



Dima: Hi, welcome to 6 Minute English with me, Dima Kostenko

Rebecca: and me, Rebecca Byrne. Hi.

Dima: Rebecca, can I begin by asking you a very very simple question? How would you describe yourself?

Rebecca: *Responds.*

Dima: Sounds like a pretty accurate description to me - but it's not your height, weight, or built that we're going to talk about today.

Rebecca: What then?

Dima: Your hair colour!

Rebecca: *Responds (what IS it about my hair colour that's worth talking about?) + short exchange with Dima.*

Dima: ... today we'll be talking about how your natural looks - and in particular your hair colour - can tell others what kind of person you are - or at least reveal some of your qualities.

Rebecca: *Responds (sounds interesting - but shall I go through some of today's key vocabulary first?)*

Dima: Yes, and I would like you to begin with the expression 'ginger whingeing'.

Rebecca: I haven't heard it before but I guess it refers to an opinion that some of us who are redheads, also known as ginger heads, complain about things more often than others. There will be the phrase 'fiery temper'. If you have a fiery temper, you get very angry, or extremely excited quite easily. We'll hear the term 'scientific backing', which means that something has been proved or confirmed by a scientific study. And finally the verb 'to avoid', meaning to manage not to do something, to stay away from something or someone.

Dima: So that's 'to avoid', 'scientific backing', 'fiery temper' and 'ginger whingeing'.

Rebecca: Yes, that's right. Listen now to our correspondent Matt McGrath, a redhead himself. He's talking about a recent study involving redheads - of course this is just one of many studies, not textbook material, but I thought it was interesting. As you're listening, try to catch today's key vocabulary, and also see if after listening you can answer this question: during the study, who or what did the group of redheads try to avoid?

Dima: Let's listen to find out:

Clip 1 0'19"

We redheads are well known for our fiery tempers. Now it seems there is scientific backing for our ginger whingeing as well. Scientists in the United States studied a group of 144 dental patients, almost half of whom had red hair. They found that the red hair group were more sensitive to pain and as a result were twice as likely to avoid visiting the dentist.

Rebecca: Matt McGrath says that redheads, including himself, are well known for their fiery tempers. They have a reputation for complaining a lot, or as our reporter put it, for their ginger whingeing. And, because it can sometimes hurt, they even try to avoid visiting dentists! However, it looks like not all of this is down to temper alone. There is a newly discovered scientific reason.

Dima: In a moment we'll hear from Professor Daniel Sessler, one of the authors of the study at the Cleveland Clinic in the United States. But before that Rebecca, I need you to explain two more terms for us. One is 'anaesthetic requirement'.

Rebecca: Someone's 'anaesthetic requirement' is how many painkillers they need before surgery, such as dental treatment, can be performed on them.

Dima: And secondly, the word 'phenotype'.

Rebecca: This is a scientific term. It describes how a certain quality of yours shows in your physical appearance.

Dima: Thanks Rebecca. OK, now, armed with all this knowledge, shall we have a go at this week's question?

Rebecca: *Responds*

Dima: Imagine seeing a couple of people walking along the street. Do you think it's possible to tell which one in each pair is likely to be more sensitive to pain? Is it

- a) an older person as opposed to a younger person
- b) a man as opposed to a woman, or
- c) a red haired person as opposed to someone with a differently coloured hair?

What do you think Rebecca?

Rebecca: *Guesses*

Dima: We'll check your answer in a minute but first, here's Professor Daniel Sessler with his explanation:

Clip 2 **0'29"**

Red hair is the first phenotype for anaesthetic requirement in humans. And what I mean by phenotype is external characteristic. So let's say you're walking down the street, and you see somebody who's a little older and [somebody who's] a little younger - that tells you nothing about their anaesthetic requirement. You see a man and a woman - that tells you nothing about their anaesthetic requirement. But you see a redhead - aha! You know that person is going to require 20% more general anaesthesia.

Dima: OK Rebecca, did you manage to hear the answer to this week's question?

Rebecca: Well it sounds like the first two comparisons don't really tell you anything. A woman can suffer from pain to no lesser extent than a man, and a younger person, just as much as an older one. However, if you're a ginger head, you're more sensitive to pain - *which means that my earlier guess was right/wrong.*

Dima: *Responds* - and of course you can find out more about this story by simply following the links from our website, bbclearningenglish.com. You can also find out what people in the Learning English team look like by clicking on Meet the team.

Rebecca: *Comments.*

Dima: I'm afraid that's all we have time for. Until next week.

Both: Goodbye!