

## *.: Short Straw – Catch Phrase .:*



Hello, I'm Dan and welcome to Catch Phrase from Storynory.

Do you know what it means to draw the short straw? A (1) \_\_\_\_\_ /strɔ:/ can mean either a (2) \_\_\_\_\_ /rʌf/ , dry plant stalk or a long plastic tube that you might drink from.

But what does it mean when someone says that they (3) \_\_\_\_\_ /dru:/ the short straw?

Have a listen to this clip and see if you can (4) \_\_\_\_\_ /wɜ:k/ it out.

The general (5) \_\_\_\_\_ /sez/ that his company drew the short straw and (6) \_\_\_\_\_ /hæd/ to stay behind while the other soldiers escaped:

My orders were to (7) \_\_\_\_\_ /rɪ'meɪn/ behind with my men and hold (8) \_\_\_\_\_ /ɒf/ the enemy as long as we could. Someone had to do it, to (9) \_\_\_\_\_ /gɪv/ the others a chance to get (10) \_\_\_\_\_ /ə'weɪ/ , and my company drew the short straw.

Well, (11) \_\_\_\_\_ /drɔ:ɪŋ/ straws is a way of selecting someone to do a task that no-one has volunteered for.

If you want to draw straws, hold a (12) \_\_\_\_\_ /nʌmbər/ of straws in your hand, with one straw that is (13) \_\_\_\_\_ /mʌtʃ/ shorter than the rest. Make sure that no-one can see which one is the (14) \_\_\_\_\_ /ʃɔ:t/ straw, and have each person pull out – or draw out – a straw; the (15) \_\_\_\_\_ /'pɜ:sən/ who draws the short straw is the loser.

It's a way of (16) \_\_\_\_\_ /rændəmli/ choosing which member of the group has to do an unpleasant job.

(17) \_\_\_\_\_ /ɔ:l'dəʊ/ you can literally draw the short straw, most of the time the expression doesn't refer to an actual contest.

It's (18) \_\_\_\_\_ /'kɒmənlɪ/ used to describe someone who's been unlucky, or who has to do something even if they don't want to. So you might hear someone say something like: "I'm sorry (19) \_\_\_\_\_ /dʒɒn/ ; you drew the short straw, so you've got to take out the rubbish."

Let's (20) \_\_\_\_\_ /'lɪsən/ to the clip again. The general and his soldiers have to stay behind and face the enemy because they drew the short straw.

My orders were to remain behind with my men and hold off the enemy as long as we could. (21) \_\_\_\_\_ /'sʌmwʌn/ had to do it, to give the others a chance to get away, and my company drew the short straw.

So here the (22) \_\_\_\_\_ /freɪz/ shows that the general is (23) \_\_\_\_\_ /ʌn'lʌki/ ; his company drew the short straw so they have to stay behind while the others escape.

That's all (24) \_\_\_\_\_ /wi:v/ got time for today, but (25) \_\_\_\_\_ /θæŋks/ for listening, and join us again for more great (26) \_\_\_\_\_ /'ɪŋɡlɪʃ/ phrases next time.

## *∴ Short Straw – Catch Phrase ∴*



Do you know what it means to draw the short straw? A straw can mean either a rough, dry plant stalk or a long plastic tube that you might drink from.

But what does it mean when someone says that they drew the short straw? Have a listen to this clip and see if you can work it out. The general says that his company drew the short straw and had to stay behind while the other soldiers escaped:

My orders were to remain behind with my men and hold off the enemy as long as we could. Someone had to do it, to give the others a chance to get away, and my company drew the short straw.

Well, drawing straws is a way of selecting someone to do a task that no-one has volunteered for.

If you want to draw straws, hold a number of straws in your hand, with one straw that is much shorter than the rest. Make sure that no-one can see which one is the short straw, and have each person pull out – or draw out – a straw; the person who draws the short straw is the loser.

It's a way of randomly choosing which member of the group has to do an unpleasant job.

Although you can literally draw the short straw, most of the time the expression doesn't refer to an actual contest.

It's commonly used to describe someone who's been unlucky, or who has to do something even if they don't want to. So you might hear someone say something like: "I'm sorry John; you drew the short straw, so you've got to take out the rubbish."

Let's listen to the clip again. The general and his soldiers have to stay behind and face the enemy because they drew the short straw.

My orders were to remain behind with my men and hold off the enemy as long as we could. Someone had to do it, to give the others a chance to get away, and my company drew the short straw.

So here the phrase shows that the general is unlucky; his company drew the short straw so they have to stay behind while the others escape.

That's all we've got time for today, but thanks for listening, and join us again for more great English phrases next time.