



Session 8 (Ch. 29–32) — Fall 2026 ESL360 Book Club

READING SCHEDULE

Session #	Date	Chapters
1	9/3/2026	Letter + Ch. 1–2
2	9/10/2026	Ch. 3–5
3	9/17/2026	Ch. 6–7
4	9/24/2026	Ch. 8–11
5	10/1/2026	Ch. 12–18
6	10/8/2026	Ch. 19–25
7	10/15/2026	Ch. 26–28
8	10/22/2026	Ch. 29–32
9	10/29/2026	Ch. 33–36
10	11/5/2026	Ch. 37–40
11	11/12/2026	Ch. 41–44
12	11/19/2026	Ch. 45–47
13	12/3/2026	Ch. 48–51
14	12/10/2026	Ch. 52–56

SESSION 8: VOCABULARY

The expressions below come from Chapters 29–32. Notice how each expression works in its original context and how you could use it in other situations.



bring something up Phrasal verb

If you **bring something up**, you introduce a subject into a conversation because you want or need to discuss it.

Usage: *Bring something up* means to introduce a subject; *weigh in on something* means to give your opinion about a subject that is already being discussed. With a pronoun, say **bring it up**, not *bring up it*.

Context: “I’ve never even brought it up!”



keep someone on their toes Idiom

If you **keep someone on their toes**, you make that person stay alert because they cannot be completely sure what you will do next.

Usage: *This can describe playful unpredictability or a more demanding situation that requires someone to stay alert.*

Context: “I’m already thinking I should buy a bottle of the coconut hair mask, too, but I like to keep him on his toes.”



for what it's worth Fixed expression / discourse marker

You say **for what it's worth** before giving information or an opinion that may be helpful, even though you are not sure how important or useful it will be.

Usage: *This expression can soften an opinion because the speaker is not claiming that the opinion should settle the matter: **For what it's worth, I think you handled it well.***

Context: “And for what it's worth, that peanut butter chocolate cake you baked was the best I ever ate.”



for the record Fixed expression / discourse marker

You say **for the record** when you want to make your position or the facts clear, especially when there could be a misunderstanding.

Usage: ***For the record** introduces a clear statement or correction. It does not necessarily mean that anyone is formally recording the information.*

Context: “For the record, the only reason girls ever paid me any attention was because I was Peter’s best friend.”

SESSION 8: VOCABULARY



back and forth

 Fixed expression

If people communicate or move **back and forth**, something goes repeatedly from one person, place, position, or side to another.

Usage: Common combinations include *send messages back and forth*, *walk back and forth*, and *go back and forth between two choices*.

Context: “I’m really enjoying writing letters back and forth, but can I also have your phone number?”



deep down

 Idiomatic adverbial phrase

If you know, believe, or feel something **deep down**, you have that feeling or belief inside you even if you do not fully admit it or think about it consciously.

Usage: *Deep down* often contrasts what someone says or consciously thinks with a feeling or belief underneath: *Deep down, I think she already knew.*

Context: “I suppose deep down I must have been worrying about it, because I feel so relieved to know for certain.”



out of sight, out of mind

 Proverb / fixed expression

Out of sight, out of mind means that when you no longer see a person or thing, you may stop thinking about it.

Usage: People often use this humorously when they hide something tempting or unpleasant. In the novel, Lara Jean pushes the letter under her bed because she does not want to think about it.

Context: “Out of sight, out of mind.”



get a say in something

 Fixed expression

If you **get a say in something**, you have an opportunity to express your opinion and have some influence over a decision.

Usage: You can *weigh in on* a subject simply by giving an opinion. If you *get a say in* a decision, your opinion is supposed to have some role in what is decided.

Context: “It’s like their parents just decide something and no one else gets a say in it.”

SESSION 8: VOCABULARY



in the clear Idiom / fixed expression

If you are **in the clear**, you are no longer in danger of being blamed, punished, suspected, or affected by a problem.

Usage: *The exact meaning depends on context: you can be **in the clear** because you have done nothing wrong, because evidence has removed suspicion, or because a danger or problem has passed.*

Context: “Technically you’re in the clear.”



not buying it Informal idiom

If you say I’m **not buying it**, you mean that you do not believe someone’s explanation, excuse, or claim.

Usage: *This meaning has nothing to do with purchasing. **I’m not buying it** is fairly direct. Softer alternatives include **I’m not sure I buy that** and **I’m not completely convinced**.*

Context: “He gives me a look like he isn’t buying whatever I’m selling.”



turn out Phrasal verb

If someone **turns out** a particular way, that is what the person eventually becomes like; if a situation **turns out** a particular way, that is the final result.

Usage: *Common patterns include **How did he turn out?**, **It turned out well**, and **It turned out that I was wrong**. In Chapter 31, Lucas is asking what kind of person John became as he grew older.*

Context: “So how did he turn out?”



look back on something Phrasal verb

If you **look back on** a period or experience, you think about it later and remember or evaluate it from your present point of view.

Usage: *Remembering what happened and **looking back on** it are not exactly the same. Your interpretation of an experience can change even when the facts do not.*

Context: “Everyone will fall in love with you, because you’re so beautiful and so charming, and you’ll look back on high school as such a tiny blip.”

SESSION 8: VOCABULARY



show up Phrasal verb

If someone **shows up**, they arrive at a place, often when other people are already there.

Usage: *Show up* means arrive. *Pop up* often means appear or happen unexpectedly. Someone can **show up unexpectedly**, but *show up itself* does not necessarily mean the arrival was unexpected.

Context: “Later in the day Peter and Trevor Pike showed up, and we put the books away and played cards.”



get out of doing something Fixed verbal expression

If you **get out of doing something**, you manage to avoid doing something that you are expected or supposed to do.

Usage: Use *get out of + -ing* for an action: **get out of cleaning, get out of going, get out of helping.**

Context: “Kitty will do anything to get out of brushing her teeth.”



no matter what Fixed expression

No matter what means regardless of what happens or what the circumstances are.

Usage: It often expresses a very strong expectation or commitment: **I'll be there no matter what.** In Chapter 32, Lara Jean realizes that something she once assumed was permanent was not.

Context: “Those people in your life that you just always know, no matter what.”



in the slightest Fixed expression / intensifier

In the slightest means even a very small amount and is normally used after a negative expression.

Usage: **Not ... in the slightest** strengthens a negative statement: **I'm not worried in the slightest.** This contrasts with softeners such as **a little, a bit, and kind of**, which make a statement less strong.

Context: “At the time I was deep in the throes of liking Peter, so it wasn't romantic in the slightest, of that I'm sure.”

SESSION 8: GRAMMAR—ADVICE & SOFTENING

Giving Advice Without Sounding Too Strong

Advice can be grammatically correct and still sound stronger than you intend.

Direct advice

- **You should** talk to him.
- **You shouldn't** worry about it.
- **Don't** make a decision yet.

Giving the listener more room

- **Maybe you could** talk to him.
- **You might want to** wait.
- **If I were you, I'd** think about it first.
- **I think I'd probably** hold off for now.

Words such as **maybe**, **might**, **I think**, and **probably** recycle our earlier work on softening what we say. Softening advice does more than make it sound “nicer.” It can communicate:

- This is my perspective, not an order.
- I may not know everything about your situation.
- The decision is yours.

Advice vs. reassurance: Sometimes we do not need to tell someone what to do.

Compare

Advice: You should change your mind.

Reassurance: It's okay to change your mind.

Advice: You should stop trying to please everyone.

Reassurance: You don't have to please everyone.

Useful patterns:

- *You might want to ...*
- *Maybe you could ...*
- *If I were you, I'd ...*
- *I think I'd probably ...*
- *It's okay to ...*
- *You don't have to ...*
- *You don't need to ...*
- *If I could talk to my younger self, I'd probably tell her ...*
- *One thing I wish I'd known is ...*

Language Connection: HOLD ON • HOLD UP • HOLD OFF

Last week, one of our vocabulary phrases was **hold off**. Let's review it and compare it with two similar expressions: **hold on** and **hold up**.

Expression	Main idea	Example
Hold on!	Wait a moment.	Hold on. Let me think.
Hold up!	Wait! Stop for a moment. Often a little more abrupt or surprised.	Hold up! You forgot your phone.
hold off	Don't do something yet. Delay an action or decision.	Let's hold off on deciding .

A useful shortcut:

Remember
HOLD ON / HOLD UP → Wait NOW. HOLD OFF → Wait to DO IT.

Pattern: **hold off on + noun / -ing**

- hold off on **the decision**
- hold off on **deciding**
- hold off on **weighing in**

Hold up also has several other common meanings:

- Traffic **held me up**. = delayed me
- I **got held up** at the doctor's office. = was delayed
- How are you **holding up**? = How are you coping?
- The bank was **held up**. = robbed

What Comes After BEFORE and AFTER?

Compare:

- I'd like **to weigh in**. ✓
- I'll wait before **weighing in**. ✓
- I'll wait before **I weigh in**. ✓
- I'll wait before **to weigh in**. ✗

Useful rule

After BEFORE or AFTER, don't use TO + VERB.

Use **before/after + noun**: before **the discussion**

Use **before/after + -ing**: before **weighing in**

Use **before/after + subject + verb**: before **I weigh in**

But learn **would like to + verb** as a complete pattern:

- I **would like to weigh in**.
- She **would like to bring up** another point.

Fix It

✗ When I don't know much about a subject, I prefer to **hold off before to weigh in** until I understand what people are talking about.

✓ When I don't know much about a subject, I prefer to **hold off on weighing in** until I understand what people are talking about.

SESSION 8: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Grammar in Conversation

As you discuss, listen for opportunities to give an opinion or suggestion without making it sound like an order. Try at least two of these:

- For what it's worth, ...
- Maybe ...
- You might ...
- I think ... probably ...
- If I were you, I'd ...
- It's okay to ...
- You don't have to ...

Also notice when a classmate gives advice. Does the speaker sound certain, tentative, reassuring, or directive?

Past You vs. Present You

This discussion moves from Lara Jean's old letter to the way we understand our own younger selves. You do not need to remember every detail before you begin; each question includes a short reminder from the book.

1. What we forget about ourselves

Book reminder: Lara Jean rereads the old letter she wrote to John and is surprised by her own words.

What does the letter help Lara Jean realize about her younger self?

Need a starting point? Think about her feelings, her certainty, or what seemed important to her then.

2. Why our memories change

Book reminder: Lara Jean remembers liking John, but reading the letter makes that time in her life feel different from the way she remembers it now.

Why do you think our memories of our younger selves can change over time?

You might think about: later experiences • what we forget • what we choose to remember • how our priorities change

3. Seeing your younger self differently

Book reminder: Lara Jean is reading words written by a younger version of herself—someone who was completely certain about feelings that seem different to her now.

When you look back on your younger self, what kinds of things might you understand differently now?

You might think about: things that seemed very important • things you worried about • people you trusted • decisions you made • things you believed about yourself

4. Advice for Lara Jean

Book reminder: Lara Jean now knows things about herself, John, Peter, and friendship that her younger self did not know.

If, in ten years, Lara Jean could give teenage Lara Jean one piece of advice or reassurance, what might she say?

Language support:

- *I think I'd probably tell her ...*
- *Maybe she could ...*
- *She might want to ...*
- *It's okay to ...*
- *She doesn't have to ...*

5. Advice for your younger self

Book reminder: Reading her old letter gives Lara Jean an unusual chance to meet an earlier version of herself through her own words.

If you could talk to your younger self for ten minutes, what is one thing you would want to tell her? Why?

Language support:

- *I think I'd probably tell her ...*
- *If I could talk to my younger self, I'd ...*
- *One thing I wish I'd known is ...*
- *It's okay to ...*
- *You don't have to ...*
- *For what it's worth, ...*

Choose something as personal or as light as you are comfortable sharing.

Possible model

If I could talk to my younger self, I think I'd probably tell her that she doesn't have to have everything figured out. For what it's worth, I'd also tell her that it's okay to change her mind.

Looking ahead

In Chapter 32, Lara Jean thinks about people she once assumed she would know forever, "no matter what," just as the old tree house is about to disappear and the time capsule is about to come back into their lives.

SESSION 8: PRACTICE QUESTIONS

GRAMMAR

Section A – Advice, Reassurance, or Too Strong?

Choose the response that best fits the situation.

1. A friend is unsure whether to answer an emotional message immediately. You want to suggest waiting without ordering her.
 - a. Don't answer it.
 - b. You have to wait.
 - c. You might want to hold off until tomorrow.
 - d. You will wait until tomorrow.
2. A friend changed her mind about a plan and feels guilty. You want to reassure her.
 - a. It's okay to change your mind.
 - b. You should have decided earlier.
 - c. You might change your mind.
 - d. Don't make plans.
3. Someone asks what you would do, but you know you do not have all the facts.
 - a. Do exactly what I say.
 - b. You definitely need to confront her.
 - c. She is wrong.
 - d. If I were you, I'd probably get more information first.
4. A friend worries that everyone must approve of her decision. Which response gives reassurance rather than advice?
 - a. Maybe you could explain it again.
 - b. You don't need everyone to agree with you.
 - c. You should ignore everyone.
 - d. If I were you, I'd change the plan.
5. You want to offer your opinion while making clear that the decision belongs to the other person.
 - a. For what it's worth, I think the first option makes more sense.
 - b. The first option is obviously right.
 - c. Choose the first option.
 - d. You have to choose the first option.
6. Someone is about to make a decision while upset. Which response is a softened suggestion?
 - a. You are making a mistake.
 - b. Stop right now.
 - c. Maybe you could give yourself a little time before deciding.
 - d. You shouldn't be upset.

Section B – Which Form Comes Next?

7. Choose the grammatically correct sentence.
 - a. Before to bring it up, I want to think about what to say.
 - b. Before bringing it up, I want to think about what to say.
 - c. Before bring it up, I want to think about what to say.
 - d. Before brought it up, I want to think about what to say.
8. Choose the grammatically correct sentence.
 - a. I would like weighing in on that.
 - b. I would like weigh in on that.
 - c. I would like to weighing in on that.
 - d. I would like to weigh in on that.
9. Choose the grammatically correct sentence.
 - a. Let's hold off on making a decision until we know more.
 - b. Let's hold off to make a decision until we know more.
 - c. Let's hold off on make a decision until we know more.
 - d. Let's hold off before to make a decision until we know more.
10. Choose the grammatically correct sentence.
 - a. After to read the message, she changed her mind.
 - b. After read the message, she changed her mind.
 - c. After reading the message, she changed her mind.
 - d. After to reading the message, she changed her mind.
11. Choose the grammatically correct sentence.
 - a. Before I to weigh in, I want to hear both sides.
 - b. Before I weigh in, I want to hear both sides.
 - c. Before weighing in I am want to hear both sides.
 - d. Before to weigh in, I want to hear both sides.
12. Choose the grammatically correct sentence.
 - a. She would like bringing up one more question.
 - b. She would like bring up one more question.
 - c. She would like to bringing up one more question.
 - d. She would like to bring up one more question.

VOCABULARY

Section C — This Week's Vocabulary: Use It in a New Context

Use each expression once. Change pronouns or verb forms when necessary.

Word Bank:

not buying it • in the slightest • get a say in • show up • for the record • deep down • keep someone on their toes • turn out • no matter what • back and forth • in the clear • bring something up • out of sight, out of mind • look back on something • for what it's worth • get out of doing something

13. We sent messages _____ for almost an hour before we finally made a plan.
14. I know she says she doesn't care, but _____ I think she is disappointed.
15. Nobody told me the restaurant had changed locations, so I _____ at the old address.
16. He has a different excuse every time, and I'm sorry, but I'm _____.
17. I don't mind which movie we choose, but I'd at least like to _____ the decision.
18. I didn't want to embarrass her in front of everyone, so I waited until later to _____.
19. I used to worry about that constantly. Now I _____ that period and wonder why it seemed so important.
20. She always finds a clever excuse to _____ washing the dishes.
21. We had no idea how the renovation would _____, but the finished room is beautiful.
22. _____, I never agreed to change the date.
23. I put the cookies in the freezer because, for me, it really is _____.
24. My sister changes the rules of the game just enough to _____.
25. _____, I think your first idea was easier to understand, but either one could work.
26. I wasn't offended _____; I just wanted to understand what she meant.
27. The test results came back normal, so for now we're _____.
28. She promised she would come to the ceremony _____ happened.

Section D — Meaning in Context

Choose the expression that best completes each situation.

29. You are discussing a family trip. Everyone else has chosen the destination without asking you. You say:
 - a. "I'd like to get a say in this too."
 - b. "I'd like to get out of this too."
 - c. "I'd like to turn out this too."
 - d. "I'd like to look back on this too."

30. Someone gives you an explanation that does not seem believable.
- "For what it's worth."
 - "No matter what."
 - "I'm not buying it."
 - "Out of sight, out of mind."
31. You want to clearly correct a misunderstanding about what you said earlier.
- "Deep down, I never said that."
 - "For the record, I never said that."
 - "Back and forth, I never said that."
 - "In the slightest, I never said that."
32. You are talking about how differently you understand a difficult period several years later.
- "I show up on that time differently now."
 - "I keep that time on my toes differently now."
 - "I get a say in that time differently now."
 - "I look back on that time differently now."
33. A friend asks how your brother changed as he grew older.
- "How did he turn out?"
 - "How did he bring up?"
 - "How did he get a say?"
 - "How did he show out?"
34. You want to offer an opinion but signal that the other person can decide how useful it is.
- "In the slightest, I think the blue one fits better."
 - "Out of sight, out of mind, I think the blue one fits better."
 - "For what it's worth, I think the blue one fits better."
 - "No matter what, I think the blue one fits better."
35. Your friend changes plans so often that you never know what to expect.
- "She gets me out of doing things."
 - "She keeps me on my toes."
 - "She gets me a say."
 - "She looks back on me."
36. You hide an unfinished project in a closet because seeing it makes you feel guilty.
- "For the record."
 - "Deep down."
 - "Back and forth."
 - "Out of sight, out of mind."

37. The police checked the security video and confirmed that Maya was not involved. Maya is now:
- a. showing up
 - b. back and forth
 - c. in the clear
 - d. deep down

Section E — Recycled Grammar & Vocabulary

Choose the best answer. These questions bring back language from earlier Book Club sessions.

Word Bank:

a bit much • by heart • catch someone off guard • hold off • hold something against someone • play out • pop up • show up • weigh in on something

38. You do not know enough about the situation yet, but everyone is asking for your opinion. What is the most natural response?
- a. I'm not buying it, so I'll take the lead.
 - b. For the record, I'll get out of answering.
 - c. I think I'll hold off on weighing in until I know more.
 - d. I'll weigh in before to get more information.
39. Your friend is upset and wants to send an angry message immediately. Which response gives softened advice and recycles an earlier expression naturally?
- a. Maybe you could wait a little and see how things play out.
 - b. You should take it out on her before she replies.
 - c. For the record, you must send it now.
 - d. I'm not buying it no matter what.
40. You are at a party when a former neighbor you have not seen in years suddenly appears. Which sentence best expresses that the appearance was unexpected?
- a. She looked back on the party.
 - b. She got a say in the party.
 - c. She held off at the party.
 - d. She popped up at the party.
41. Your cousin promised to arrive at 6:00 and walks through the door at 6:05. You simply want to say that she arrived. Which sentence is best?
- a. She popped the party up.
 - b. She showed up a few minutes late.
 - c. She turned out a few minutes late.
 - d. She brought up a few minutes late.

42. A friend is still angry about a small mistake you made months ago. Which response uses an earlier expression correctly?
- a. She is keeping it on her toes.
 - b. She is playing it out on me.
 - c. She is still holding it against me.
 - d. She is getting a say in me.
43. You want to tell a friend that her reaction seems stronger than the situation requires, but you want to soften your opinion. Which sentence sounds most natural?
- a. Your reaction is in the slightest.
 - b. You are definitely wrong.
 - c. Hold up! Your reaction is impossible.
 - d. For what it's worth, I think that reaction might be a bit much.
44. An old song unexpectedly makes you remember every word. Which sentence uses an earlier expression correctly?
- a. I haven't heard this song in years, but I still know it by heart.
 - b. I haven't heard this song in years, but I still know it back and forth.
 - c. I haven't heard this song in years, but I still know it in the clear.
 - d. I haven't heard this song in years, but I still know it no matter what.
45. A friend's comment surprises you because you were not expecting anything negative. Which sentence best describes what happened?
- a. Her comment kept me on my toes for years.
 - b. Her comment got under my skin before she said it.
 - c. Her comment made things right.
 - d. Her comment caught me off guard.

SESSION 8: PRACTICE QUESTIONS—ANSWERS

GRAMMAR – WITH ANSWERS

Section A – Advice, Reassurance, or Too Strong?

1. c --- You might want to hold off until tomorrow.
2. a --- It's okay to change your mind.
3. d --- If I were you, I'd probably get more information first.
4. b --- You don't need everyone to agree with you.
5. a --- For what it's worth, I think the first option makes more sense.
6. c --- Maybe you could give yourself a little time before deciding.

Section B – Which Form Comes Next?

7. b --- Before bringing it up, I want to think about what to say.
8. d --- I would like to weigh in on that.
9. a --- Let's hold off on making a decision until we know more.
10. c --- After reading the message, she changed her mind.
11. b --- Before I weigh in, I want to hear both sides.
12. d --- She would like to bring up one more question.

VOCABULARY – WITH ANSWERS

Section C – This Week's Vocabulary

13. back and forth
14. deep down
15. showed up
16. not buying it
17. get a say in
18. bring it up
19. look back on
20. get out of
21. turn out
22. For the record
23. out of sight, out of mind
24. keep me on my toes
25. For what it's worth
26. in the slightest
27. in the clear
28. no matter what

Section D — Meaning in Context

- 29. a --- get a say in
- 30. c --- not buying it
- 31. b --- for the record
- 32. d --- look back on
- 33. a --- turn out
- 34. c --- for what it's worth
- 35. b --- keep someone on their toes
- 36. d --- out of sight, out of mind
- 37. c --- in the clear

Section E — Recycled Grammar & Vocabulary

- 38. c --- I think I'll hold off on weighing in until I know more.
- 39. a --- Maybe you could wait a little and see how things play out.
- 40. d --- She popped up at the party.
- 41. b --- She showed up a few minutes late.
- 42. c --- She is still holding it against me.
- 43. d --- For what it's worth, I think that reaction might be a bit much.
- 44. a --- I haven't heard this song in years, but I still know it by heart.
- 45. d --- Her comment caught me off guard.