

## Chatterbox #288 – What's your favourite quote?

### Episode description

Words can inspire us. Everyone has that moment when they read something, or hear something, that just makes sense. So much so that we want to share these quotes with the world. In this episode, Andrew and Anna talk about inspirational quotes and share the ones they feel have influenced their lives in some way.

Our Chatterbox series is designed for intermediate and advanced English learners. Podcasts and audio lessons are a great way to improve your English listening skills. Chatterbox episodes feature natural, unedited conversations between native speakers, so you can build your English skills and learn something new at the same time.

### Fun fact

According to a study by cognitive scientists, people tend to believe that a statement that rhymes is more accurate than the one that doesn't, even if both statements say the same thing.

### Expressions included in the study guide

- A fine line between [X and Y]
- In line with
- To spin
- Through the lens of
- Rusty
- To Boil [something] down



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## 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. The transcript has been edited for clarity.

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**Andrew:** Hey everyone, it's Andrew here. I just wanted to make a quick announcement before Anna and I get started with this episode, we just added two new features to our website that I want to let you know about. The first is a long-requested feature, a comment section. Yes, that's right, finally, now you can comment directly on our website about each episode. The second feature is a discussion forum. You can find the forum by going to the membership menu, and then selecting the forum option. Here you can talk with other members of the Culips community and with the Culips team as well. And if you have a question or want to suggest a topic for an upcoming episode, then please let us know by posting in the forum. Help us make these two features become successful by using them often. We hope that we can create a great sense of community among the Culips listeners around the world and that you guys will be very active in the comments section and discussion forum. So, make sure to visit [Culips.com](http://Culips.com) after you listen to today's episode, and let us know your thoughts by leaving a comment. And now let's get started with this episode. Here we go.

Hello, everyone. My name is Andrew.

**Anna:** And my name is Anna.

**Andrew:** And you're listening to the Culips English Podcast.

Welcome back to Culips. This is Chatterbox, the Culips series for intermediate and advanced English learners that features natural, unedited conversations between native speakers about compelling topics, or trending current events, or even hot issues. And today I am joined by my cohost, Anna. Hey, Anna.

**Anna:** Hi, Andrew. And hello, listeners. I can't wait to get started with today's conversation, Andrew. We've got a topic lined up that is really, really interesting for me, and I really can't wait to talk about it, maybe Andrew, you could let them know what we're going to chat about today.

**Andrew:** Yeah, for sure. So, we are going to talk about favourite quotes today or just about quotes in general, which is a topic that you pitched Anna, and I think it's a good one. So, thank you for that suggestion. But before we get started with our chat, I want to remind all of our listeners about the study guide for this episode. It's available to all Culips members and inside the study guide, you'll find a transcript, along with detailed vocabulary explanations and examples of some of the difficult vocabulary that you'll hear Anna and I use today. There's also a quiz, and some prompts that you can use for speaking practice

or writing practice. There's a lot of good stuff in there and we recommend following along with the guide while you listen to this episode. So to get the study guide, you just need to sign up and become a Culips member. And you can find out all the details about that and sign up on our website which is [Culips.com](http://Culips.com). [C-U-L-I-P-S.com](http://C-U-L-I-P-S.com).

**Anna:** We'd also like to give a shout out to Milan a Culips listener from the Czech Republic who left us a very kind review and five-star rating on Apple Podcasts. Milan wrote "Hello there Culips team. I've been listening to your podcast for almost one year, every day in my car on my way to work and back home." Wow, that's a lot. "I always managed two episodes a day. And I have to say that you make the best podcast for intermediate listeners. The speed of your speech is neither fast nor slow. So, it perfectly fits my needs. Don't stop doing this kind of luxury service for all people who want to learn English. Thanks a lot 😊" Wow, that's a really well-written comment. Well done, Milan. It's fantastic.

**Andrew:** I love that Anna, a luxury service. I've never thought of the Culips podcast as a luxury service. But I'm going to start thinking of it as a luxury service from now on. Thank you for your support, Milan, and for listening to Culips and learning English with us.

**Anna:** And thanks to all of you out there who have been leaving us reviews and subscribing to Culips on your favourite podcast app or telling your friends to check out Culips. This really helps other English learners around the world connect and learn with us. So, please keep it up.

**Andrew:** All right, Anna, let's get into our main topic for today, which is quotes and we're going to talk and share some of our favourite quotes that have influenced us in some way in our lives. But maybe before we get to that, we should start by explaining exactly what a quote is. I'm wondering if there is a little bit of cultural difference around the world. Maybe in some cultures, quotes are very important and in other cultures not as much. But in English speaking cultures around the world, I think quotes are very important. And many people collect them and have some favourite ones. But I guess we'll start here by just explaining what a quote is before we go any farther. So maybe Anna, you could break it down for everyone. What do we mean when we're talking about quotes and favourite quotes?

**Anna:** Well, maybe, like me, you've seen maybe on Instagram, or one of these social media apps, and you've been scrolling along, and then you see, I don't know, a picture with a group of words or a sentence or a very short phrase, and then a name of somebody. And this is really common on social media nowadays, we love to share these types of things. And a quote is essentially, repeating or copying words from either it could be a text, or it could be something somebody's written, or something somebody spoken. And then, you know, this kind of short phrase or sentence becomes infamous around the world. I guess the reason why some quotes are more famous is because for me, it's like they managed to sum something up in a way that's so simple and make sense to so many people. And you think, wow, I never could have come up with that. They just managed to sum up something about daily life or the way that things work. That just makes so much

sense. And I think that's the beauty of a quote is that it just sums things up really beautifully. Yeah.

**Andrew:** Yeah. Well said, and quotes can be really powerful like you just mentioned. They can inspire us, right? It's actually really amazing, we can just read like two sentences of some words that somebody said some time in the past, and you're like, wow, I never thought of it that way, or that's a really great way of looking at things. And those words can inspire us, or motivate us, or move us and make us feel more hopeful about life. So, they really are quite powerful in that regard. Now, speaking of Instagram, Anna, it's interesting that you brought that up, because that is where I learn about a lot of quotes, to be honest with you, I follow an Instagram account called Stoic Reflections. And they post a motivational quote every day. Now some of them I don't really agree with, or I don't think are very interesting but every once in a while, there's like a perfect quote there. And when I see it, it actually does fire me up a little bit, I feel more motivated or more excited to get on with my day or to achieve things in life. So that's one place that I find quotes these days is Instagram. Are you the same way? Do you follow any quote accounts on social media?

**Anna:** I do, but I have to say, there can be too many motivational quotes. There's a **fine line between a good number of quotes and a bad number of quotes**, because, you know, those kinds of people that just, you know, live their life in quotes. And I'm not about that, really. But I do follow an account called Afterskool. And the account name is Afterskool100. And, as far as I know, it's by a guy and his posts are really interesting, because they are pictures that he's drawn. I think it's him or his team, and they have a quote or saying, and it just really makes you think. It's a lot about society, the way that we are. It's not motivational, actually, which is slightly different. It's yeah, about society, the way that we are making you think a little bit further than the status quo of how things are supposed to be or, and it really makes me think, and that's another thing like you said, Andrew, it's like inspiration, motivation. But I think a quote is also about making you think about something in a different way. So, I love that because it, you know, I see it, and I think wow, it's like really powerful. I've seen a couple of posts on there recently. And I think that's totally changed my perspective on something in like, six words, I'm like, wow. So, I absolutely love that page. It's not everybody's cup of tea. I'm sure there's some people that would think they don't want to hear that kind of stuff. But for me, I think it's really, really useful Afterskool, yeah Afterskool100. They quote lots of different people, like modern people, but also people from the past. So, it's a nice range of different people. So, I love that page, but not too many quotes and we don't want to live our life in quotes. OK, that's, you know, those kind of people that every other post is like a pink background and then some kind of motivational thing or we don't want that, OK? There's a fine line.

**Andrew:** I even had a friend when I was a university student, and I remember going to that friend's apartment and all over the house they had written out different, like motivational or inspirational quotes and kind of like posted them on sticky notes like everywhere, like physically posted on the walls and on the fridge and stuff. I thought that was a little too much like, you know that many quotes, they lose their meaning like, how

are they special? I think you're onto something that less is more when it comes to motivational quotes.

**Anna:** I like that. Yes, less is definitely more. And I'm a little bit worried about your friend, if you need that many motivational quotes to survive maybe he needs to think about something else. But no, I mean, whatever floats your boat. Some people really love that type of stuff. And it really gets them fired up exactly like you said, I really liked what you said there Andrew about, you know, it gets you fired up, it gets you going. So, I just love quotes. And I do think they really help sometimes maybe when you're having a bad day, and I'm going to talk about one that I like, actually, I'm going to bring up.

**Andrew:** Yeah, let's get into it. Let's share some of our favourite quotes.

**Anna:** OK, so a lot of quotes, again, about motivation. And I'm going to choose one by Albert Einstein. And he says, "Anyone who has never made a mistake has never tried anything new."

**Andrew:** "Anyone who has never made a mistake has never tried anything new."

**Anna:** Right. So, it's like, really good way of putting it. And there's other similar quotes like this. But you know, what it's trying to say is that even though maybe failing and making a mistake doesn't always feel very nice. But actually, it's just when you do new things, like learning a language, for example, you're gonna make mistakes. And coming from somebody like Albert Einstein, who, you know, one of the smartest people who ever lived, a super intelligent guy, like, I'm sure he made loads of mistakes. So, I really like that of to do new things, to go into new territory, you're not going to be perfect at doing everything.

**Andrew:** I actually have one that's very similar by Tennyson, the poet. He's a poet from way back in the day, Alfred Lord Tennyson is his full name, of course. So, Tennyson has a quote about trying new things, kind of just like the Einstein quote, and he said, "It's better to have tried and failed than to live life wondering what would have happened if I hadn't tried." So Anna, I think that's kind of similar, it's kind of **in line with** that Einstein quote, right? It's like, go for it essentially, it's just kind of like motivational like, you don't want to live with regrets of not doing something, right? We only live once. So, we might as well try and take advantage of opportunities or try new things. And if we fail, hey, at least we tried, and we have that experience. We can learn from it and we can regroup at that time if we have to. But it's better than just not doing anything and regretting that later. Like, I hate that feeling of like, oh, I should have done this. I should have done that. Why didn't I do this? Why didn't I do that? I think quotes like this can help make us take that first step towards doing something new and scary.

**Anna:** Absolutely. And I always find when I'm in that moment, you know, when you've got that choice, you get to a crossroads. Maybe it's like, you know, you're like, do I do it? Or do I not? And things like these quotes, you know, in that moment can be really useful because you're like, wow, no, but I don't want to live my life thinking about what would



have happened. So, you think, OK, I'll do it. So actually, I think when you're at a crossroads, and I don't mean like, I mean, just in the moment in that kind of millisecond, where you kind of have to make a decision, or it can kind of sway you one way or the other, and just bring you back and remind you that, you know, as you said, we only have one life and live it. I need to live more by these ones. By the way, that's what I'm, I need to work on, on this a little bit more, because I'm very much an overly conscious person, like I don't take enough risk. So, for me, these are really, really useful. Another one I really like, and this is actually really over, overly quoted one. So that's kind of why I wanted to choose it because I do think it's beautiful. But, you know, it's like everywhere. And this is kind of more to do with I think relationships and things like this. And it said, "Don't cry because it's over, smile because it happened." And this is a quote by Dr. Seuss, who was an American children's author.

**Andrew:** Yeah, *Green Eggs and Ham*.

**Anna:** I really like it because I think it's important, you know, when you do break up with somebody, or you move on, or you move away, or whatever, it can be really, really upsetting. And you kind of always think about the bad things but you know, it's also you should be grateful that you had that opportunity to know that person. And, you know, you always learn from the people that you're with, and you meet and you're in a relationship with. So, I think it's a nice way to **spin it**. If you're having a really bad time after a breakup, for example, and think, OK, it's really bad. I'm really sad, but I'm happy that I met that person and I'm happy that they were part of my life for a specific period of time.

**Andrew:** So that was, "Don't cry because it's over, smile because it happened." Yeah, I really like that. And I think you could actually apply that to so many different situations. You're right, it could be applied to like a romantic relationship, especially if you have, you know, a breakup where you really did have some honest feelings for someone, that can be a tough time, but you could even apply it to like maybe you know, graduating from high school, that's kind of sad, or moving on to a new job in life, or even, you know, it's kind of grim to think about, but if someone passed away, even you might look back at that relationship and apply that quote, and find some comfort with a quote like that. So, yeah, a beautiful little quote that, like you say, is very, very popular. And you'll see it many places and come across it many times.

**Anna:** Yeah, jobs, you could apply to a job situation, you know, maybe you've been let go, or maybe you're moving on to a different opportunity, or whatever. And, you know, be happy and be grateful, I think, really, is what it's trying to say, like, be grateful that you had that opportunity, even though, you know, it's not going to be forever and really, nothing's forever.

**Andrew:** Anna, as a language learner, as a Korean learner, and as an English teacher, I of course, apply a lot of quotes to language learning. And I think about quotes **through the lens** of language learning. And there's a couple of quotes that I have here that I usually apply to my language studies more so to my personal studies as a Korean learner,

but I also sometimes share them with my students, as well to try and fire up my students or to try and give them some comfort, because often learning a second language is super difficult. And it's not something with an immediate payoff, right? We put in a lot of time and effort and work and money, and stress, like we invest a lot of ourselves into learning a language. And sometimes we don't see returns on that investment right away. And to get those returns, we have to go through a lot of obstacles, and feel frustrated, and all of these things. So, two quotes that I like to think about, actually three quotes I have here, I'll just share them all. And then maybe you can tell me which one is your favourite of them. And we'll spend some time talking about that one. So, the first quote is a Chinese proverb. It's attributed to a Chinese proverb, so I don't know who the original person who said it is, but this proverb goes, "The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago, the second best time is now." "The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago, the second best time is now." And when I apply that to language learning, you know, sometimes I feel lazy or unmotivated, and I don't really want to study, but I think, ah, you know, like I could put off the studying until tomorrow. But the best time to do it really is right now, like the results might not come for a long time. But if I do the work now, it will come sooner than if I delay. So, it's kind of like makes me want to start doing things right away. The second quote that I wanted to share is by President Kennedy, JFK, the American president. And he had quote about doing all of the kind of amazing things he did during his presidency. One was to help America travel to the moon and when he was talking about that experience he said that, "We chose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they're easy but because they're hard"

**President Kennedy:** We choose to go to the Moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard.

**Andrew:** I really like that, like, you should have a purpose when you're doing something and doing something because it's difficult is like a good reason to do something. It's good to challenge ourselves, it's good to face obstacles because when we finally achieve goals, it just feels that much more satisfying. And I think there's a lot of power and a quote like that we don't do things because they're easy, we do them because they're hard. I don't know I've always felt a connection with that quote. And the final one that I have is again by another American president, Theodore Roosevelt. And he said a very simple quote, "Comparison is the thief of joy." "Comparison is the thief of joy". And I find with my Korean studies, maybe even you Anna, can relate to this with learning Spanish is that it's easy to like look around and see other people who are better at our target language than we are like I have some friends who are much better Korean speakers than I am. Or I watch TV and I see some Korean learners on TV speaking really fluent, amazing Korean, and sometimes that can bum me out like if I compare myself to the best of the best, I feel it inadequate, or I feel like I'm not very good. And that really robs me of the joy of just learning the language and enjoying the process of learning the language and enjoying doing what I can do with the language. And so, I also thought, that's a really nice, quote,

"Comparison is the thief of joy." Just reminds me that I shouldn't compare myself with others, and I should just live my own life and find some joy in that.

**Anna:** Yeah, I love that one, that last one really spoke to me probably the most out of all of them. Because you know, just think about if we didn't actually compare ourselves, if we didn't feel the need to compare ourselves or, you know, we'd be just much more relaxed and content about the effort that you've made. Because I have that feeling as well, even though I've reached a point where I can communicate in Spanish, so I should be really pleased with that. But there's always going to be somebody who speaks better Spanish than you, there's always going to be somebody that speaks better Korean or better English or better French, or a better Arabic or whatever, there's always going to be people that speak better than you. And a lot of these things exist, like things like social media exist, because we like to compare. Maybe I'm not sure if it's necessarily like to compare ourselves to each other, but we kind of feel the need to compare ourselves with each other and see where we're at. So, if we didn't need to do that, probably, we'd probably be a lot more content and just relax with what we're doing and more focused on what we're doing rather than worrying about everybody else. So, I really liked that one. That one was my that one was my favourite of your three.

**Andrew:** Yeah, think about like, all the time, when you're thinking about your friends who have houses or sports cars, or you know, something that you're a little bit envious of. And you're like, I wish I kind of had that I wish I had that sports car too. You know, you're just like, giving your mental energy, your potential happiness to that thought that's kind of useless. It isn't really serving any purpose, right? And instead of being happy in that moment, you're just like kind of wasting your mental energy towards a jealous envious thought. So yeah, I do. I do agree that it can be applied to many situations in life, not just language learning. When we compare ourselves to others, it's probably not usually a good thing overall. Anna, do you have any other quotes, maybe one more that we could finish up on?

**Anna:** Yeah, I'll finish off with this one, which is kind of similar and I think should be motivating for languages. Maybe if you're, you're getting back into English, maybe you're a little bit **rusty**, you haven't been practicing for a while. This is maybe something that could be quite motivational for you. And it was by a guy called Zig Ziglar, who is a- was a motivational speaker. "You don't have to be great to start, but you have to start to be great."

**Andrew:** "You don't have to be great to start, but you have to start to be great." Yeah, I love that. It's totally true too, right? Like, a lot of these quotes, I think Anna, actually **boil down to** very simple ideas. But like we mentioned at the top of the episode, it's the phrasing, it's the way that that idea is expressed that is just really easy to connect to and that's what makes them so important, I think. I really liked that one.



**Anna:** Yeah, it's a skill to be able to articulate something, in a way like that. So, I'm really grateful that we have these wonderfully intelligent people much more intelligent than me that can come up with these fantastic quotes.

**Andrew:** I know. Even while we are listening to some of these quotes, I fell into that trap of comparing myself to others again, I was thinking why can't I say these things so articulately like that? But you never know, maybe I will one day, maybe in the future Anna people will be quoting us, it could happen.

**Anna:** I hope not.

**Andrew:** Well everyone, I think we'll leave it here for today. But thanks for listening. And congratulations listeners on making it to the end of this episode. Great job. And we want to know what your favourite quotes are. So, make sure to leave a comment on our website and share your favourites with us and the rest of the Culips community. Again, with your help, we can get a really interesting discussion going on our website.

**Anna:** If there was a part of our conversation, maybe you didn't understand, you can always rewind and listen to it again. Or you can visit [Culips.com](https://www.culips.com) become a Culips member and download the study guide and the transcript.

**Andrew:** If you like Culips, we would really appreciate it if you could support us. There are many ways that you can do that. You could tell your friends who are learning English to check us out. Or you could follow us on Instagram. Just search for Culips English and you'll be able to find us there. You could also subscribe to Culips on your favourite podcast app and leave us a positive review or finally, you could become a Culips member. And for all the details and information about the awesome benefits you get when you're a member, you know where to go, just visit [Culips.com](https://www.culips.com).

**Anna:** We'll be back very, very soon with another episode and we'll talk to you all again then. Bye, bye.

**Andrew:** Bye, everyone.

## Detailed Explanations

### A fine line between [X and Y] Idiom

A **fine line between [X and Y]** means there is little difference between two things. The X and Y in the expression represents two objects or things. For example, there's a **fine line between a frown and a grimace**. Or X and Y can represent ideas or concepts. Usually, one of the things is good in the comparison, and the other thing is bad.

The **fine line between** them shows that one could easily become the other. In the case of the frown and the grimace, the frown shows disapproval or displeasure, but it's not the worst expression. A grimace however expresses disgust or pain, so it is worse than a frown. A frown can easily become a grimace, depending on the actions of the person causing the expression.

In this episode, Anna says "there's a **fine line between a good number of quotes and a bad number of quotes**." She means that having a lot of inspirational quotes can be a good thing, but having too many is bad, and it's very easy to accidentally collect too many quotes.

Here are a couple more examples with **fine line between [X and Y]**:

**Zahra:** How is your little boy? Is he walking?

**Constance:** He is! And he knows how to get past the baby gate we have on the stairs now too.

**Zahra:** Oh, that must be scary.

**Constance:** It really is. Shawn and I have caught him before he fell down the stairs so many times. As a parent, I know that there is a **fine line between panic and caution**. But I'd really like to give in to my panic and wrap him in cushions so that he never gets hurt.

**Zahra:** I understand. Unfortunately, we can't do that with our kids, or they'll never learn how to be careful.

**Reuben:** The comedian tonight wasn't as funny as I thought he'd be.

**Austin:** I agree. There's a **fine line between humour and insults**, and it feels like he crossed that line with all of his jokes.

## In line with Idiom

**In line with** means that two things are similar, in agreement with each other, or at the same level as something. When one thing is **in line with** another thing, those two things match (like a shirt matches a pair of pants), they might even be the same (like a pair of socks). These “things” can be physical things, concepts, ideas, and even feelings.

For example, if you and a friend are talking about a trip, and you’re sharing ideas that both of you like, you could say that your ideas are **in line with** each other’s. You’re in agreement. In this episode, Andrew and Anna talk about quotes from Albert Einstein and Alfred Lord Tennyson. Andrew says Tennyson’s quote “is kind of **in line with** that Einstein quote.” He means that both quotes are similar.

Here are a couple more examples with **in line with**:

**Honoka:** Okay, now that we’ve picked out the paint colour for your living room, it’s time to pick your curtains. I have this beautiful blue fabric here, that’ll look great. And then this red one, that kind of shimmers in the light, see?

**Naomi:** Oh! Well, both are really lovely. It’s a tough choice, but I think the red one is more **in line with** what I want for the room.

**Honoka:** Great choice! I agree. It’s warm and that shimmer gives it that added character that’ll really lighten up the room.

**Jim:** Now that you’ve seen how we interview potential new employees, do you have any questions about how the interview is conducted?

**Patricia:** I was wondering why we ask so many questions about their thoughts on those example situations, where the customer is rude or when a complaint is received. Won’t those situations be handled by their manager?

**Jim:** Yes, you’re right. The manager will handle those types of situations. However, we need to know if their values are **in line with** our company values. Plus, sometimes a manager isn’t available right away, so employees may need to handle the situation until a manager can be found.

## To spin Verb

**To spin [something]** means to present information or tell a story in a way that makes it seem better (or worse) than it actually is. You can **spin** a tale, **spin** the statistics, **spin** a story, and more. Politicians, marketers, and advertisers all **spin** information to achieve their goals (election, sales, popularity, etc.). In this episode, Anna talks about a Dr. Seuss quote she believes is important. She says: "I think it's a nice way to **spin** it." Thinking about the good that happened is a nice way to think about a situation that might be unpleasant.

You might also hear native English speakers using this definition of spin as a noun. Someone might put a positive **spin** on a situation, or you might hear different **spins** on an issue. These are special points of views or interpretations created to make a situation or issue seem better (or worse) than it actually is.

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

**Eric:** Jake's not with you today?

**Beatrice:** Nope. I'm here by myself.

**Eric:** Let me guess, he **spun** a story about eating something bad at lunch and he got food poisoning, so he needs to stay home to rest and recover?

**Beatrice:** Wait. How did you know?

**Eric:** He told me the same thing when I invited him out to my launch party a few years ago. He really hates coming to this kind of party. I think there are just too many people.

**Beatrice:** Huh, I didn't know that. Well, I'll let him know he can just say no next time. I mean, I'm fine attending on my own!

**Song:** Wow. That news report was... wrong. Right?

**Jay:** It wasn't wrong, exactly. They did have the right facts and numbers, based on the report I read about the situation at work today. It does feel like they decided to **spin** it very differently from the press release my company gave them though.

**Jay:** Is this bad? Will your job be okay?

**Song:** Oh, yeah. We'll be fine. The media has tried to make my company sound like the bad guys before and we survived the bad press. I'm sure it'll be the same this time too.

## Through the lens of Idiom

**Through the lens of [something]** means to see a situation, idea, concept or thought from a specific perspective or point of view. In this episode, Andrew says “I think about quotes through the lens of language learning.” This means that Andrew decides whether a quote is inspirational based on how it relates to language learning.

In photography, through the lens means to use only the camera lens to take a photo. The lens itself determines the colour, focus, light balance, etc., without any technology modifying the image. So, seeing a situation through the lens of something means understanding it from only that new perspective. No outside influences change the result or conclusion you develop.

Here are a couple more examples with **through the lens of**:

**Julie:** Have you heard from Eloise lately? I’ve been trying to reach out to see if she needs anything.

**Masami:** No, I haven’t spoken to her since the funeral. I think she just needs some space right now to deal with her loss.

**Julie:** I know. Her and her grandmother were so close. But I’m worried about her. I remember how I felt after my grandpa died, and I know how hard it can be. Everything is distorted **through the lens of** grief.

**Masami:** Well, why don’t we go for a visit? We can check in on her and maybe offer to do some chores if she has any that need doing.

**Julie:** Yeah, I’d like that. Thanks for understanding.

**Leonard:** These politicians, man. They keep talking about this one issue as if it’s the only issue that matters. Why can’t they talk about fixing up the roads and stuff?

**Yuko:** Well, if you look at it **through the lens of** politics, then this issue is the most important, because it’s the one that’s most likely to get them a lot of votes. Plus, it’s the one that they can most likely do something about.

**Leonard:** So you think fixing roads is hard to do?

**Yuko:** There are a lot of roads in the country, Leonard. Plus, I think road maintenance is done by the individual cities, not the national government.



## Rusty Adjective

**Rusty**, when describing skills or knowledge, means not as good as it once was due to lack of practice. For example, Anna says “if you’re getting back into English, maybe you’re a little bit **rusty**.” Here, Anna means that your English knowledge might not be as good as it once was because you haven’t been practicing. Likewise, someone who played soccer when they were younger, but hasn’t played since then, might say “my soccer skills are **rusty**.” Luckily, **rusty** skills are usually easy to get back. You just have to practice and remove the “rust”.

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

**Marvin:** How did the marathon go yesterday? Did you finish in the time you wanted?

**Gemma:** Ugh, no. I totally messed up my pacing and ran too fast in the beginning. I was exhausted halfway through and wasn’t even sure I’d be able to finish!

**Marvin:** Well, it was your first race in three years so it makes sense that your strategy would be a bit **rusty**. Your next one is in a month, right? So you just gotta practice!

**Gemma:** You’re right. But you know, I totally wish I hadn’t signed up for next month’s marathon. I think I’m getting too old for this.

**Lucky:** Whoa, what’s with all those typos? If I’d known you were this bad at typing, I wouldn’t have asked you to write while I drive.

**Jeff:** Yeah, sorry. My typing is a little **rusty**. It’s been a while since I had to transcribe on my phone. Plus the phone keyboard is so small! Why do they make them so small?

**Lucky:** Well, they have to fit on the phone screen, you know. Maybe you should get a bigger phone.

**Jeff:** But then it’d be too big for my hands... wait, you know what? That’s not important. I’ll fix up these typos before I send the document to you, okay? Now, focus on driving.

## To boil [something] down

Phrasal verb

**To boil [something] down** means to summarize, condense, or simplify it to its most basic parts. The something might be information, a story, a report, or any complex situation or problem. In this episode, Andrew says “a lot of these quotes ... actually **boil down to** very simple ideas.” This means that the quotes have a simple message when you summarize them to their most basic parts.

When you **boil [something] down**, the goal is to include all the important information, without the unnecessary details. The final summary contains only the essential points and information. It's like when you boil a sauce to thicken it. You remove the excess water that isn't necessary, so that only the flavour remains.

Here are a couple more examples with **boil [something] down**:

**Nate:** Is that a new book? I see you with a different book like, almost every day.

**Rina:** Huh? Oh, yeah. I read really fast.

**Nate:** Are they good books at least?

**Rina:** Well, I guess it depends on what you think is good. For the books I've been reading lately, I could **boil the plots down** to a single sentence: simple, easy stories about good versus evil that help me escape into a fantasy world.

**Nate:** Nothing wrong with that. If they take you where you want to go, then they're good books.

**Rina:** Exactly! I'm glad you understand.

**Pom:** Where do you want to go for dinner?

**Isla:** I don't care. Anywhere is fine.

**Pom:** That's not exactly helpful when it comes to making a decision you know.

**Isla:** Ugh, fine. Gimme a few minutes and I'll **boil the choices down** to three, but you're going to have to pick from those options.

**Pom:** That works for me.

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## Quiz

- 1. Which of the following means to tell a story to make it seem better or worse than it actually is?**
  - a) Twirl a story
  - b) Spin a story
  - c) Rotate a story
  - d) Swing a story
  
- 2. Your friend claims his dancing skills are rusty. What does he mean?**
  - a) He's an excellent dancer
  - b) He dances only when there's rust on his clothes
  - c) He can't dance because he's covered in rust
  - d) He's not as good at dancing as he once was
  
- 3. Which of the following means to summarize information to its main points?**
  - a) Boil it down
  - b) Burn it down
  - c) Boil it up
  - d) Burn it up
  
- 4. Your teacher says that your grade is in line with the class average. What does she mean?**
  - a) Your grade is a lot worse than the class average
  - b) Your grade is a lot better than the class average
  - c) Your grade is the same as the class average
  - d) You have a failing grade
  
- 5. Which of the following means to see a situation from a specific point of view?**
  - a) Through the looking glass
  - b) Through the lens
  - c) Through the window
  - d) Through the spyglass

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## Writing and Discussion Questions

1. What are some of your favorite quotes? Introduce them and discuss why they are important to you.
2. Which of the following quotes mentioned in this episode are in line with your current situation, thoughts, or feelings?
3. Andrew mentioned that he interprets many quotes through the lens of language learning. What lens do you interpret quotes through?
4. Do you have a rusty skill? What is it and why did it become rusty?
5. Take a moment to boil down this episode and summarize what it's about in a short speech or paragraph.

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## Quiz Answers

1.b    2.d    3.a    4.c    5.b

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### Episode credits

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