

### **Sharp is good.**

It's funny how ordinary items or actions can show your knowledge of a language. Sometimes when I do something, or say something, I ask myself the question, "Could I say that in Spanish or French?" Your question would probably be, "Could I say that in English?" With that in mind, I was looking for a pen, the other day, to write down some notes. I couldn't find one anywhere which is really annoying. We seem to have little elves that come at night and steal useful items of all kinds, like pencils, pens, note paper, even envelopes. Mmmm....I wonder who they could be. I couldn't find a decent pencil either. The ones that were in the pencil holder didn't have any nibs. Whoever had previously used them had worn them down, or simply pressed down so hard that the nib had broken off. The solution? A pencil sharpener. But no ordinary pencil sharpener. We have always had the ordinary little plastic ones that have a small blade in them. You insert the pencil, turn it a few times while pushing against the blade, and voila, a sharp pencil. But I decided to buy something that would give immediate gratification. A super-doooper electronic office sharpener. Ooooo! It's black, and very serious looking. Now, with ease, I can insert a pencil into the hole, and the blades automatically come on. They do their job in a few seconds, and out comes the pencil, with a sharp nib, and ready to be used. No more messing about with pencil shavings. My kids were impressed with my new buy. They, by the way, are the culprits for the disappearing pens and pencils. My daughter sat down and sharpened about fifteen pencils straight away. I had bought a battery run sharpener a couple of years ago, but my youngest son tried to sharpen the other end of some pencils, you know, the end with the eraser in the little metal holder. Well, you can guess what happened. The sharpener broke. However, now the youngest are older and less likely to do that again. And their fingers are too big to put in the hole, ....thank goodness!

### **Grammar notes.**

Related vocabulary and expressions: with that in mind, elf/ elves, no ordinary....., nib.

1. The concert was cancelled because of the rain; with that in mind, we should think of something else to do.
2. They say that Santa is helped by elves.
3. She is no ordinary woman. She's an astronaut, a racing car driver, and a best selling novelist.
4. The nib of this pencil is broken. Where's the sharpener?