
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

The English We Speak

Frenemy



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This is not a word-for-word transcript

Feifei

Hello, welcome to The English We Speak, I'm Feifei...

Neil

...and hello, I'm Neil. So Feifei, did you enjoy Jane's leaving party last night?

Feifei

Oh yeah, it was great. Free food and free drink...

Neil

But that was the only reason was it? Weren't you sad to see her leave? You've worked with her for many years.

Feifei

Oh... right... yes. Very sad. Such a shame to see her go. We were such good friends.

Neil

Friends! Really? Didn't she tell the boss when you took that extra-long lunch break?

Feifei

Oh yeah – but generally, we were best buddies.

Neil

Hmm, and didn't you once punch her when she tried to chat up your boyfriend at the Christmas party?

Feifei

OK, OK, I didn't like her that much.

Neil

Well it sounds like you were really her 'frenemy' – someone who pretends to be her friend but is really her enemy. It's a combination of two words – friend and enemy. Get it?

Feifei

Yes, a fren-emy! Hmm, I've never had one of those before.

Neil

Really? Well let's hear this word in action...

Examples

She seems so false. I wouldn't trust her – she's just a frenemy.

Tania's been my frenemy for years – I'd go for a quick drink with her but that's it!

Tom's just my frenemy – I pretend to like him but really I can't stand him!

Feifei

If you pretend to be friends with someone but in reality you don't like each other then they are your 'frenemy'. I wonder if I was *her* frenemy?

Neil

I'm afraid you were. She told me she was only friends with you so she could share your biscuits – and she didn't really like you. She told me at the party last night.

Feifei

Thank goodness we're real friends Neil – at least we can be honest with each other.

Neil

Well actually, I don't like you much either. I only pretend to be your friend when I'm presenting this programme!

Feifei

Oh no! Now I've got two frenemies!

Neil

Oh don't cry Feifei. I was only joking.