

A Winter Weather Report

Lindsay: “We’ll start off the day with plenty of sunshine and mild temperatures, but into the afternoon hours and evening, it’ll be, become blustering cold with wind gusts of 25 to 30 miles per hour. Expect a high of 10 degrees Fahrenheit and a low of -3 by midnight.” Okay, so we just heard one piece of a forecast that you might hear on TV. (Um), so Susan and Molly, what would the term ‘mild temperatures’ actually mean?

Susan: (Hmm)? That’s a great question. **Mild temperatures**, essentially, (I mean), (it) depends on the part of the country that you’re in, but in (um), mild for Boston, (uh) winter...

Molly: Is above freezing.

Susan: Yeah, yeah, ‘cause (because) it’s always very cold. I’d say that mild might be like comfortable. (You know), you don’t have to wear your big heavy coat, you can just wear a light coat.

Molly: (Like) in the 50s, maybe the 40s.

Key Vocabulary Words

1. Cold snap
2. To bundle up
3. Mild
4. Flurries
5. Taper off
6. Picked up
7. Snow showers
8. Black ice

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Susan: Yeah. (Uh-hm). That's right.

Molly: But nothing, nothing much colder than that because then you get down into the freezing temperatures, which is – (I mean) if you're used to Celsius, something to keep in mind is that (um) in Fahrenheit, 32 degrees Fahrenheit will be the equivalent of 0. So if we're talking about negative temperatures, we're not just talking about below freezing, we're talking about many, many, many degrees below freezing.

Susan: Yes, yes. (Uh-huh). That's correct.

Lindsay: And we've really had quite a **cold snap** here, haven't we, in the last few days?

Susan: (Uh-huh). Yeah I checked online today and it was the equivalent of, I think, -17 Celsius. So it was (has been) very cold here recently.

Lindsay: Wow, that's freezing.

Susan: Yeah.

Molly: (You know), it's the type of cold that, that you feel in your bones is something we would say. It's, it's something that the wind will cut right through you, no matter how much you **bundle up**, you're going to feel it, so you're encouraged to, to, to wear a hat, and a scarf, and gloves, and a coat...

Susan: Yeah, that's what we call...

Molly: ...many layers.

Susan: ...that's what we call bundling up, is putting on all those layers to go outside.

Molly: Right and you want, (you know), you'll wear a t-shirt, and a sweater, and a long sleeve shirt and maybe long underwear underneath all of your clothing...

Susan: Yeah, layering.

Molly: ...to stay warm.

Susan: (Uh-hm, uh-hm).

Lindsay: Definitely. And in that weather report, we also heard "We'll have a high of... and a low of..." So what does that mean?

Molly: So when you're talking about the high and low, you're talking about the very best case scenario and the worst case scenario, so maybe at noon when the sun is directly overhead and, (you know), you've had time to warm up for the day, it might, maybe for an hour get to that high temperature.

Susan: Yes. It's a range for that day.

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Lindsay: Yeah. Okay. Perfect. Let's go with the next one. "If you're heading out tomorrow evening, be sure to bundle up on your way out the door and look out for black ice on the sidewalks after that freezing rain that we had on Tuesday." Okay, so in this one we talked about "bundle up" and we just talked about that (um) in the last segment. (Um) one, one more time what does that mean?

Susan: It means to put on your hat, and your coat, and your scarf, and your, and your mittens, and just (uh) – we, when we -- before a

little child would go outside and go to school, we'd say "Bundle up." (It) means put on everything 'cause (because) it's cold out there.

Molly: Right and put on as many layers as possible, which means that, that even if you're not accustomed to it, you might wanna (want to) wear not just a shirt, but multiple shirts to make sure that you're really warm.

Susan: Yes, then when you come inside you can take off those layers, depending on how warm the inside is.

Lindsay: Definitely. That's perfect. Thanks guys. And what about "**black ice**"? What the heck is black ice?

Molly: Black ice is very, very dangerous and, and basically what it means is that typically when you see ice on the ground in winter, you can see it. It's, it's white, it stands out. Black ice is something that unless you catch the light on it just right, it's almost invisible. You, you might not notice it and it causes a lot of people either to slip and fall if they're walking or to spin out or fishtail if they're driving.

Susan: Yes. And black ice – (uh) the reason it's called black ice is 'cause (because) it's normally found on asphalt which is what the roads are made out of, and (um) yeah, when people start driving it's a very dangerous, (it could) cause them to spin off the highway or collide with other vehicles.

Molly: And it's something that in my experience, you often see early in the morning and late at night before the sun's had the time to take it off 'cause (because) it's a very thin layer, or if it, if it rains in winter, if you get what we call 'freezing rain,' which is kind of like a snow-rain mix, that might freeze into black ice.

Susan: Yes, that's true.

Lindsay: Have you guys ever fallen on a, on a sheet of black ice?

Molly: Yes. Definitely.

Lindsay: Oh, man it sounds painful. You gotta (got to) watch out for that. Okay, here's our next segment. "By Sunday morning, we should see occasional flurries, with heavier snow showers developing in the late afternoon. Winds will pick up and could turn this thing into a full-on blizzard by Sunday evening. Snow should taper off to flurries by Monday morning for the commute." So in this case, we just heard the word '**flurries.**' What is that?

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Molly: Flurries are like the light snow that you might see in the air intermittently, but it wouldn't be something that you'd expect to accumulate or what we would stay 'to stick.'

Susan: Yeah, yeah.

Molly: (Um) it's something that's going to be more of a visual nuisance, than an actual storm.

Susan: Yeah, just a slight amount of snow and you might be in – and little kids when it starts to snow the first time of the year, they look out the classroom window and it's

probably just a little bit of flurries coming down that don't even stick to the, the, the, the ground, but (um)...

Lindsay: Yeah, but they get really excited, right, when they see the snow?

Susan: First time of the year yeah.

Lindsay: That's so cute. And so, so a heavier version of flurries would be "snow showers," right?

Molly: Right, right. And that's (I mean), it's kind of-- we use the same word to describe rain. It really means that it, it's not intermittent, it's something that will last for a period of time.

Susan: Yes and it's more likely to gather on the ground and actually have some accumulation.

Lindsay: Exactly and part of a blizzard is when a, when the winds pick up, right? (If) we say that a – that **the winds will "pick up,"** what does that mean?

Susan; The winds get stronger and faster and (um)...

Molly: And, and more noticeable

Susan: (Mm-hm). Yeah.

Lindsay: Definitely. We just had a blizzard here, again, a week or two ago. We're having some pretty intense weather...

Susan: Yeah. Definitely.

Lindsay: ...this week, aren't we? How did you guys do with that blizzard?

Molly: (Um) I live in a place where I have to shovel, (um), which is one of maybe the worst things about winter even more than the cold because you have to go outside and do physical labor. (Um), but yeah, when it's a blizzard, you might have to do that every couple of hours because snow can really accumulate quickly.

Susan: Yes. And (uh) we were hoping we might have a day off of work because the snow might be so much, but...

Molly: Right. A snow day.

Susan: Yes. A snow day (is) when you don't have to go to work or school, but we did end up having to go, so.

Lindsay: Oh man, I'm sorry to hear that. Okay and the last term is **"The snow should taper off to flurries."** What are we saying there?

Molly: 'Taper off' means that it's going to stop, but not abruptly. 'Tapering off' shows that it's decreasing in volume over time, so it'll slowly get less and less until it finally stops.

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Susan: Yeah, until it goes, turns into flurries and then stops.

Lindsay: Yeah and at that point the kids get disappointed 'cause (because)...

Susan: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...they have to go to school.

Molly: Correct.

Lindsay: Okay. Thank you.

Molly: Of course.