

# ESL News- Week of Sept. 26, 2016

## Story 1

### Seal hitches a ride with boat full of whale-watchers!

A smart seal escaped from a pod of orca whales off the coast of B.C. by flopping onto a whale-watching boat for safety as the orcas waited below. Long time whale-watching guide Nick Templeman took a family of whale-watchers north of Powell River last week. A group of orcas were spotted going in circles diving down looking like they were hunting. Soon after a wet whiskered head came out of the water 150 meters from the boat. "The seal pup had been avoiding tail kicks and thrusts from the whales," said Templeman, head of Campbell River Whale and Bear Excursions. "He'd duck underwater for awhile, then eventually come back up, Templeman said. "He saw our boat and followed with the whales at one point no more than six inches from him, which was very intense." The seal hopped on the lower stern of the boat and hitched a ride. Templeman put his waterproof GoPro camera underwater to get the calls and squeaks of the killer whales. After the orcas gave up, the seal plopped back into the Strait of Georgia. In his 20 years of whale guiding, Templeman said it was the wildest thing that has happened to him.

## Story 2

### Winnipeggers want Uber!

Uber may have overlooked Winnipeg, but if Jay Hall has his way, that will change. Hall has started a petition to get ride-sharing companies to get into the market here by calling on Premier Brian Pallister and Mayor Brian Bowman to get "Uber or Uber-like regulations for Manitoba taxis." Uber has sparked debate all over the world, but Hall is sure Winnipeg is ready for it. Many people have posted bad experiences with taxis on Hall's Facebook page called The Winnipeg and says he has over 350 signatures on his petition with problems

varying from safety concerns to rude drivers. One woman says she is afraid to use cabs in the city alone and has had drivers try to convince her to pay without the meter. Others say they have been refused service based on where they live. Hall says these issues are resolved with ride-sharing in other cities. Money does not change hands as it is all done through the app meaning you don't have a cabbie telling you he wants \$20 more or taking advantage of intoxicated people after a night out. You can rate your driver and rate your customer, which keeps people honest.

## Story 3

### Surrey businesses feel unsafe!

Safety levels felt by businesses in Surrey's downtown core have gone down to the lowest level since 2006. The main concerns mentioned in the Downtown Surrey Business Improvement Association's safety report point out drug users, theft, drug dealing and thrown away needles in their community. Those surveyed said even more police presence in the area has not reduced the crime. Of the 205 businesses surveyed, 29% felt less "less safe" and 71%, the lowest ever, felt safety was the same or had improved. "They do not feel that homeless or addicted people are dangerous, but they create an environment of disorder and make others in the area feel unsafe," wrote report author Alexandra Dibnah. Businesses who felt the downtown area improved identified new buildings, development, businesses and a new demographic of people in the area as positive changes. Those who felt things were worse blamed increasing drug users and street people. They also pointed to social services like the food bank, needle exchange, shelters or methadone clinics in the area as a "magnet for disorder." They want the RCMP to have more foot and bicycle patrol and speak to the public about loitering and drug use.

## Story 4

### Pot for your pooch!

Marijuana can help your pet say some Vancouver pot shops, but one veterinarian is warning pet owners to be careful. Cannawide, a medical marijuana store on West 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Vancouver says cannabis products can help dogs with anxiety and joint pain. Some people become members only to buy products for their dogs not themselves according to Andrew Gordon, community integration director at the Cannawide. The dog biscuits, which sell out, have the chemical cannabidiol (CBD) in them and do not get the dogs stoned or high from eating the treats. Many people will do anything for the canine family member to take away pain or change bad behavior. Andrea Dobbs, co-founder of The Village Cannabis Dispensary says it makes sense if it works for humans, it may work for an animal. Vet Parmjit Dhillon, director and owner of Burrard Animal Hospital says it is a grey area and there is no major study to confirm there is a benefit for dogs. Vets cannot prescribe or suggest pet owners try cannabis products on animals until marijuana is legalized.