and a demeanor that suggested he'd seen it all yet remained empathetic. "So, John, tell me what's been going on," he said, settling into a chair. John described his symptoms in detail: the persistent shortness of breath, the occasional chest pains that came and went, the slight cough that never seemed to produce anything. He emphasized there were no heart palpitations or wheezing, just a

constant struggle to breathe deeply. Dr. Spetzel listened intently, nodding as he took notes. Then, he stood, placed his stethoscope against John's chest, and asked him to take several deep breaths. John complied, though each breath felt like pushing against a barrier.

After a moment, Dr. Spetzel stepped back, his expression thoughtful but not alarmed. "I think we've got a clear picture here," he said. "It sounds like asthma." John blinked, surprised. Asthma? He'd always associated it with children, not adults in their thirties. Dr. Spetzel explained that adult-onset asthma was more common than people realized. Triggers could range from allergies to stress to environmental factors, and while the exact cause wasn't always clear, the treatment was straightforward. "An inhaler will help manage your symptoms," he said, scribbling a prescription. "You'll likely need to use it long-term to keep things under control, but it should make a big difference right away."

Prescription in hand, John felt a mix of relief and apprehension. A diagnosis was good—it meant a solution—but the idea of relying on medication for life was daunting. He thanked Dr. Spetzel and headed to the pharmacy, a large chain store bustling with activity. At the counter, he handed over the prescription and was told it would take about twenty minutes. With time to kill, John wandered the aisles, his eyes scanning the shelves lined with remedies for every ailment imaginable. Cold medicines, allergy pills, flu treatments, and even over-the-counter solutions for constipation and diarrhea filled the rows. The sheer variety was overwhelming, a testament to humanity's ongoing battle with its own biology. He picked up a bottle of vitamins, wondering if he should start taking them, then set it back down. One change at a time, he thought.

When the pharmacist called his name, John collected his inhaler—a sleek, compact device that felt oddly significant in his hand. Back in his car, he followed the instructions, taking his first dose. The effect was almost instantaneous. His chest loosened, air flowed more freely, and the dull ache that had lingered for days began to fade. He sat there for a moment, breathing deeply, marveling at how something so small could make such a difference. Gratitude washed over him—not just for the inhaler, but for the entire system that had brought him here: the doctor's expertise, the pharmacy's efficiency, the science behind it all. Modern medicine, he realized, was nothing short of a miracle.

Driving home, John's mind turned inward. This experience, though minor in the grand scheme, had shaken him. He'd always considered himself healthy, but the past few days had shown him how fragile that state could be. A life

plagued by constant illness would be no life at all. He thought about his habits—his late-night takeout meals, his irregular exercise routine, the stress he brushed off as normal. If he was going to rely on an inhaler, he wanted to do everything else in his power to stay healthy. His diet, he decided, would be the first place to start. Less processed food, more vegetables, maybe even some meal prep to keep things consistent. He wasn't one for drastic resolutions, but this felt different. It wasn't about perfection; it was about respect for his body, the only one he'd ever have.

Over the next few days, John began researching nutrition, jotting down recipes for simple, wholesome meals. He bought fresh produce, lean proteins, and whole grains, experimenting in the kitchen with mixed results. Some dishes were hits, others edible but forgettable. He also started paying attention to his triggers, noticing that dust and pollen seemed to worsen his symptoms. Armed with this knowledge, he invested in an air purifier for his apartment and began a habit of regular cleaning—small changes that made a noticeable difference.

Each morning, John used his inhaler, a ritual that became as routine as brushing his teeth. The initial unease of lifelong medication faded as he saw it not as a burden, but as a tool to live fully. He started jogging again, cautiously at first, monitoring his breathing. To his relief, the inhaler kept his symptoms at bay, letting him reclaim the activities he loved. He even joined a local running group, finding camaraderie in the shared rhythm of footsteps and steady breaths.

Reflecting on it all, John felt a quiet pride. He'd faced a health scare, sought help, and taken steps to improve his life. It wasn't dramatic, but it was meaningful. His asthma diagnosis, once a source of worry, had become a catalyst for change, a reminder that health was a gift worth nurturing. As he chopped vegetables for dinner one evening, the inhaler sitting unobtrusively on the counter, John smiled. He was breathing easier in more ways than one.

## Comprehension Questions and Answers

Question 1: What symptom prompted John to visit the doctor?

Question 2: Why was John surprised that he was experiencing breathing issues?

Question 3: What did John bring to the doctor's office to pass the time?

Question 4: How did John address the headache he developed while waiting?

Question 5: What routine procedures did the nurse perform during John's check-up?

Question 6: What did John tell the nurse about his family's medical history?

Question 7: What was Dr. Spetzel's diagnosis for John's condition?

Question 8: What treatment did Dr. Spetzel prescribe to manage John's symptoms?

Question 9: What did John observe while browsing the pharmacy aisles?

Question 10: What lifestyle change did John decide to make after his diagnosis?

## **Answers**

Answer 1: John was having difficulty breathing for the past few days.

Answer 2: He was only 30 years old and had never smoked, which made the symptom unusual for him.

Answer 3: He brought a novel to read in the waiting room.

Answer 4: He took over-the-counter pain relievers from his car and drank water from the office's fountain.

Answer 5: The nurse measured his blood pressure, height, and weight, and asked about his family's health history.

Answer 6: He said there was no family history of heart disease, cancer, diabetes, or arthritis.

Answer 7: Dr. Spetzel diagnosed John with asthma.

Answer 8: He prescribed an inhaler, which John would need to use long-term.

Answer 9: He saw a variety of over-the-counter medicines for colds, allergies, flu, constipation, and diarrhea.

Answer 10: He decided to improve his diet by eating less processed food and more vegetables, lean proteins, and whole grains.

### 3. Grammar Page

Unit  
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## see somebody do and see somebody doing

**A** Study this example situation:

Tom got into his car and drove off. You saw this.  
You can say:

- ☐ I saw Tom **get** into his car and **drive** off.

We say 'I saw him **do** something' (= he did it and I saw this). In the same way, you can say:

hear	somebody <b>do</b> something
listen to	something <b>happen</b>
watch	
feel	



- ☐ I didn't **hear** you **come** in. (you came in – I didn't hear this)  
☐ Lisa suddenly **felt** somebody **touch** her on the shoulder.

**B** Study this example situation:

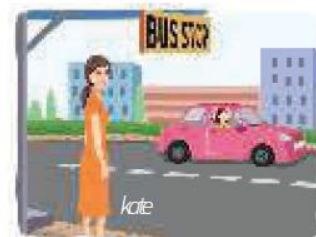
Yesterday you saw Kate. She was waiting for a bus.

You can say:

- ☐ I saw Kate **waiting** for a bus.

We say 'I saw her **doing** something' (= she was doing it and I saw this).  
In the same way, you can say:

hear	somebody <b>doing</b> something
listen to	something <b>happening</b>
watch	
feel	
smell	
find	



- ☐ I could **hear** it **raining**. (it was raining – I could hear it)  
☐ **Listen to** the birds **singing**!  
☐ Can you **smell** something **burning**?  
☐ We looked for Paul and finally we **found** him **sitting** under a tree **eating** an apple.

**C** Study the difference in meaning:

I **saw him do** something = he **did** something and I saw this.

I saw the complete action from start to finish:

- ☐ He **jumped** over the wall and **ran** away. I saw this.  
→ I **saw** him **jump** over the wall and **run** away.  
☐ They **went** out. I heard this. → I **heard** them **go** out.

I **saw him doing** something = he **was doing** something and I saw this.

I saw him *in the middle* of doing something (not from start to finish):

- ☐ I saw Tom as I drove past in my car. He **was walking** along the street.  
→ I **saw** Tom **walking** along the street.  
☐ I heard them. They **were talking**. → I **heard** them **talking**.

Sometimes the difference is not important and you can use either form:

- ☐ I've never seen her **dance**. or I've never seen her **dancing**.