

Catch Word #249 – A gigantic slap in the face

Episode description

Would you like to receive a slap in the face? Probably not! However, the expression a slap in the face isn't a physical thing, it's more of an insult. In this Catch Word episode, you'll learn all about it as Andrew and Suzanne talk about the various ways of using the expressions **a slap in the face** and **a slap on the wrist**. Take a listen and learn how to use these two natural English expressions.

Catch Word is the Culips vocabulary series. By studying with Catch Word, you will be able to grow your English vocabulary and learn idioms, expressions, and phrasal verbs that will make you sound like an English native speaker. In this episode, you will learn what **a slap in the face** and **a slap on the wrist** mean. Additionally, you will learn the meaning of **to ghost [someone]** and **to get riled up**.

Fun fact

In this episode, our hosts talk about an example where one friend leaves dinner without paying for their food. If both of them did that, the situation would be called a dine and dash. Have you ever heard of that? A dine and dash is when you eat your food and then dash, or run, out of the restaurant without paying.

Expressions included in the study guide

- A slap in the face
- A slap on the wrist
- To ghost [someone]
- To get riled up
- A grant
- A phase



Transcript

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.

Andrew: Hello everyone, my name is Andrew.

Suzanne: Hey, guys. I'm Suzanne.

Andrew: And this is the Culips English Podcast.

Hello there, everyone. Welcome back to Culips. You are listening to Catch Word which is the series where we teach you idioms, phrasal verbs and expressions that will help improve your English listening and speaking and in this episode, we'll teach you two idiomatic expressions that look similar, but actually have completely different meanings. Those two expressions are, **a slap in the face**, and **a slap on the wrist**. And to help me teach this lesson, I'm joined by my cohost, Suzanne. Hey there, Suzanne.

Suzanne: Hey, Andrew. Hey, guys. Hey, everyone. So yeah, we're gonna kick this episode off with a shout out, actually. So one of our listeners from Saudi Arabia, Refaa Al-sharif, I hope I said that correctly please let me know if I didn't, left us a five-star rating and a positive review on Apple Podcasts. And Refaa wrote "Great! five stars. You make me better in the English language day by day. Thank you so much." Fire emoji, fire emoji. We love that. That means we are on fire.

Andrew: It's a very hot review, Suzanne.

Suzanne: Hot review. This podcasts on fire. And then so Refaa Al-sharif via Apple Podcasts in Saudi Arabia. So thank you so, so much for that excellent review. Shout out to you.

Andrew: Yes, thank you very much, Refaa, and listeners if you'd like to get a shout out in an upcoming Culips episode, then please leave us a five-star rating and a positive review on Apple Podcasts or whatever platform you use to listen to us because doing this will just help more English learners from around the world learn English with us. We're gonna get started in just a moment. But before we do everyone, I have to let you know that there's a transcript and study guide for this episode that's available for all Culips members. Following along with the guide, while you listen to us is the best way to study and improve your English with Culips. And we highly recommend it. Plus, when you become a Culips member, you'll get access to lots of special bonuses like invitations to our monthly live streams, access to our members only series, the Fluency Files and more. So to sign up, become a member and get the study guide and transcript, just visit Culips.com.

All right Suzanne, so let's get started with today's lesson. And as I mentioned at the top of the show, the two expressions that we are studying today look similar. They both have the word slap in them, a slap in the face and a slap on the wrist. They also have a body part in them, right? Face and wrist. However, that is where the similarities end because they actually have very different meanings. And this is a kind of different focus than we usually have here on Catch Word because usually on Catch Word we teach everyone about two idioms that have a similar meaning or that you can use them in a similar situation. But today's focus is different, the expressions look the same. And you might think that they're related. But actually, they're very, very different. So why don't we start with the first expression for today, which is, a slap in the face, a slap in the face. Now maybe the first thing we should mention Suzanne, is what this word slap means. Could you tell everyone what a slap is?

Suzanne: Well, the literal act of a slap is, right, like taking your open hand and smacking it or hitting. Usually a slap is on like a cheek or face, right? Like in a movie you might see that somebody how could you and you, bam, slap them right there in the face.

Andrew: It's usually like face cheek or a butt cheek. Those are usually the two places that gets slapped. If you think about like football players or something, right? When they congratulate each other they slap each other on the butt.

Suzanne: Yeah, you can also slap a high five right like each other's hands.

Andrew: Right. So it's really just when you hit someone with an open hand instead of a closed fist.

Suzanne: Exactly, exactly.

Andrew: OK, so that is what the literal meaning of this expression is. But actually, we use it idiomatically and it has a very different meaning. So what does it mean idiomatically this expression, a slap in the face?

Suzanne: It's usually used in reference to something that's very insulting. But it's not necessarily, you know, an insult that someone might say, on the street, maybe like a stranger or somebody like that. A slap in the face is usually an insult or a form of disrespect that's done by someone that you might know. Or that there is a little bit of a relationship or history with, because in order for you to feel that deep disrespect or hurt, you kind of need to have that history with that person, right? So like, if someone just cuts you off in traffic, that's not a slap in the face. That's just, you know, oh, man, that wasn't nice, right? But a slap in the face is usually when you think this person is going to be truthful or respectful and then suddenly, they aren't. And they catch you by surprise and they slap you right in the face with disrespect.

Andrew: Yeah, that was a very good definition there, Suzanne. So a slap in the face. If somebody cuts in line while you're trying to get onto the subway, and they sneak in onto

the subway in front of you, you know, that's not really a slap in the face, right? Is that a disrespectful thing that that person did? Yeah. But you don't really have a relationship with them. And you'll forget about it after just a moment. It won't like haunt you for a long time and make you feel really upset for days and days after. But Suzanne, could you give us an example? Maybe you could use me and you because we have a long relationship, right? We've been friends for a while. So maybe this would be the perfect context to give a slap in the face example.

Suzanne: I think if we're, maybe you and I went to dinner, and I just got up and like, left, and I didn't leave you any money. And I'm like, OK, bye. And you're like, Sue, you got to help pay the bill, you know, and I just leave, and I don't leave you any money, or any knowledge of how I'm going to pay and share the cost with you. Well, that's kind of a slap in the face, right? It's like, I suddenly just get up and go bye and I leave and it's like, what? Oh, I'm paying for dinner? I didn't know that. That could be a slap in the face.

Andrew: Yeah, Suzanne, I think that is a perfect example. If we went for dinner, and then suddenly, you know, after dinner, maybe you ate a delicious meal. And we had a good time together. But then you just stood up and left and **ghosted me** at the end of the meal, I'd feel kind of disrespected. Like, were you just using me for free food? Like that would be a slap in the face, right? You didn't physically smack me and slap me in the face. But the lingering feeling is kind of the same. I feel like you almost just slapped me in the face like I feel hurt and upset. And that is why we use this expression to talk about this specific situation.

Suzanne: Yes, I'm sorry. I would never do that to you, Andrew.

Andrew: I know. I know, of course, Suzanne, this is just an example. Speaking of examples, why don't we listen to our first dialogue example with this expression, a slap in the face?

Suzanne: Sounds good. Let's go.

Friend 1:	So, I got some bad news from my boss today, unfortunately.
Friend 2:	Oh, no. What did she say?
Friend 2:	Well, apparently our offices sales are down over 25% from last year. And because of that the company won't be giving out a year-end bonus this year.
Friend 1:	But aren't your sales numbers up this year?
Friend 2:	Yeah, they are. And that's what makes this such a slap in the face. I've been working my butt off and all I get as a reward is a smaller paycheck.

Friend 1: What a joke. That stinks.

Andrew: So in this example, we heard about a guy who feels like he just got slapped in the face. And that is because his company won't be giving him a year-end bonus even though he's performing better than ever, his sales numbers are up, he's performing really well in his job. And, you know, when your company decides to not pay you money that you're expecting, and you're working hard for them, you know, you wouldn't feel very good in that situation, you would feel disrespected, you would feel upset. And with your company, you have this relationship, right? It's an employee, employer relationship, but it's still there. And if your employer disrespects you like that, it can only feel like a slap in the face. You can only feel upset and disrespected.

Suzanne: Yeah, that is a slap in the face from that boss. What an awful thing to do. OK, so now let's listen to example number two.

Andrew: Perfect, let's do it.

Friend 1: Hey, did you hear about the government's new decision?

Friend 2: No. What did they announce?

Friend 1: They'll be cutting **grants** for artists by 50% next year.

Friend 2: What? That's horrible.

Friend 1: I understand that the economy is struggling right now, but feels like a gigantic slap in the face for all the artists in our community.

Friend 2: Is there anything we can do about it?

Friend 1: The best thing you can do is email your local representative and tell them that funding the arts is a priority for you, and you expect to see it restored in the next budget.

Friend 2: I'll definitely do that.

Suzanne: So in this example, we have kind of a slap in the face from the government, right? From this entity, from this larger institution. And these two friends or two people are talking about how the government is just cutting funding to the arts by 50%. So it's a huge cut in their funding. And that it just seems at this time, a big slap in the face. Like they are just saying we don't like the arts, right? Or we don't care about the arts, just a big, disrespectful kind of act. And so they're **getting riled up** to do something about it.

Andrew: Yeah, exactly. So Suzanne, this is a little bit of a difficult example, I think there are a couple of things that we could explain in a bit more detail. The first one is cutting

grants. Now a grant is almost like a scholarship for not for students who are attending school, but it's usually money that the government gives to citizens to do something. It's like an investment, you could get a grant, if you are a scientist to do some kind of research, you get a grant if you're an artist to create something. And in Canada, there are lots of these types of grants that artists can apply to. And so in this example, these two characters were talking about this cut that the government decided to do to the grants for artists and the artists in the town, they really felt like this was a slap in the face, not just a slap in the face, but a gigantic slap in the face. So it's very disrespectful, they feel very upset, and that the government doesn't really appreciate what they do for their community as artists.

Suzanne: I feel like both of these examples, example one and two, both show that a slap in the face also can constitute or include the element of working hard for something, and then someone else or an outside entity or an outside force totally wiping that away, right? Or taking that away from the person. And I think that's similar to what we said earlier about there being a history, you know, either with a friend, or maybe history with a company, right? Of working hard putting in effort, and then it just doesn't happen because they took something away or didn't appreciate all of the work that you put in. So yeah, I think that really shows that in both of these examples.

Andrew: Yeah, it's an excellent point. It's almost like there is a deep feeling of unfairness involved, right? When you really feel like something is unfair. You worked hard for that bonus, but then you don't get it. You are an outstanding artist in the community, and you believe in the arts, and then suddenly the government just says that's not a priority for this country or for this city, and then they take it away and you feel that's very unfair. It's this exact kind of situation where we would say that that feeling is a slap in the face. Now, Suzanne, there's one more thing we should mention before we move on to our second expression for today. And that is the preposition in, because I think a lot of our listeners will be confused. Why is it a slap in the face? Maybe logically, it feels like it should be a slap on the face, right? But that is just one of the weird things about English and I would encourage our listeners not to get too caught up with this point. OK, if you try to think too deeply about prepositions, I think it can actually be hurtful. I know logically, for me, too, it makes sense to think about getting slapped on the face, but it's just one of those collocations, it's one of those words that go with another word. When we're talking about face, it's usually in this situation, in. Punched you in the face, slap you in the face, even though it feels logically like it should be on, we use in. Now keep that in mind and you'll have no problems with this expression. And I think now we can move on to expression number two, which is, a slap on the wrist, a slap on the wrist. We're not talking about the face anymore. Now we are talking about the wrist, which is the area that connects your arm and your hand. Suzanne, usually where you wear a watch or a bracelet, right?

Suzanne: Yep, exactly. And you can take your pulse.

Andrew: Exactly, yes. So a slap on the wrist has a very different meaning than a slap in the face, right? Could you explain what a slap on the wrist means?

Suzanne: Yeah. So it's really used when it's kind of a light punishment, a gentle punishment, maybe more like a warning than a punishment, really. And it's like a lighter slap. It's not quite the gigantic slap that we talked about in the first expression. So yeah, it's a small, light punishment, that doesn't really fit the seriousness of the crime or offense.

Andrew: Exactly. So let's just step back for a moment what a slap on the wrist is then is a kind of punishment, a punishment for doing something wrong, right? So if you break the law, then you usually have to get a punishment for that, right? You can't just break the law and not receive no punishment at all. Maybe it's a fine. Maybe it's community service, maybe you have to go to jail or prison, there's some kind of punishment. Or if you break a rule, maybe at school or at your office, you don't follow the rules, then there is some kind of punishment, maybe it is a detention or going to the principal's office or something like that, right? So this is what a slap on the wrist is it's talking about this kind of punishment that you receive for doing something wrong. But it's a very, very, very light, easy punishment. So maybe we'll take the example of drunk driving Suzanne, drunk driving a very serious offence, right? And if you were driving drunk and you got caught by the police, we would expect that the punishment would be very severe and very serious. Maybe you would get your driver's license taken away from you. Maybe you would never be allowed to drive again. Maybe you would have to go to jail or do months and months of community service. Like that's a serious crime, there should be a serious punishment, a serious consequence. But maybe for some reason, you didn't receive a punishment like that. And all you had to do was not drive for three days. And then you could drive again and everything was fine. Well, that doesn't seem like it matches up, right? A serious crime, like drunk driving should have a serious punishment. And if it doesn't, and instead you get a very light punishment, or almost just like a warning, hardly any punishment at all. Then that specific situation is what we say is a slap on the wrist.

Suzanne: Exactly. It's just a little oh, it's OK. Tap, tap, tap, you can go, you can go. You can pass.

Andrew: All right, so listeners if you keep this meaning in mind, that a slap on the wrist is a very light punishment that doesn't match the crime or the offense that someone committed, then you'll be able to understand the next conversation examples that we're going to listen to right now very, very easily. So Suzanne, why don't we listen to conversation example number one, right now?

Friend 1: My car was broken into last night.

Friend 2: What? Oh, that's horrible. Did you call the cops?

Friend 1: Yeah, I filed a report. And they actually caught the person who did it.

Friend 2: Did you press charges?

- Friend 1:** I did. But the person who broke into the car was only 15. So they'll just get a slap on the wrist.
- Friend 2:** What about your car? Is it OK?
- Friend 1:** Yeah, thankfully, nothing was missing. And there's no damage to the car.
- Friend 2:** Oh, phew.

Andrew: So in this example, we heard about a person who broke into a car. But because that person was only 15 years old, they're only going to get a slap on the wrist, they're not going to get a very severe punishment for that crime. And I guess this is probably different in every country around the world, Suzanne, maybe some of our listeners could tell us about their country where they're from, but at least in Canada, and I think in the United States as well, juvenile offenders is what we call them, young people who commit crimes, usually under the age of 18, they receive a much lighter punishment than an adult would. I think that makes sense, you know, they're not as fully developed. And sometimes this feels very unfair, right? Sometimes it's makes us very angry, I can imagine if my car was broken into, and then the perpetrator, the person who committed the crime, just got a slap on the wrist and kind of like a warning, no real punishment at all, because they were young. Maybe that would feel unfair. I think probably overall, this is a good thing. But like I said, it might be different country by country and listeners, let us know what it's like in your country. But I think this is the perfect situation to use this expression, a slap on the wrist, because that criminal didn't really get a severe punishment, just because they are a minor, and they're very young.

Suzanne: It is the same in the US as well. I think they are treated like a minor. And they get a minor, a punishment.

Andrew: A minor punishment, usually maybe a slap on the wrist to start a kind of warning. I mean, it's not like nothing happens. There has to be some kind of process. Usually they go to court, and maybe they have to do some volunteer or community service. But yeah, many minors don't get punished too severely for the first offense. And then maybe later if the behavior isn't fixed, then things can get more serious. But we won't focus on that for now Suzanne, instead, what we will focus on is another usage example. So let's take a listen to that example using this expression, a slap on the wrist now.

- Friend 1:** Hey, what kind of a kid were you when you were in high school?
- Friend 2:** Me in high school? When I was a pretty good kid, didn't get into too much trouble.
- Friend 1:** What's the worst thing you did?

Friend 2: I went through a shoplifting **phase**. Believe it or not.

Friend 1: Really?

Friend 2: Yeah, I once got caught stealing cheese from a grocery store.

Friend 1: No way. Did you get in trouble?

Friend 2: Nah. Luckily, I just got a slap on the wrist. But it scared me enough that I stopped.

Friend 1: I guess you learned your lesson.

Friend 2: Yeah, thankfully, that phase didn't last too long.

Suzanne: Andrew, I can't imagine you stealing things.

Andrew: No, Suzanne, this is not a story about me. But it is actually a reference to one of my friends. I do have a friend that got caught for stealing cheese from a grocery store.

Suzanne: Well, this is a great example. Again, in this example, the person was a kid, right? Was a juvenile.

Andrew: A high school student.

Suzanne: A high school student, so they were under 18. And, you know, if this is based on your friend, I'm sure they were happy to just get a slap on the wrist and not have to do any kind of hard time. But that's really similar to the first example where the punishment here was reduced. So maybe they just got, you know, a warning, a talking to, or a lecture from the authorities not to do it again, which would be considered a slap on the wrist just like "Hey, don't do this again OK? Because we got our eye on you."

Andrew: Yeah, kind of like the maybe the manager took the student aside and was like, we know you stole the cheese, give it back to us. We're not gonna call the cops this time, but just don't come back to the store ever again, right? So there's not really any, like lasting repercussion to the shoplifting act. And that's exactly why we can call it a slap on the wrist.

Suzanne: Yep, exactly. I think too, when you are a kid, or when you have kids, you know all about slap on the wrist kind of things. You know, I just want to say quickly, an example of this literal example of a slap on the wrist is, when I was little, my grandparents owned a bakery in Brooklyn. And it was so yummy all of the food and the pastries and breads and things. And I would sometimes want to reach into the case, and pull out a delicious treat, like a cannoli or a cookie. And my grandmother would slap me literally on the wrist, because she would be like, nope, you know, that's for the customers. And she would slap

me on the wrist. And I think it's, you know, maybe a little shocking, a slap on the wrist figuratively and literally, but it is just a minor, tiny little punishment. So something to remember.

Andrew: Yeah, it's pretty much like the smallest punishment that you could give somebody physically, right? Like, if you just kind of tap them slap them on the wrist. It's not like getting slapped in the face or you know, punched or something like that, it's very light. And yeah, that's a great example of how you received a kind of light punishment literally back in the day, Suzanne. There's one more thing that I wanted to focus on, from this conversation example about the cheese shoplifter before we move on and wrap this episode up. And that is that they talk about a phase, going through a phase, right? He said, "I went through a shoplifting phase." And at the end of the conversation, thankfully, that phase didn't last too long. And this is a word that we use to talk about stages of development when you're growing up, right? Could you maybe tell us some other phases that young people might go through on their way to adulthood?

Suzanne: Yeah, I mean, I remember, my sister went through a phase where she had an imaginary friend, she talked to an imaginary friend.

Andrew: Classic.

Suzanne: Or maybe you could have a phase where you really like dinosaurs, right? And you're obsessed with like, a colour or a dinosaur, or, you know, a cartoon, or a TV show or something. You can maybe be into a kind of music or a band. And you really just want to listen to that music all the time 24/7 you want to go see their concerts and wear their T-shirts. And this is kind of what we would call in English as going through a phase because you start, you go through it, and then it ends at some point, maybe you will still continue to listen to that music, for example, or like that music. But you're not going to be obsessed with it to the extent that you were during that time in your life, during that phase.

Andrew: Yeah, we also have the expression a rebellious phase.

Suzanne: Oh, yeah.

Andrew: Which we use to describe teenagers who are rebelling against their parents and not listening to their parents and, you know, doing the opposite, really, of what their parents want them to do. I'm sure it causes a lot of problems for the parents of teenagers. But we call it a phase because it doesn't last forever, right? Usually, it's temporary behavior that maybe lasts for like, six months or a year or something. And then eventually, the youngster develops enough, grows out of it and behaves in a different way in the future.

Suzanne: I think we could do a whole podcast episode on phases, don't you think, Andrew?

Andrew: Yeah, that's a great idea, but we'll save it for an upcoming episode. So listeners stay tuned for that. We're going to wrap things up here for today, but before we do, we should review what we covered in this lesson. So we took a deep look at two expressions that on the surface seem very similar, but the meaning is actually quite different. The first expression was, a slap in the face. And we use this expression, when we are talking about an action that somebody or some organization like a big business or the government does, that really makes you feel disrespected, and upset, and that life isn't really fair at all. And then our second key expression was, a slap on the wrist. And this is an expression that we use to talk about a punishment that somebody receives that is very light, very easy, and doesn't really match the seriousness of the crime. So if somebody does something illegal, and then doesn't really get punished at all for that crime, then we'd say it's a slap on the wrist.

Well, that brings us to the end of this episode, everyone, thank you for listening. We hope you learned a lot with us here today. If you want to get the study guide and transcript for this episode, then just visit our website Culips.com. That's the place where you can sign up, become a Culips member and get unlimited access to the transcripts and study guides for all of our episodes. This is a question that I've been asked a few times recently, Suzanne, when I become a member, do I only get access to the new episodes? And the answer is no. When you become a member, you get access to our entire library, from the start when we began Culips all the way to the present and throughout the duration of your membership.

Suzanne: That's a huge amount of learning materials, right? That's a huge library chock full of learning materials.

Andrew: Hours and hours and hundreds of episodes. It's a great resource for getting serious about improving your English. So becoming a Culips member is a great way to support us. But it's not the only way. You can also support us by following us on social media. We're on YouTube and Instagram. Those are the best places to follow us. But we're also on Twitter and Facebook as well. You could also tell your friends who are learning English to check out the Culips English Podcast or you could leave us a five-star rating and a nice review on Apple Podcasts or your favourite podcast app.

Suzanne: Yeah, and if you want to get in touch with us, if you have questions, ideas for new episodes, you can contact us via email at contact@culips.com. We love hearing from you.

Andrew: We'll be back soon with another brand new episode and we'll talk to you then take care and see ya.

Suzanne: Bye, guys.

Detailed Explanations

A slap in the face

Phrase

The first key expression from this episode is **a slap in the face**. **A slap in the face** is the feeling you have when you feel insulted or disrespected, usually by someone or some organization you have a relationship with.

For example, if you worked hard for a company for many years, but then were suddenly fired and your boss gave you no explanation about why you were fired, then you would feel like that is **a slap in the face**. Or if a close friend borrowed some money, but then never paid you back, that could be considered **a slap in the face**.

A slap in the face does not mean that you have been physically hit in the face. However, the hurt emotional feeling you have feels as if you have been physically hurt.

Here are a couple more examples with **a slap in the face**:

Jake:	I was wondering. Are you still going out with Frank?
Sally:	No, we broke up.
Jake:	Oh, no. That's too bad. What happened?
Sally:	Well, we made plans to be together for my family reunion, but he cancelled. That was a huge slap in the face . Then he cancelled on me for my birthday party. That was it for me, so I broke it off with him.
Jake:	Good decision. That's not right.

Ian:	So did you finally get that promotion?
Luke:	No.
Ian:	What? You told me your boss was surely going to give it to you.
Luke:	I know. But at the last minute, he changed his mind. What a slap in the face . Needless to say, I've started looking for another job.

A slap on the wrist

Phrase

A slap on the wrist is a light punishment, one that often doesn't match the seriousness of the crime or offense. It is also a lighter punishment than expected. For example, when a university student cheats on a final exam, the usual punishment is to get an F in that class. However, if a cheating student was caught by the professor and instead of getting an F was only warned not to cheat again in the future, that would be **a slap on the wrist**. The punishment is much lighter than expected.

This expression comes from the physical act of slapping someone on the wrist as a punishment. Compared to other forms of corporal punishment (like being hit with a stick or being whipped) a slap on the wrist is extremely gentle.

So, when someone receives a punishment that seems too light and doesn't match the seriousness of the crime or offense committed, we can call it **a slap on the wrist**.

Here are a couple more examples with **a slap on the wrist**:

Hillary:	Do you remember that woman who was caught drinking and driving in our neighbourhood last month?
Joanie:	Yeah.
Hillary:	The court only gave her a \$75 fine.
Joanie:	What? That's only a slap on the wrist .
Hillary:	I know.
Joanie:	She deserves a way bigger punishment than that.

Truman:	What's the worst thing you did when you were a teenager?
David:	Nothing crazy. Some friends and I got caught in a public park at 2 a.m. once. As you know, nobody is allowed to be in a public park past 10 o'clock.
Truman:	So what happened?
David:	A slap on the wrist , basically. The security officer gave us a warning. That's all.
Truman:	Wow, you were pretty lucky.

To ghost [someone] Verb

In this episode, our hosts speak about a situation where one friend suddenly leaves the restaurant and **ghosts the other friend**. **To ghost [someone]** is to suddenly disappear without leaving any trace of yourself. A classic example of this is when someone you are dating suddenly changes their number and address and you cannot contact them at all. It's as if that person turned into a ghost.

Another example is when someone runs away while on a date. Maybe in the middle of dinner, that person excuses themselves to go to the bathroom, but then never returns back to the dinner table and instead just runs away without saying anything. In this situation, the person has **ghosted their date**. **To ghost [someone]** can also mean that someone you know is entirely unreachable forever and has never given you a reason why.

So, when someone **ghosts [someone]**, they suddenly run away and disappear without giving any notice or reason why. Here are a couple more examples with **to ghost [someone]**:

Monty: I saw Rachel the other day. She really seemed unhappy. What's up?
Jin: Oh. Do you remember the guy she was dating?
Monty: Yeah.
Jin: He straight-up **ghosted her**.
Monty: What?
Jin: Yeah. She tried calling him, but there was no answer. She showed up at his apartment, but there was no one there.

Mandeep: Hey, are you still in contact with Peter?
Nathan: No.
Mandeep: Oh, that's too bad. What happened?
Nathan: I don't know. He kind of **ghosted me**, I think. He hasn't answered any of my texts or emails.
Mandeep: He did the same to me too!

To get riled up

Phrasal verb

In the second example dialogue of this episode, two friends are upset about the government's plan to cut grants for artists. Suzanne explains that the friends are **getting riled up**. **To get riled up** means to get very agitated and upset about something.

There are two different causes for **getting riled up**. For one, something else can **rile you up**. That means something made you angry. You can also **rile yourself up**. That means you are thinking about something, and by thinking about it, you are making yourself angry.

Here are a couple more examples with **to get riled up**:

Daniel:	How was your evening yesterday?
Julia:	Well, George started talking about politics again.
Daniel:	And?
Julia:	He knows it always gets me riled up because I can't stand talking about politics. I think he's just trying to make me angry.
Daniel:	What did you do?
Julia:	I quickly changed the subject of course. I think I should have a talk with him about it.

Martha:	You look tired. Are you OK?
Frances:	Oh, I couldn't sleep last night.
Martha:	How come?
Frances:	I stayed up late last night watching a documentary on pollution. I got so riled up that I started writing an email to our member of parliament. I want her to look into the pollution that is happening in our province.

A grant

Noun

The second example dialogue in this episode is about government **grants**. A **grant** is money that is given to someone to do something. For example, researchers at universities often depend on **grants** to conduct their research. The professors are given money from the government or an organization, and with that money, they do research. The money the professors receive is called **a grant**.

The most common verbs associated with grant are to cut, to apply for, to give, to get, and to win. As seen in the example dialogue, the government planned to cut **grants** by 50%. However, usually before receiving a **grant**, you need to apply for a **grant**. If your application is successful, then an organization will give you a grant. As a result, you get or win the grant.

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

Brian:	Hey! I've got great news.
Craig:	Did you win the lottery?
Brian:	Ha! Ha! Almost. Do you remember the project I've been working on at the university?
Craig:	Yes.
Brian:	Well, the board of directors has decided to give us an additional grant because of the good work we've been doing.
Craig:	That's amazing! Good job.

Crissy:	Do you know if the city is going to have the Shakespeare festival this year?
Mona:	Oh, I have news about that. The festival is usually paid for by grants from a local publishing company. But that company decided not to provide the money this year.
Crissy:	So, there won't be a festival?
Mona:	That's right.
Crissy:	That's too bad. That festival is the highlight of the summer.

A phase

Noun

A phase is a period of time in someone's life when they acted or behaved in a way that they no longer do. For example, if you listened to jazz music a lot in your 20s but no longer do to the same extent, you can call that your **jazz music phase**.

In this episode, Suzanne and Andrew mention various **phases** someone can have. Suzanne says that her sister had **a phase** where she talked to an imaginary friend. Andrew mentions the rebellious **phase** teenagers often have.

When talking about **phases**, you mostly refer to them in the past tense. You can say you went through **a phase** or you had **a [something] phase**. However, it is common to talk about others, especially children, and say that they are currently going through some kind of **phase**.

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

Garret:	Is that you in this picture?
John:	Yes, unfortunately. That's me on the right.
Garret:	Why are you all dressed up in leather clothes?
John:	In my late teens, I went through a massive leather phase . All of my friends were wearing clothes like that, so I joined along.
Garret:	Wow, you look unrecognizable. Do you still have any of those clothes?
John:	Nope. Not at all.

Monique:	How's your family? How old is your boy now?
Fiona:	He just turned two.
Monique:	Oh, the terrible twos.
Fiona:	That's right. He's going through a phase where he likes to hit people. I'm constantly telling him to stop hitting me or his older sister. I guess it's a normal process in life.

Quiz

1. What is the best example of a slap in the face?

- a) you got into a small argument
- b) someone disrespected you
- c) you got into an accident
- d) someone punished you

2. Yes or no? If you had a phase when you were younger, are you still doing it?

- a) yes
- b) no

3. What is the major thing that a grant involves?

- a) friendship
- b) broken promises
- c) money
- d) diamonds

4. If you get all riled up, you are _____.

- a) angry
- b) happy
- c) laughing
- d) rhyming

5. Generally, if someone ghosts you, is that a good thing or a bad thing?

- a) good
- b) bad

Writing and Discussion Questions

1. When is the last time you can say that you received a slap in the face?
2. Discuss a moment when you thought you were going to receive a big punishment but only got a slap on the wrist?
3. What are some of the major phases you went through in your life?
4. How would you react if someone ghosted you?
5. Have you ever applied for a grant? If not, what is a type of grant you would like to receive for the work you do?

Quiz Answers

1. b 2. b 3. c 4. a 5. b

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