

## Chatterbox #230 – Introducing Kassy!

### Episode description

In this special Chatterbox episode, Andrew does a behind-the-scenes interview with Kassy, one of Culips' very own study guide writers. Tune in to learn about one of our newest team members!

### Fun fact

Kassy is from Hershey, Pennsylvania, in the United States. Hershey is not just a name, but the headquarters of the international company Hershey's Chocolate. Milton Hershey started selling chocolate in 1900 and became so successful that he built a town called Hershey for his factory workers and their families, as well as a theme park for his workers to enjoy and a school to educate orphaned boys in the area.

### Expressions included in the study guide

- Behind the scenes
- To spring up
- The best of both worlds
- To skyrocket
- To get your hands on [something]
- To peel



## Transcript

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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.

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Andrew: You're listening to the Culips English Podcast. To download the study guide for this episode, which includes the transcript, detailed vocabulary explanations, real-world examples, and a quiz, visit our website, [Culips.com](http://Culips.com), [C-U-L-I-P-S.com](http://C-U-L-I-P-S.com).

Hey, everyone, this is Andrew and you're listening to Culips.

Welcome back to another addition of Culips. I hope you've been well since the last time we've talked. Today's episode features an interview with Kassy, one of our study guide writers. Now, Kassy told me she was a tad bit nervous about coming onto Culips, but I think she did an absolutely fantastic job.

We'll get to the interview in just a moment but, before we do, I'd like to ask you a question. Have you subscribed to Culips on your favourite podcasting platform yet? You'd be doing us a huge favour by subscribing and leaving a review on the podcasting platform you use, whether it's Apple podcasts, Google podcasts, Spotify, or even a different service. Your subscription helps us become more visible to other English learners and will ultimately contribute to our ability to make better and better study content for you. So, if you haven't done so already, please subscribe and leave us a review.

Also, a quick reminder that there's a study guide available for this episode on our website, [Culips.com](http://Culips.com). It features a transcript, detailed vocabulary explanations, real-world examples, a quiz, and also prompts that you can use for writing or speaking practice. It's an awesome resource, and we think it's the best way to study with us. So check it out on [Culips.com](http://Culips.com).

Those are all the announcements I wanted to make, so let's get to the interview. Everyone, here she is, Kassy.

I am here with Kassy. Kassy, hello.

Kassy: Hello.

Andrew: Thank you so much for agreeing to come on to the Culips podcast.

Kassy: Oh, yeah, no problem.

Andrew: So, Kassy, you have actually been working for Culips for a little while, **behind the scenes**. You have been writing our study guides for us for how long now? Like 6 months, a year?



- Kassy: A couple of months, yeah, maybe 6 or 7.
- Andrew: Yeah, 6 or 7 months, so it's good to get you out from behind the computer and in front of the microphone.
- Kassy: Yeah, it's definitely a different experience.
- Andrew: A different experience for sure. So, Kassy, I would like to introduce you to our listeners today, and I guess the best way to do that is to start with the very basic information about you. Let's start with where you're from. Where are you from?
- Kassy: I am from Pennsylvania, in America. Have you heard of Hershey chocolate?
- Andrew: I have.
- Kassy: My hometown is Hershey, Pennsylvania.
- Andrew: Hershey, Pennsylvania. So what came first, the city name or the chocolate company?
- Kassy: Milton Hersey was actually the founder of Hershey Chocolate, and he made the factory and then the city. There's an amusement park, yeah, the whole thing.
- Andrew: So it **sprung up** around the chocolate factory?
- Kassy: Yes.
- Andrew: Wow, does the whole city smell like chocolate?
- Kassy: Unfortunately, the chocolate factory moved to Mexico due to budget cuts, but in the past, yes, it did.
- Andrew: Ah, that's cool. And is it a big city or a small city? What's Hershey like?
- Kassy: Um, I mean it's nestled in between a lot of farmland, but I don't know, a couple thousand, probably, people live there.
- Andrew: Oh, so it's quite small, then.
- Kassy: Very small.
- Andrew: Oh, OK.
- Kassy: Countryside.
- Andrew: Countryside.



- Kassy: Yes.
- Andrew: I've actually never been to Pennsylvania myself but, as far as I know, Pennsylvania has some urban centres and also a lot of countryside, rural areas, is that correct?
- Kassy: Yeah, so there's two major cities, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.
- Andrew: Right.
- Kassy: And then all the stuff in between we actually call Pennsylvtucky. It's a mixture between Pennsylvania and then southern Kentucky.
- Andrew: OK.
- Kassy: Nothing.
- Andrew: I've never heard that before. Pennsylvtucky—that's cute. So that must be convenient, then, because if you wanted to go to a big city and experience some of the things that are in a big city, it must be pretty easy to do that?
- Kassy: Yeah, I live an hour outside of Philadelphia, so it's no problem.
- Andrew: Yeah, and then you can get to New York easily, as well, I assume?
- Kassy: Yup, 3 hours.
- Andrew: Three hours.
- Kassy: Yeah.
- Andrew: So that's kind of **the best of both worlds**.
- Kassy: Exactly, yes.
- Andrew: Nice. And, Kassy, you and I, the way we got to know each other is at a language exchange.
- Kassy: Yeah, that's right.
- Andrew: Because you are also living in Korea now, too. So how long have you been in Korea?
- Kassy: I've been in Korea almost 3 years.
- Andrew: Almost 3 years, wow, not very long.



Kassy: No.

Andrew: But at the same time, long.

Kassy: Feels like it's been forever.

Andrew: I guess in the middle there, you went back to the States for a bit, right?

Kassy: Yeah, I went back for 5 months to visit family and get my teaching certification.

Andrew: Oh, really?

Kassy: Yeah.

Andrew: I didn't know that.

Kassy: Yes.

Andrew: So you're a teacher, a certified teacher, now?

Kassy: The American government paperwork system is a little slow, so I'm still in the process. But I passed the tests, yes.

Andrew: Oh, congratulations. What did you originally study at college? What was your major in college?

Kassy: Extremely different from English teaching. I was a physics major in college.

Andrew: Physics major?

Kassy: Yeah.

Andrew: So why did you change over to teaching English if you were in the hard sciences? Switching over to language teaching is quite a big change.

Kassy: Yeah. Actually, after I graduated I moved to Iowa. Have you heard of Iowa?

Andrew: Yeah.

Kassy: Middle of nowhere.

Andrew: Another countryside place.

Kassy: Yeah. And in Iowa I did an internship at a huge university, Iowa State.

Andrew: OK.

- Kassy: And when I was there, the internship was a great opportunity, but it was incredibly boring. So my lab mates, they were actually graduate students from China and Iran and India, and so I really got to be part of this international community.
- Andrew: Wow.
- Kassy: Yeah, I realized that I'd rather pursue something abroad then continue with science.
- Andrew: Interesting. And why did you choose Korea over so many countries that you can teach in?
- Kassy: I actually started learning Korean by myself when I was in Iowa.
- Andrew: Oh, OK.
- Kassy: I had some Korean friends.
- Andrew: I see. And, yeah, that's how we met was at a language exchange, 'cause we were both learning Korean. And I witnessed your Korean really **skyrocket**. It went from beginner level to very high level really quickly and so I thought maybe some of our listeners would like to know how you did that?
- Kassy: Yeah, I guess my two biggest tips, the first one is vocabulary practice. If you don't have the vocabulary, you can't say anything, right? So one of my favourite websites is actually called Memorize.com. And it helps you study vocabulary, kind of like a game.
- Andrew: Right, it's gamified.
- Kassy: Yeah, you have these plants that you have to water and so every time you answer the vocabulary word correctly, you water your plant and make it grow.
- Andrew: Right.
- Kassy: Yeah.
- Andrew: And this is based on a spaced repetition system.
- Kassy: Yes, spaced repetition.
- Andrew: So that the memorized algorithm predicts when you're going to forget the word and that's when you need to water it, right?



- Kassy: Exactly, yes. And I guess the second tip is just, in order to output language, you need lots and lots of input. So I just listened to podcasts like this and YouTube videos, people talking on the streets. Just anything I could **get my hands on**.
- Andrew: Yeah. It actually sounds exactly like my study method, too. Lots of listening practice and every day doing a spaced repetition vocabulary system. That's awesome.
- Kassy: Yeah.
- Andrew: Also, I would like to know about your hobbies. What kind of hobbies do you have? What do you do in your free time?
- Kassy: The biggest thing I do these days is hiking and then ultimate frisbee.
- Andrew: Oh, yeah, I forgot you are an ultimate frisbee player, that's right.
- Kassy: Yeah.
- Andrew: OK, so hiking. Let's start with hiking. What kind of hiking do you like to do? Short day trips or longer overnight trips where you're camping in the woods?
- Kassy: I've done a couple of overnight backpacking trips but, in Korea, just day trips. Yeah, last weekend I actually went to the coast and did a coastal hike.
- Andrew: Coastal hike, that's awesome. I did a hike last weekend too, on Mount Halla, Hallasan.
- Kassy: Oh, I've been there. It was so windy. How about when you went?
- Andrew: No, it wasn't windy at all. But it was really sunny and I'm such a fool, I forgot to put on my sunscreen.
- Kassy: Did you get as red as a lobster?
- Andrew: Yeah, red as a lobster. Actually the skin on the top of my head **is peeling** and my ears **are peeling**. It's very disgusting, and I'm really upset with myself that I didn't put the sunscreen on. But it was worth it, the hike was beautiful.
- Kassy: That's good.
- Andrew: And what about ultimate frisbee, what is ultimate frisbee exactly?

- Kassy: Ultimate frisbee is kind of like a mixture between soccer and American football, maybe. There's two end zones and then two teams and they throw the frisbee back and forth until they make it to an end zone and score a point.
- Andrew: OK, so the goal is to get the frisbee into the end zone at the opposite side of the field and you score a point that way. How many players are on a team?
- Kassy: It depends on the league, but in Korea there's seven players on each team, four males and three females.
- Andrew: Ah, OK. That's really cool. And what is the name of your team, can you shout out your team name?
- Kassy: Yeah, I represent Uprising.
- Andrew: Uprising.
- Kassy: Yes.
- Andrew: That's a fitting name because we are in Gwangju, which is very famous in Korea for being the birthplace of Korean democracy, and that was actually kicked off by an uprising by some students, right?
- Kassy: Yup, that's how we got the name. There's actually another team in Gwangju called Dokkaebi, which in Korean means goblin.
- Andrew: Yeah, the goblins.
- Kassy: Yes.
- Andrew: Who's a better team?
- Kassy: Unfortunately, both of our teams suck this year.
- Andrew: Oh no.
- Kassy: We have a lot of fun, but we are the worst in the league right now.
- Andrew: How many teams are in the league?
- Kassy: I can't remember the specific number, but I think 14.
- Andrew: Fourteen.
- Kassy: Fourteen teams.



Andrew: And it is mostly foreigners and expats, or is it a mixture of Koreans and expats together?

Kassy: It is a really great mixture of Koreans and expats.

Andrew: Oh, cool.

Kassy: Yes.

Andrew: So if there's any Korean listeners listening to us right now, and I'm sure there are, this could be an interesting opportunity to practice English, right? Join a sports team that has some foreigners on the team and you can practice English with them.

Kassy: It's a great way to make new friends, practice your English. We have a great time.

Andrew: That's really cool.

Well, Kassy, I think we'll leave it at that for now. We're gonna record some more episodes together, so, listeners, in the future, in the near future, in the upcoming weeks you'll be able to hear more from Kassy. So please stay tuned for that. Thanks again.

Kassy: Thank you.

Andrew: Well, that was great, wasn't it? I enjoyed talking to Kassy, and I hope you liked listening to our conversation. Do you have any comments or questions for us? Send us an email at [Culips.com](mailto:Culips.com). We're also on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. Just search for the Culips English Podcast and you'll be able to find us.

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That is it for now, we will be back soon and we'll talk to you then. Bye.

## Detailed Explanations

### Behind the scenes

#### Phrase

To be **behind the scenes** is to be unknown by the majority of people or to work outside of the public view. Imagine a theatre performance. For every theatre performance, there are two groups of people: the actors and actresses and the stage crew, who are the people who work **behind the scenes** or behind the curtain, away from the view of the audience.

In this episode, Andrew mentions that Kassy works **behind the scenes** as a Culips study guide writer; she is not well-known by the Culips listeners like Andrew or the other hosts are; rather, she works behind the computer, outside of the limelight.

Here are a couple more examples with **behind the scenes**:

Trent:	Have you ever wondered what actors are really like in real life, you know, when they aren't in front of a camera?
Reagen:	Yeah, totally. I heard some famous actors are actually totally crazy <b>behind the scenes</b> . They cause so much drama on set.
Trent:	Exactly! Or the opposite, I've heard that some actors who act so crazy and outgoing in movies or TV shows are actually pretty boring in real life.
Reagen:	Maybe we'll be famous one day and we can see if those rumours are true.
Trent:	Ha ha—yeah, right. That's pretty unlikely!

Rach:	The Razorbacks are really sucking this year. What's going on?
Nina:	I heard there's a lot of stuff going on <b>behind the scenes</b> that's causing trouble for the players: one's going through a divorce, the pitcher's grandmother died, and the team manager quit 2 weeks into the season.
Rach:	Man, they have had some bad luck. No wonder they can't focus on baseball!
Nina:	Yeah, it's hard to focus on the game when their personal lives are being affected like that.

## To spring up

Phrasal verb

**To spring up** is to suddenly appear, seemingly out of nowhere. A good example of the word **spring up** can be found in US history books. During the California Gold Rush, thousands of people flooded into California hoping to find their fortune, and temporary towns **sprung up** to accommodate the influx of people.

Here are a couple more examples with **to spring up**:

Yolanda:	There are so many coffee shops around here. It's kind of ridiculous.
Hera:	I know! I swear a new one <b>springs up</b> every time I come into town.
Yolanda:	All of this competition can't be good for business. I wonder how many of them will actually be successful.
Hera:	Beats me. I prefer the one on 4th and Walnut, though. They have the best cinnamon chai lattes. They are to die for!

Honata:	It's so difficult to have an original idea these days and keep it to yourself.
Miko:	I know what you mean. You remember when I designed those cool patches people could stick on their clothes or their bags?
Honata:	Yes, those things are awesome!
Miko:	Yeah, well, it only took about a week until all these different people started <b>springing up</b> with patches almost identical to mine. It was so irritating I decided to just stop making patches altogether.
Honata:	That's such a bummer. Why do some people always have to piggyback off of the work of others?



## The best of both worlds

### Idiom

To have **the best of both worlds** is to be able to experience the advantages of two totally different things, usually without experiencing any of the disadvantages of those things. For example, having a house in the city and a vacation home at the beach allows you to experience **the best of both worlds**: you can enjoy city life, but also escape the crowds and cold winter for the nice sunny beach cottage.

Here's one more example with **the best of both worlds**:

Mina: Where did you go to high school?

Hyun-June: Oh, I actually went to high school in Canada.

Mina: But you were born in Korea, right?

Hyun-June: Yeah, high school in Korea is ultra-competitive, like mandatory school until 10 p.m. competitive, so my parents sent me to high school in Canada to avoid that.

Mina: But you decided to go to university here?

Hyun-June: Oh, yeah, university is much more fun and low key in Korea compared to Canada. It's just getting in that's the hard part. Well, it's easy for people who studied abroad, for people like me, that is.

Mina: Huh, so you really got **the best of both worlds**.



## To skyrocket

Verb

If something **skyrockets**, it increases a lot and very quickly. Things that **skyrocket** are usually prices or the amounts of something. For example, the cost of college tuition has **skyrocketed** in recent decades, and the number of people who use social media **skyrocketed** after the introduction of apps like Facebook and Instagram.

Here are a couple more examples with **to skyrocket**:

Max: Dude! Check this out! You know that video you uploaded last night?

Gorge: What about it?

Max: Haven't you looked at your phone? It went viral! You're famous! Your subscribers have **skyrocketed** to 300,000 people overnight.

Gorge: What? No way! Give me the phone!

Zendaya: Hey, wanna hang out after school?

Therese: Sorry, I wish I could. I gotta go to my part-time job.

Zendaya: Part-time job? Since when? I didn't know you got a job.

Therese: Since the price of gas decided **to skyrocket**. Not all of us are lucky enough to have parents who will pay for gas.

Zendaya: Hey, don't blame me! It's my parents who pay it, I just gladly accept all that they are willing to offer!

Therese: Whatever. You're so lucky!



## To get your hands on [something]

### Idiom

**To get your hands on [something]** is to find or get something that you really wanted or needed. In this episode, Kassy said that she learned Korean quickly by reading or listening to any Korean material she could **get her hands on**. In other words, she listened to or read everything she could find, from newspapers, to books, videos, podcasts, etc.

Here are a couple more examples with **to get your hands on [something]**:

Rita: Watcha doin' tonight?

Georgiana: I'll be at home on my computer with my finger ready to click the "purchase" button as soon as the clock hits 10:00.

Rita: Oh, right. Those concert tickets you want are going on sale then, right?

Georgiana: Not want, need! I **NEED to get my hands on those tickets!** I've been waiting for this concert for months, and I'm not about to fail now.

Rita: Aren't you acting a little bit too obsessive right now?

Georgiana: No! Now leave me alone. I have to massage my finger to prepare it for tonight's click battle.

Fred: Is that the latest edition to Battleship Cowboys? How did you manage to **get your hands on that?** It's not supposed to be released until Tuesday!

Tyler: My brother works at the publishing company. He sent me a copy.

Fred: Can I just touch it?

Tyler: You can read it, too, if you want.

Fred: No, really? You are my best friend ever!

Tyler: No problem, man. I didn't realize you were so into comic books. I could have got you all the new releases.

Fred: Well, you can start now!

## To peel Verb

**To peel** has a couple of meanings, one being to remove the skin from fruits and vegetables. However, in this episode we are focused on the meaning of **peeling** skin. A person's skin **peels** if he or she spends too much time in the sun and the skin becomes damaged. If skin is sunburnt, it first turns red, then it becomes dry and itchy, and finally the skin starts **to peel** off the body in white flakes.

Here are a couple more examples with **to peel**:

Kitty:	Ew, what's wrong with your skin? You look like a lizard.
Victor:	I went out sailing on Sunday and I forgot to wear sunscreen. I got burnt to a crisp and now my whole body <b>is peeling</b> . The lizard comment is pretty accurate.
Kitty:	Did you try using aloe or some kind of moisturizer?
Victor:	Yeah, but it was too late. The damage was done. I just have wait for all this dead skin <b>to peel</b> off and use proper skin protection next time.

Heather:	Hey, Isabella, do you have any moisturizer? I went to the beach yesterday and got a bit sunburnt. My nose <b>is peeling</b> so badly right now.
Isabella:	Yeah, sure. Here ya go.
Heather:	Thanks, girl. You're a real lifesaver. I would hate to go into the mall looking like a molting snake.
Isabella:	Anytime. That's what friends are for.

## Quiz

**1. What is an example of something a baseball fan might really want to get his hands on?**

- a) tickets to a basketball game
- b) a signed ball
- c) popcorn
- d) a picture with Michael Phelps

**2. Which is NOT a job that works mostly behind the scenes?**

- a) IT guy
- b) chef
- c) news anchor
- d) movie director

**3. What causes peeling?**

- a) freezing temperatures
- b) humidity
- c) sunburn
- d) allergies

**4. Which is an example of something skyrocketing?**

- a) the price of gas stabilizing
- b) the number of people who attend Justin Bieber's concerts drastically decreasing
- c) a man's hair gradually turning grey as the years go by
- d) the number of viewers doubling overnight

**5. Which word below has a similar meaning to spring up?**

- a) appear
- b) increase
- c) energize
- d) bounce





## Writing and Discussion Questions

1. What's your job? Do you work behind the scenes or front and centre?
2. What is something that's hard to get that you really wish you could get your hands on?
3. Have you ever experienced the best of both worlds? How so?
4. Have you ever tried Hershey chocolate? What's your favourite kind?
5. Besides this podcast, what is one method you use to improve your English?

## Quiz Answers

1.b    2.c    3.c    4.d    5.a

### Episode credits

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