

Chatterbox #157 – Around the Culips water cooler 2

Episode Description

Andrew and Maura are back with another episode of Around the Culips water cooler! Join them as they talk about a mixed bag of interesting, weird, and wacky news stories from around the world.

Sample Dialogue

Maura: I have to admit, though, one year I taught at a school that did start at 9:45, which is pretty close to 10:00.

Andrew: Yeah? How was that?

Maura: I really liked it. I never felt like I had to get up super early. I had time in the morning. The only problem is that you finish later too, so I guess that's the **trade-off**.

Expressions Included in the Learning Materials

- To have a frog in your throat
- A trade-off
- Sluggish
- To get pushed around
- To go nowhere fast
- Kicks
- Bo Jackson
- To cash in on something
- Diehard
- Paraphernalia
- To round out something
- A mixed bag



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Note: The words and expressions that appear in **bold text** within the transcript are discussed in more detail in the detailed explanations section that follows the transcript.

Transcript

Maura: Hello everyone. It's Maura.

Andrew: And I am Andrew. And we are back with another Culips episode.

Maura: And our website is Culips.com, that's C-U-L-I-P-S.com. You should definitely go to our website and check out becoming a member. When you're a member, you get access to the transcripts for all of our episodes, more detailed explanations of the expressions we use, and quizzes to test yourself.

Andrew: Yeah. So definitely head on over to our website and sign up to become a member today.

Maura: And if you're on social media, like Facebook, you can also send us a message or leave a comment. Because we love to hear from our listeners.

Andrew: That is right. And if you listen to us through iTunes, please leave us a five-star rating, because that will help us spread the word about Culips and that would just help us out a lot.

Maura: So how is it going with you, Andrew?

Andrew: I'm doing pretty good. To be honest, I'm a little tired right now, but I'm feeling good.

Maura: Good, good.

Andrew: Yeah. How about you? It kind of sounds like you **have a little frog in your throat**.

Maura: Yeah. I do have a bit of a sore throat, and when I chat a lot or start talking a lot, it starts to sound a bit... a bit strange and it's a bit sore, but I'll be all right for an episode or two.

Andrew: Mmhmm. Well, we'll try not to keep you too long today.

Maura: Sounds good.

Andrew: So, should we get started with today's episode?

- Maura: All right. Let's do it. And so today we are going to do a Chatterbox episode, and that is where we chat about all different kinds of topics.
- Andrew: Mmhmm. And we're actually going to revisit an episode idea that we did a few months ago, called the Culips water cooler. And in this type of episode, we gossip and chat about some current-event stories that are happening right here in Montreal, also in Canada, and around the world.
- Maura: That's right. And the reason that we call it the water cooler is because often, at work, colleagues will chat about things in the news, or things that they've read online or heard on the radio. They might chat around the water cooler, where they get something to drink. So this has been known as a place where people chat about stuff that's happening.
- Andrew: Yeah. So join us as we gather around the water cooler to talk about what's going on in our world.
- Maura: All right. So let's start with the international story, so a story that's been in the international news recently.
- Andrew: Mmhmm. And this one caught my attention because it's about one of my favourite subjects: sleeping. And a research scientist from Oxford University in England has come out with some new research findings that say that we should be getting more sleep than we originally thought, and we should be starting work later than we do. So he argues that we should start work at 10:00am.
- Maura: That sounds pretty sweet to me. I am for any study that suggests we should sleep more. I wish I could sleep more. Starting work at 10:00 sounds amazing.
- Andrew: It sounds super good, hey?
- Maura: I have to admit, though, one year I taught at a school that did start at 9:45, which is pretty close to 10:00.
- Andrew: Yeah? How was that?
- Maura: I really liked it. I never felt like I had to get up super early. I had time in the morning. The only problem is that you finish later too, so I guess that's the **trade-off**.
- Andrew: Yeah, that's true, right? You start later, you finish later. So everything has advantages and disadvantages.
- Maura: I really didn't mind working later a little bit. I like this study though, because a lot of schools, and definitely workplaces, still require that people start early; and I think it's just too early.

Andrew: I agree. And this researcher – his name is Dr. Paul Kelley – he thinks that if we start school and work later, employees and students will have increased cognitive functions, so they will be better students and they will be better employees. And I think there's something to this, because I don't know about you, but when I start working early in the morning, I still feel **sluggish**; it's hard to get going. So I think if I started later in the day, I'd be rested and ready to go.

Maura: I can't argue with you, Andrew. I really think that this research associate, Dr. Paul Kelley, is a brilliant guy. I just wish that people would listen to him now.

Andrew: Yeah. So if you're a boss out there, listen to the research. Go with what the science is saying and let your employees start later in the day. It will be beneficial for everyone.

Maura: OK. Now before I fall asleep, let's switch to the Canadian story.

Andrew: Mmhmm, the Canadian story. And this is a very interesting story for me, because I'm originally from Western Canada. And so the headline for this story is: "Western Canada wants to separate."

Maura: What?

Andrew: I know. It's crazy, right?

Maura: That's shocking. I mean, I do hear stories about Quebec, the Province of Quebec, wanting to separate from the rest of Canada. And I've even heard stories about Newfoundland and Labrador wanting to separate, but I haven't really heard much about Western Canada.

Andrew: Right, so there is a group – an organization – that is petitioning for the separation of Western Canada. And so the hypothetical new country would consist of four provinces: British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. And the reason why this group wants a Western Canadian country is because they feel like Western Canada is **getting pushed around** and we're not getting enough representation from the government in Ottawa, in Central Canada.

Maura: I think it is true that because our country is so large, people feel disconnected, especially when they're far from the capital, where all the federal government stuff is going on.

- Andrew: Yeah. And you know, we had an election a little while ago in Canada, and I watched the election on TV and I was surprised to see the election results decided very early. Before Western Canadians were even done voting, we already knew who the new Prime Minister was, and this angered a lot of Western Canadians because it made them feel like their vote doesn't count.
- Maura: Well, I can understand that, but I also understand that the reason it was decided by the Province of Ontario and Quebec is because that's where the most people live, and that's... that's where the majority of voters are. So I get it, but I also can understand how Western Canada might feel underrepresented, but I don't want them to separate.
- Andrew: Yeah. As a Western Canadian, I think this is an awful idea, and the reason I think this is because British Columbia is very different, I think, culturally and politically, than the other three provinces, the more central provinces: Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. And I think I would really hate being a part of that group. If it was just those four provinces, I would feel very alienated.
- Maura: I think Canada is fine as it is, even with our little problems that come up. I think that we all – I mean all the provinces – get along pretty well.
- Andrew: Mmhmm. And, you know, honestly, this idea has zero chance of becoming a reality, I think. A lot of people are talking about this story, but when you look at how many supporters of the movement there are, it's very small. On their Facebook group, they have about a thousand likes, so this idea is **going nowhere fast**.
- Maura: Good. I like my Canada united.
- Andrew: There we go. The united provinces of Canada. Right on.
- Maura: All right. Should we move on to a more local story now?
- Andrew: Yeah. So for Montreal, our local story, we're going to talk about **kicks**; talking about sneakers.
- Maura: All right. So, in case you didn't catch those first two words that Andrew used, he's talking about running shoes; shoes that you use to play sports.
- Andrew: Yeah. And in Montreal, we have a very successful hockey team: the Montreal Canadiens. And they are doing extremely well this season, and they actually did extremely well last season too, if you remember.
- Maura: That's true.
- Andrew: Mmhmm. So, to celebrate the success of the Canadiens, Nike, the famous athletic company, is releasing a limited-edition Montreal Canadiens sneaker.

- Maura: So, is it going to have the Montreal Canadiens logo on the side of the shoe?
- Andrew: Not exactly. The shoe is white and it has blue and red accents, and this represents the colours of the Montreal Canadiens: white, blue, and red. But it doesn't really have their logo on it. On the sole of the shoe, it has a picture of **Bo Jackson**, and he's wearing a Montreal Canadiens jersey. So there is a little bit of representation there, but it's actually on the underside of the shoe so you wouldn't be able to see it if you were wearing these shoes.
- Maura: And so, Andrew, in this story, did Nike say why they're doing this? I mean, other than obviously trying to get a lot of money from people?
- Andrew: Well, I think it's really just to celebrate the success of the Canadiens over the last few years. But you're right, they are **cashing in on** this idea, because guess how much a pair of these shoes costs.
- Maura: Well, with prices nowadays, a brand-new pair of high-quality sneakers I would say is at least \$100.
- Andrew: Mm. You're right. They're \$165 plus tax.
- Maura: Yes. In Canada, you can't forget the tax, because it can add quite a lot more on top. Wow, \$165 plus tax, that's crazy, I think. Andrew, are you going to buy a pair?
- Andrew: Nope. No, I won't be buying a pair, just because, first of all, I'm not a shoe collector; and second of all, this idea is outrageous. This is a hockey team; why are you making a shoe? You should be making a hockey skate that's limited-edition.
- Maura: That's true; hockey players don't wear running shoes, so this is a strange idea. But it's for the fans.
- Andrew: Yeah. So when I was reading this news story and I was looking through the comments online, there were tons of people who were very excited about this shoe. And one commenter in particular left a funny comment. He said: "This shoe is super ugly but I don't care. I'm going to buy it anyways." He's just a **diehard** Canadiens fan.
- Maura: That's it. It proves how crazy some fans are, that they'll buy any **paraphernalia** associated with the Canadiens.
- Andrew: Yes, exactly.
- Maura: All right, so I think that **rounds out** our water cooler chat pretty well.

Andrew: Yeah. So we started by talking about an international story, about how we should start work later and sleep longer. And then we talked about a Canadian story: Western Canada separating. Hmm. An interesting idea. And then finally we talked about shoes and the Montreal Canadiens sneaker that Nike is releasing.

Maura: We get some pretty interesting stories in the news, don't we?

Andrew: Yeah. It's a mixed bag; you never know what's going to come out, and that's what makes life worth living, because it's always interesting.

Maura: That's right. So don't forget; we'll remind you again to check out our website if you haven't lately. It's Culips.com. That's C-U-L-I-P-S.com. And become a member. You won't regret it.

Andrew: Yeah. Sign up and become a member right now. Thanks for listening everybody. We'll be back with another episode very soon.

Maura: See you later!

Detailed Explanations

To have a frog in your throat

If you **have a frog in your throat**, your mouth and throat are dry and you have difficulty speaking. In this episode, Andrew says that Maura sounds like she **has a frog in her throat**. Maura admits that this could be true, because she has a bit of a cold.

The idiom **to have a frog in your throat** first started being used in the USA in the 1890s and remains popular these days. You may wonder why we say that someone who has difficulty speaking **has a frog in their throat**. Well, the answer is simple, because when someone with a hoarse voice talks, they sound similar to the croaking sound a frog makes.

So, any time someone has problems speaking because they have a cold, are sick, or have a dry mouth, we can say that person **has a frog in their throat**.

Here are a couple more examples with **to have a frog in your throat**:

Christy: How did your presentation go?

Johnny: At first I felt a little nervous, and I **had a frog in my throat**.

Christy: Oh no!

Johnny: But after about 2 minutes, I felt more comfortable and took a couple of sips of water, and then everything went really well.

Christy: That's good.

Johnny: Yeah. I think I ended on a strong note.

Christy: Way to go!

Matthew: I didn't see you in economics class this morning.

Cindy: Yeah. I stayed at home because I didn't feel very well. How was it?

Matthew: So annoying! Our prof must have a cold or something. He **had a frog in his throat** and had to pause to clear his throat every 2 seconds.

Cindy: He probably has what I have. Something's going around!

Matthew: Sounds like it! I hope I don't get sick too.

A trade-off

You make **a trade-off** when you have to accept something bad in order to gain something good. In this episode, Maura says that there's **a trade-off** to starting work later in the morning: you have to work later in the evening as well. The good aspect of starting work later (more time for sleep) is balanced by a bad aspect (working later), and that's the **trade-off**.

So, when you tolerate something that is bad or negative so that you can get something that's good or positive, then you make a trade-off.

Here are a couple more examples with **a trade-off**.

Kelsey: I was just offered a new job.

Felix: No way! That's awesome!

Kelsey: Yeah. It's a great opportunity for me. The job pays well and has a really good benefit package, but there's one problem.

Felix: What's that?

Kelsey: It's located in a really small town, a 10 hours' drive from Toronto.

Felix: Oh. Ouch.

Kelsey: Yeah. So now I'm not sure what to do. It's **a trade-off**, I guess between salary and location.

Felix: Sounds like you've got a big decision to make.

Jessica: I want to buy a new pair of headphones. Can you help me choose a pair?

Ricardo: Sure. What's your budget?

Jessica: No more than 75 dollars.

Ricardo: OK. That gives us a bit to work with, but in that price range, you'll be faced with **a trade-off**. You'll have to sacrifice some audio quality for affordability.

Jessica: That's OK. I don't need to have professional-quality headphones. I just want a pair that are comfortable and sound decent.

Ricardo: We should be able to find something for you that fits that description.

Jessica: Perfect.

Sluggish

The adjective **sluggish** describes people and things that work or operate more slowly than they usually do. Most people feel **sluggish** on Monday morning, after a relaxing weekend off from work. It can be really difficult to get back into the swing of things after a nice rest!

In this episode, Andrew says that he feels sluggish when he has to wake up early in the morning. In other words, he feels tired and works more slowly in the morning compared to other times of the day.

So, when someone or something is **sluggish**, they are moving, working, or operating more slowly than usual.

Here are a couple more examples with **sluggish**:

Brody: Wanna hit the gym after work?

Taylor: I think I'm going to skip the gym today.

Brody: Oh, come on.

Taylor: I just feel really tired and would rather get some rest.

Brody: Well, you'll feel **sluggish** at first but after we start exercising you'll feel better. I promise.

Taylor: OK fine. You convinced me.

Brody: Yes! OK, see you later.

Karl: What's going on with the Yankees? It looks like they're half asleep out there. What a boring baseball game so far!

Stella: Yeah. They're off to a **sluggish** start, aren't they?

Karl: If they don't pick it up quickly, they're going to lose this game.

Stella: Let's hope they turns things around!

To get pushed around

You **get pushed around** when someone tries to make you do things that you don't want to do. In this episode, Maura and Andrew discuss a news story about an organization that wants four western Canadian provinces to separate from Canada. This organization complains that the four provinces are **getting pushed around** by the federal government. In other words, in the view of the separatist organization, the federal government forces the western provinces to do things that they don't want to do and that are against their best interests.

So when someone **gets pushed around**, they are told to do something that they don't want to do. And usually, the person who does the **pushing around** is rude, demanding, or coercive.

So if someone tells you what to do or tries to get you to do something you don't want to do, then you are **getting pushed around**.

Here are a couple more examples with **to get pushed around**:

Brianne: I think I'm going to quit my job. One of my coworkers is a real jerk. We just can't seem to get along.

Chris: That's the worst.

Brianne: Yeah. He's really bossy and always tries **to push me around**. He's always telling me to do things that aren't part of my job description.

Chris: Have you tried talking to him about it?

Brianne: Yup. He promised me he'd try to change but he hasn't changed at all. I'm sick of **getting pushed around** by him.

Chris: I'm sorry to hear that. Let me know if I can help you with a job search!

Carol: Did you hear I got in a car accident last week? Some idiot burned through a red light and hit me. My car is totalled.

Matias: I'm so glad you're OK. What are you going to do about the car?

Carol: Well, it's complicated. I'm kind of getting pushed around by my insurance company. They want me to accept a settlement of only \$5000.

Matias: That doesn't seem fair at all.

Carol: Yeah, I agree. I've been talking with my lawyer over the last few days and he thinks we should go to court.

To go nowhere fast

When you **go nowhere fast**, you make no progress. Even though you try to complete a task or achieve an objective, you fail to do it. In this episode, Andrew says that the separatist organization that wants four western Canadian provinces to split from Canada is **going nowhere fast**. In other words, their idea is so unpopular that it will never become a reality. The organization is making no progress trying to convince people to support their plan, so they are **going nowhere fast**.

Sometimes people use the verb **to get** with this expression instead of **to go**. The meaning of the two expressions is exactly the same. So, you can either say **to get nowhere fast** or **to go nowhere fast**. The choice is yours!

So when you're making no progress in whatever you're trying achieve, you are **going nowhere fast**.

Here are a couple more examples with **to go nowhere fast**.

Josh: I'm worried about Bill. Ever since he lost his job, he's been pretty depressed.

Kyle: Has he been looking for a new job?

Josh: Yeah. But he's **going nowhere fast**. We should take him out next weekend; try to cheer him up.

Kyle:: That's a great idea. I'll give him a call and see if he's up for it.

Josh: Perfect.

Melody: Have you seen Linda? I heard she wanted to speak with me.

Mariah: Yeah. She's just in the staff room talking with her supervisor. She's trying to convince him that he should give her a couple of days off next week, but she's **going nowhere fast**.

Melody: Why does she want time off?

Mariah: Apparently she was given some tickets to a Broadway show in New York City, but she can only go if she gets Monday and Tuesday off.

Melody: Those are my days off. She probably wants to ask me if I'll cover her shifts for her.

Mariah: Sounds about right.

Melody: I'll go talk to her and see if I can help.

Kicks

A slang expression for sports shoes is **kicks**. In this episode, Andrew and Maura talk about a special-edition pair of **kicks** that commemorate the Montreal Canadiens. These shoes are white, red, and blue – the colours of the Canadiens jersey.

This expression has an interesting origin. It was first used in the USA in the late 19th century by hobos (poor, travelling workers). Over time its popularity spread and it became used by more and more people. These days, it is mostly used by teenagers and twenty-somethings. Since **kicks** is a slang expression, it should be avoided in formal contexts.

In 2010, the indie band Foster the People released a very popular song called “Pumped Up **Kicks**.” This title refers to people who wear expensive shoes as a status symbol. The song can be found on YouTube if you’d like to listen to it.

Here are a couple more examples with **kicks**:

Lee: Cool **kicks**! Are they new?

Jane: Yeah! I just got them last week. The shoe store was having a sale.

Lee: They look great on you.

Stephen: I’m going shopping this afternoon. Want to come along with me?

Heather: Yeah, sure. What do you need to get?

Stephen: Some new **kicks**. Mine are pretty beat up.

Heather: All right! Shoe shopping! My favorite!

Bo Jackson

In this episode, Andrew mentions that the special-edition Montreal Canadiens shoe that is being released by Nike has a picture of **Bo Jackson** on the sole. **Bo Jackson** is an American athlete who played professional baseball and football. In fact, he is the only athlete named to the all-star team in both the MLB (the American professional baseball league) and the NFL (the American professional football league).

Now, you may think it is strange that **Bo Jackson** is on a shoe commemorating a hockey team. Well, in the 1990s, **Jackson** appeared in a Nike TV commercial wearing a Montreal Canadiens jersey. The Montreal Canadiens shoes pay tribute to this commercial and that’s why **Jackson’s** face is on the shoe. You can find the **Bo Jackson** Nike commercial on YouTube by searching for “Bo knows hockey.”

To cash in on something

When you **cash in on something**, you take advantage of an opportunity to make money or benefit financially. In this episode, Andrew and Maura say that Nike is trying **to cash in on** the success the Montreal Canadiens have had over the last few years. In other words, they think that Nike is trying to take advantage of the Canadiens' success by making money off of selling a limited-edition shoe.

So, **to cash in on something** means to exploit or use a situation to your advantage so that you can make money off of it.

If you **cash in on something**, you make the most of a situation by trying to make money off of the conditions that situation presents.

Here are a couple more examples with **to cash in on something**:

Sarah: I have a great new idea for a smartphone app.

Nick: Oh yeah?

Sarah: Yeah. I just need a programmer to help me create it.

Nick: I'm a programmer. I can help you.

Sarah: Let's set up a meeting so I can tell you all about it. I think this app will become super popular.

Nick: Awesome. If we can **cash in on** the current app craze, we will be able to generate a large profit.

Sarah: That's what I think too!

Jamie: I'm trying to book a hotel in San Francisco and the prices are insane!

Juan: When are you planning to be there?

Jamie: Mid-July.

Juan: That's why. July is the peak of the tourist season. All the hotels raise their prices in order **to cash in on** the increased demand.

Jamie: Luckily, I'll be there on business and my company will take care of the bill.

Diehard

We can describe someone who is very dedicated to a cause or belief system as **diehard**. We also use this expression to describe fans who are extremely loyal to the sports team or celebrity that they like. In this episode, Andrew talks about a comment he read online from a **diehard** Montreal Canadiens fan who plans to buy the limited edition Montreal Canadiens shoes.

Diehard is most commonly used when describing fans who are very, very loyal to a sports team or to a celebrity. It doesn't matter if the sports team comes in last place or the celebrity goes through a shocking scandal, a **diehard** fan will still support them 100%.

So, anyone who is **diehard** strongly supports a sports team, celebrity, cause, or belief system, no matter what.

Here are a couple more examples with **diehard**:

Victoria: Are you going to watch the game tonight?

Boris: What game?

Victoria: Manchester versus Liverpool.

Boris: Soccer?

Victoria: Yeah. I thought you were a soccer fan.

Boris: Well, I guess I am but I'm not **diehard**. I usually just watch soccer during the World Cup and the Olympics.

Jana: Do you think the Liberal candidate stands a chance at being elected?

Bobby: It's tough to say. There are a lot of **diehard** Conservatives in this town, so I think the Liberals will face a difficult challenge.

Jana: Yeah, you're right about that. I guess we'll find out on Election Day.

Paraphernalia

Paraphernalia (pronounced /pær·ə·fər'neɪl·jə/) is the gear, equipment, tools, or items that are associated with an activity or hobby. In this episode, Maura says that some diehard Montreal Canadiens fans will buy any **paraphernalia** associated with the team. In other words, these fans are willing to purchase any Canadiens merchandise in order to show their support.

We use this expression often when we talk about things that people collect. For example, a huge *Star Wars* fan may collect *Star Wars* **paraphernalia** like action figures, T-shirts, and posters. To a lesser extent, we use this expression in relation to the things someone needs to practise a hobby. For example, a photographer needs photography **paraphernalia** – a camera, lights, lenses, etc. – In order to take pictures.

So, **paraphernalia** is the equipment you need to practise a hobby or the things you can collect that are related to one of your interests.

Here are a couple more examples with **paraphernalia**:

Monica: Do you have any hobbies?

Blair: I actually have a pretty weird hobby. I collect Disney **paraphernalia**.

Monica: Really? Like what?

Blair: Anything associated with Disney. Especially vintage Mickey Mouse stuff.

Monica: Oh, interesting!

Aaron: How was your weekend?

Carmen: It was pretty rough, actually.

Aaron: Oh no. What happened?

Carmen: Well, I went camping with my friend.

Aaron: Oh, that sounds fun.

Carmen: It wasn't. We had never been before and we didn't have any camping gear or **paraphernalia**. We just had a very basic tent and we almost froze to death. We didn't know that it got so cold at night out in the forest!

Aaron: Yeah, you really need to have the proper equipment or it can be dangerous.

Carmen: Exactly. We learned our lesson!

To round out something

We use the phrasal verb **to round out something** when we talk about completing or finishing something. To conclude this episode, Maura says, “That **rounds out** our water cooler chat.” In other words, she uses **to round out something** to communicate that episode is over and she and Andrew have completed everything that they needed to talk about.

When you **round out something**, you complete it or finish it. For example, if you need to add just a few more details to a report in order for it to be 100% complete, you can **round out** the report by adding those final details.

Here are a couple more examples with **to round out something**:

Jack: We need two more volunteers for the office softball team. Are you interested in playing with us?

Tina: Softball? I haven't played in years.

Jack: That doesn't matter. We're not competitive. We just play for fun.

Tina: Well, sure. I suppose I could join the team.

Jack: Awesome news. Now we just need one more player **to round out** the lineup and we're ready to play!

Sunny: If I travel to Canada, what places should I visit?

Sean: Good question. Let me tell you my top three favorite places in Canada.

Sunny: Cool.

Sean: Number one is Banff. If you're a skier like me, you're going to love Banff.

Sunny: OK, number two?

Sean: Number two is Toronto. It's a big, busy city with lots going on.

Sunny: Perfect.

Sean: And **rounding out** my top three list is Tofino. It's a small surfing village on the West Coast. It's got a cool, laid back vibe and is a super fun place.

Sunny: Sounds awesome. Thanks!

Sean: No worries.

A mixed bag

In this episode, Andrew mentions that the news is **a mixed bag**. In other words, each news story is varied and different and there is a wide range of topics covered. We use the expression **a mixed bag** when something demonstrates a lot of variety. The news is always **a mixed bag** because there is an assortment of stories all the time; some good, some bad, some interesting, some boring, etc.

So when a thing displays many different characteristics, is varied, or contains both positive and negative aspects, then we can say it is **a mixed bag**.

Since this is a casual expression, it should be avoided in formal contexts.

Here are a couple more examples with **a mixed bag**:

Anna: How's the weather supposed to be this weekend?

Kristin: The weather report says it's going to be **a mixed bag**. Some rain on Saturday and sun and clouds on Sunday.

Anna: That's better than snow!

Kristin: Yup, that's true.

Paul: My favourite clothing store is having their annual blowout sale on Saturday. Want to go with me?

Cal: Sure. I could use some new clothes. What types of things will be discounted?

Paul: All sorts of things. Usually it's the unusual clothes, styles, and colours that are the most marked down.

Cal: Ah, so it's a real **mixed bag** then?

Paul: Yeah, exactly. You never know what you'll be able to find. But everything will be cheap, that's for sure!

Quiz

1. What can we call things that can be collected?

- a) defense
- b) exhibits
- c) locations
- d) paraphernalia

2. Which of the following phrasal verbs means to complete?

- a) to round up
- b) to round off
- c) to round out
- d) to round down

3. When someone has difficulty speaking due to a cold or dry mouth, what animal do we say they have in their throat?

- a) a frog
- b) a cat
- c) a horse
- d) a raccoon

4. Which adjective describes a loyal fan or supporter?

- a) flimsy
- b) diehard
- c) everlasting
- d) fair-weather

5. If someone describes the weather as a mixed bag, what kind of weather can we expect?

- a) sun
- b) rain
- c) clouds
- d) a variety of different kinds of weather conditions

- 6. What do you do when you cash in on something?**
- a) exchange money for goods or services
 - b) take advantage of a financial opportunity
 - c) place a bet at a casino
 - d) pawn something you own to pay off a debt
- 7. Which of the following is an expression that means to make no progress in whatever you are trying to achieve?**
- a) to go anywhere quickly
 - b) to go nowhere slowly
 - c) to go nowhere fast
 - d) to go anywhere slowly
- 8. Which of the following is a slang expression for athletic shoes?**
- a) punches
 - b) pumps
 - c) kicks
 - d) chops
- 9. When someone moves, works, or acts more slowly than they usually do, which adjective can we use to describe them?**
- a) lazy
 - b) efficient
 - c) studious
 - d) sluggish

Quiz Answers

1.d 2.c 3.a 4.b 5.d 6.b 7.c 8.c 9.d

Episode Credits

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