

Chatterbox #135 – Andrew’s band trip: Part 2

Informal Contractions in this Episode

Informal contractions are unofficial short forms of other words, and they’re usually only used in casual conversation. For example, when a native English speaker talks casually, they might say *gonna* instead of *going to*, or *whaddya* instead of *what do you*. Even though informal contractions are usually only used in spoken English, we include them in the Culips written transcripts to help you get used to how they’re used and what they sound like.

These are the informal contractions used in today’s episode, along with their meanings:

- **gonna**: going to
- **kinda**: kind of
- **musta**: must have

Transcript

Andrew: Hey everybody. This is Andrew.

Harp: And Harp!

Andrew: And we’re back with another Culips episode.

Harp: Yes. Make sure you check out the website, Culips.com, because that’s where you can sign up and become a member.

Andrew: Yes. And becoming a member is great if you want to improve your English skills. What we give you is access to our learning materials. And the learning materials include transcripts for every episode, detailed explanations of all the difficult or idiomatic expressions that come up while we’re chatting to you, and you also get a quiz that tests your comprehension of what you’ve been listening to.

Harp: Yes, exactly. And if you’re on Facebook or on Twitter, come on over and say hi, leave us a comment, and if you have any ideas for upcoming episodes, please leave them. We have gotten some great ideas from you.

Andrew: That is right. So Harp, I’m curious. How was your weekend?

Harp: Well, you knew I was planning that dinner party, and I was hoping to cook a feast, but...

Andrew: But? What happened?

- Harp: Well, you know, I try so hard to cook well and I've cooked Indian food many times and it seems like I'm getting a little bit better each time and then it was just a complete failure this weekend.
- Andrew: Oh no! What type of food did you try to cook?
- Harp: I did a, like, an eggplant dish, like a bharta, and then I did butter chicken and, really, I've made both of these dishes many times, and they really were just not very good! They were edible, but not delicious.
- Andrew: Aw. I'm sure you're just being hard on yourself. I bet you they were still delicious.
- Harp: I think they were OK but I'm going to have to just keep trying to be as good as my mom.
- Andrew: Well, next time you cook, just let me know, and I'll be happy to eat whatever you make, regardless if it's delicious or not.
- Harp: OK. Good to know. All right, so let's get started. I'm sure you've been all eagerly waiting for this episode since this is our Chatterbox number two for the band trip.
- Andrew: Yeah. We left you with **a cliff-hanger** last episode.
- Harp: Yes. So we're going to continue. We're going to talk... Last episode we talked about Andrew preparing for his road trip and the beginning part of the road trip. And now we're gonna finish off the whole road trip and some lessons learned and just looking back on the trip.
- Andrew: That is right. So, when we last left you, I was talking about playing with my band in Saskatchewan.
- Harp: Yes, exactly. Where did you go after that?
- Andrew: After Saskatchewan, we went to the next province westward, which is Alberta, and we played two shows there: one in Edmonton and then one in Calgary. And these, again, are the biggest cities in that province.
- Harp: OK. And now, I'm curious, because you know Edmonton's my hometown. How were you received in Edmonton? Did you enjoy the show there?
- Andrew: Edmonton was awesome, actually. Yeah, it was really great. There was a festival that was going on and we were playing as a part of that festival.
- Harp: Which festival was it?
- Andrew: That is a good question. I'm trying to remember the name of it now. Oh! I

know what it was called. It was called the Endless **Bummer** festival.

Harp: I've never even heard of it before!

Andrew: I think it's just a small festival for the **independent music** in the city. And we have an expression. We can say *endless summer* in English, right? When we're talking just about a beautiful, long summer. And this is sort of a play on that expression, *endless summer*, by calling it Endless **Bummer**, which sort of means perpetual depression? Or sadness? I guess.

Harp: It works well for a band called No Aloha.

Andrew: That's right. So, we played in Edmonton and there were a lot of people at the show. It was really fun. All of us have a lot of friends in Edmonton so it was cool to hang out with them and it was just a good time, yeah.

Harp: Do you remember where you played there?

Andrew: Mmhmm. We played at a small place called the Wunderbar.

Harp: OK, very cool.

Andrew: Mmhmm.

Harp: And then what about Calgary? It was worse, right? 'Cause, you know, Edmonton's a much better city, right?

Andrew: Calgary... Calgary was awful, actually. It was not the greatest place to play.

Harp: Yup. I know, because Edmonton is better. You know, I have that rivalry still in my blood.

Andrew: Well, we played in Edmonton on a Saturday night, which is a great night to go and see music. And then we played in Calgary the next day, which was a Sunday, and that is not the best day to go see music, so there weren't that many people at our show, which was kinda disappointing. It was kind of a **bummer**, you could say. But I don't know. I like Calgary. It's still an OK place.

Harp: No, I'm just teasing. It's totally a fine place, and it's so beautiful because it's right by the Rocky Mountains.

Andrew: Yeah. Actually, we didn't even stay in Calgary for a day. We played our show and immediately after we finished playing, we loaded our gear in the van and then went to Banff to go camping in the Rocky Mountains.

Harp: Aw, that's beautiful.

- Andrew: It was very cold.
- Harp: Yeah, even when I went to Calgary and to the Rocky Mountains it was cold. It was a cold summer this year.
- Andrew: Yup, it was cold but it is a beautiful place.
- Harp: Mmhmm. And then, you went to BC, I imagine?
- Andrew: Mmhmm, we went to BC. We actually... It was kinda a funny story. When we were camping in Banff, because we had played that night, by the time we got there it was quite late. And so we were setting up all our camping equipment in the dark and we were just sort of making some hot dogs and roasting some vegetables on a fire, just to eat something quickly before we went to sleep. And my friend for some reason decided that he wanted to roast some carrots, which is kind of weird, like, roasting a carrot. I don't know why you would do that.
- Harp: OK.
- Andrew: So anyways, he was trying to roast these carrots on the fire and then he decided that it was taking too long to cook and he would just eat them tomorrow or something. So he just left them on the grill, on the fire.
- Harp: Oh no.
- Andrew: And then early in the morning, at about 6:00am, we got a knock on our tent, if you can knock on a tent. Some guy was rattling our tent, and it was a park warden and he was very upset with us because apparently there are signs all over the place telling you not to leave any food out or the bears will come and eat you. But because we got there at night we didn't see the signs.
- Harp: Andrew, Andrew, Andrew. I have been camping one time in my life and I know you don't leave food outside.
- Andrew: Exactly. So it was lucky that the rumbling on our tent in the morning was the park ranger, the warden, and not a bear!
- Harp: Yup, that was definitely a better wakeup.
- Andrew: 'Cause that would have been quite scary. So anyways, we had an early start that morning 'cause the ranger woke us up, and we drove through the Rocky Mountains, which is just gorgeous, to British Columbia. To Kelowna, actually. My hometown. And we played there. We stayed at my parents' house. I was able to visit with my family.
- Harp: That's nice. How was the show there? Since it's your hometown there musta

been so many people who came.

Andrew: Nope, actually it was another... Those were our two worst shows, were in Calgary and Kelowna. Just because we played in Kelowna then... It was a Monday night, so that's, again, another bad night to play.

Harp: Aw, that's not fun.

Andrew: Yup. I mean, it was OK. My parents came and some of my friends came, but overall, I don't know if I'd go back to Kelowna to play another show.

Harp: OK, OK. And then, where did you go after that?

Andrew: And then, after that we did our final three places of the tour. We played in Vancouver, and then we played in Victoria on Vancouver Island, and then we played Duncan, which is a small town on Vancouver Island. And then we went back to Victoria for one more show.

Harp: Ah, K. So kind of a **Lower Mainland** tour.

Andrew: Mmhmm. And because, like I said, three of the members of my band, we all grew up in British Columbia. Especially in the Victoria–Vancouver area, we have lots of friends, so we actually got to hang out a lot with our **pals** and there were a lot of people out to the shows so that was really fun to play.

Harp: OK. So how many days all together did you spend in that area?

Andrew: In BC we actually spent probably about 10 days. We didn't play every night. We took time off to go see our family and friends.

Harp: OK, that's nice. And were you camping there? Or staying with friends?

Andrew: No, we were just staying with friends.

Harp: OK.

Andrew: Yeah. We only camped for a couple of nights on the tour, yeah.

Harp: OK, so I've only been to Victoria on Vancouver Island, but I've heard the rest of the island is beautiful. How was Duncan?

Andrew: Duncan, again, is a beautiful spot. They call it the City of **Totems**.

Harp: Oh yeah! That's interesting. Can you explain what a **totem** is?

- Andrew: Right. So, **a totem** is a **totem pole**, is what I think the actual name is, **a totem pole**. And it's a work of art done by **First Nations** people, and they're carved out of wood, these big wood carvings. And they have a lot of, sort of, animal faces and birds that are carved into them. I'm not 100% sure, actually, the significance. Do you know?
- Harp: I think that each animal has different significance and it depends on which tribe it is because growing up in that, on the West Coast, I know that. But I don't know exactly what each mean. But they're just beautiful. The intricate carvings, they're definitely something to see. So this is a town that has a lot of different **totem poles**?
- Andrew: Yeah. It's called the City of **Totems** because there are so many different **totem poles** in this town; hundreds of them. So it's really awesome to check those out.
- Harp: And now, is Duncan a beach town?
- Andrew: You know what? It is on the coast, but I'm... I'm sure they have a beach. We went swimming while we were there but it was actually in a rock quarry, an old rock quarry, not in the ocean.
- Harp: Yeah. I think the ocean there is pretty cold.
- Andrew: Yeah! I did go swimming once in the ocean while I was on Vancouver Island and it is freezing. It's kind of a jump-in-jump-out-as-quick-as-you-can situation.
- Harp: Were you swimming when you were in Victoria?
- Andrew: Yeah, when I was in Victoria. And yeah, I was super happy that I went in the ocean because it was just late in the summer, and, yeah. I felt proud of myself for braving the...
- Harp: Braving the cold!
- Andrew: Exactly.
- Harp: Yeah, I'm sure it was freezing because I've only ever gone swimming in the ocean, in the Pacific, there, in, I think, July or maybe the beginning of August and it's still freezing!
- Andrew: Yup, it's always cold.
- Harp: Yup, it's not like if you go to Mexico and you go into the ocean.
- Andrew: No, no, no. Not at all.

- Harp: OK, and then so you guys drove home. How many days did you take to drive home? Did you stop and play any shows?
- Andrew: Yeah. Well, actually, our bass player, he decided that he wanted to spend extra time visiting his family in Victoria. So, he decided to fly home while the rest of us drove home.
- Harp: Oh! That's kind of a **weasel** move to make.
- Andrew: Yeah, because out of the five people who originally went on the trip, there were three of us who could drive: me and our guitar player and our bass player. But like I said, our bass player decided to stay in Victoria. So that meant there were only two of us who could drive home. So to drive thousands and thousands of kilometres with only two people was very tiring.
- Harp: Yeah, I am sure it was tiring.
- Andrew: And we had a deadline because there is another festival in Montreal. It's called the POP Montreal festival. Have you heard of this?
- Harp: Yes, I have. It's huge here.
- Andrew: Mmhmm. And so our band was playing in the POP Montreal festival, and we had to make it back for that show, essentially.
- Harp: OK. So how many days did it take you to drive back from Vancouver to Montreal?
- Andrew: Right, well we had four days to do it. We had to be back from Victoria to Montreal in four days, but we managed to do it in three days, which I was very proud of.
- Harp: That is very impressive.
- Andrew: Mmhmm. So our first day on the way back, we drove from Victoria to Canmore, in Alberta.
- Harp: OK, which is right outside of Calgary.
- Andrew: Mmhmm. And that was gorgeous, of course. We stayed at a friend's house right in the Rocky Mountains and it was just beautiful.
- Harp: Yup, it's just really, really beautiful there.
- Andrew: And I wanted to stay there longer. I just liked it so much I didn't want to have to leave. But I had to go.
- Harp: I am sure. I just love it there. It's beautiful.

- Andrew: Mmhmm. So after that, our second day on the way back, we drove from Canmore to Winnipeg, which was probably about 16 or 17 hours.
- Harp: I was gonna say! That's a long... That's a long haul there.
- Andrew: But that was nothing compared to the next day. Because after that we drove from Winnipeg all the way back to Montreal, which was probably about, I don't know, somewhere between 30 and 35 hours.
- Harp: Wow!
- Andrew: Yeah! We did it without stopping. I mean, we stopped for food and for gas of course, but other than that, we didn't stop.
- Harp: So were you sleeping while your friend, the guitar player, was driving and **vice versa**?
- Andrew: Exactly. We figured out... Because we had spent so much time going from city to city to city and unloading our gear and loading it back in the van, we figured out the perfect system to really maximize space in the van. And we managed to clear sort of a sleeping area, in the back. So we went in shifts. While one person was sleeping, the other was driving and when one person was driving, the other was sleeping.
- Harp: You must have been really happy to get back to Montreal and be out of that van.
- Andrew: Yes! And going across the Canadian Shield, like I explained last episode, where it's just rocky and lots of forest and lots of lakes, is really dangerous. It's a dangerous drive. People don't like to do it, and one of the reasons why is because there's so much wildlife. There are moose and there are deer and they get out on the roads at night and it can be especially dangerous when there's wildlife on the roads. If you hit a moose, for example, that can be **game over**.
- Harp: Yeah, no, I know. It's scary. That's the same thing in Alberta but you don't drive as much in the wilderness there as you do through the Canadian Shield.
- Andrew: Right. So, driving through that part of the country was really scary. We had everybody looking at the road making sure there were no moose around. I did actually see some deer on the side of the road and it almost gave me a heart attack. I was like, "What if they jump out? I don't know what to do!"
- Harp: So that's all you saw? You just saw a couple of deer on the side? You didn't actually see any moose or anything?

- Andrew: We didn't see any moose. Actually, this might be interesting to the listeners. I was keeping track of all the wildlife that I saw when we went across. And I saw some really unique animals. I saw some killer whales in Victoria, when I was on the **ferry**.
- Harp: Wow!
- Andrew: I saw some sea otters, which was really cool. And they were really cute. And I've never seen them actually come out of the water. I've seen them in the ocean before. But the ones that I saw sort of swam up to the rocks and climbed out into the forest.
- Harp: Wow. That's really cool.
- Andrew: That was cool. I saw foxes. I saw deer, so many deer, rabbits. I didn't see any bears. I was hoping to see a bear, but I didn't see any.
- Harp: Thankfully you didn't see the bear in Banff when you were camping that day or you could have added that to your list.
- Andrew: We saw some wild goats, which were cute. And yeah, lots of animals.
- Harp: Very nice. It's amazing. And I think people, when they're outside of Canada and they come here to visit and they drive through either the mountains, the Rocky Mountains, or through the Canadian Shield, and they actually see wildlife, it's always amazing for them.
- Andrew: Mmhmm.
- Harp: It's a really wild country here, so there's a lot of wildlife.
- Andrew: Tons of wildlife. Um... But I was glad, like I said, that we didn't see any moose and we made it back to Montreal after that long 30-plus-hour drive. And then I slept for about a whole day. 'Cause I was so tired.
- Harp: I'm sure!
- Andrew: And then we had to play our final concert of the tour, which was at POP Montreal. And that, actually, was really, really, fun. Probably our best show that we have ever played in Montreal. And that was it. Tour was over and it was back to real life.
- Harp: All right. Let's move to the third section of this two-part episode, where we talk about looking back on the tour. So you said that this was your... POP Montreal was your best show in Montreal. But what would you say was the most fun or the best show of your whole tour?
- Andrew: Definitely the two shows that we played in Victoria were the most fun, I think.

Just because we know so many people there and we have so many friends there that the shows were very crowded. There were a lot of people. And it was just really fun to... We also got to play with our friends' bands, right? They got to open for us and stuff. So to play with your friends and to hang out with them is just the best.

Harp: Oh, that's cool. So your friends' bands were the opening bands for the tour.

Andrew: Mmhmm, exactly. So, yeah, I don't know. Just to hang out with your friends and to see them play music that you like and to just spend that time with them is really great.

Harp: Very cool. So this was in Victoria. Those were the biggest shows. So about how many people came?

Andrew: I think probably our biggest show, there was maybe 200 people? 250 people? Something like that.

Harp: Wow, that's great.

Andrew: Mmhmm.

Harp: And so looking back, what would you have changed? Would you have taken less stuff with you? What would you have done differently?

Andrew: Uh... Well, this is a good question. I think one night when we were camping we got caught in the rain, and it was really difficult to make a fire, so I probably would have brought some sort of tarp to put up so that we could have a dry area. That would have been nice.

Harp: So you would've brought more stuff!

Andrew: I also would've brought some sort of little, like, a hatchet or an axe to chop some wood, because it was really difficult to make a fire one night. We were out in the rain for a long time.

Harp: Yeah. That's kind of the reason why I don't really like camping.

Andrew: Yeah. Those essential items are a must-have.

Harp: OK, cool. So overall though, it was a great experience and you're super happy you did it?

- Andrew: Yeah. One more thing that I would change is if we ever do this again... I think everybody wants to do it next year because it was really fun, but we'll see if we make it that far. But if we do, I'm going to force the other members to get their driver's licences.
- Harp: I was going to ask you about that. So the other people can drive, they just don't have a licence right now?
- Andrew: I don't know. Sometimes when you grow up in the city and you have access to the metro and you can ride your bike, you don't actually need to drive. So yeah, only three of the five had the driver's licences. But, you know, when you're the one that's responsible for driving, it's, um, sort of frustrating when you look back and you see your friends napping the whole time, or just reading their book. And it's a lot of responsibility. You have to protect everyone. You have to get them **from point A to B** on time, and not get in an accident, not kill them. And it's stressful driving. So, yeah, it seems unfair when you have to do all the driving and the other people don't.
- Harp: I agree with you 100%. They definitely need to get their licences.
- Andrew: Yeah. So we're going **to whip them into shape** and make them drive next time.
- Harp: All right, excellent. OK, so that about does it for us today. Thank you for listening and thank you for sharing your story. It sounds like it was a super great time.
- Andrew: Yes. The epic two-part band tour story.
- Harp: And maybe you can share some pictures on Facebook?
- Andrew: Yup, I'll see. I'll go through my pictures and find some good ones and post them so you can follow along while you listen.
- Harp: Yes. And hopefully a music video.
- Andrew: Yeah. We have one music video, so I will post that as well.
- Harp: OK, excellent. And make sure, everyone, that you go to check out the website: Culips.com. That's C-U-L-I-P-S.com.
- Andrew: That's right. We'll catch you next time, bye bye.
- Harp: Bye everyone.

Detailed Explanation

A cliff-hanger

A **cliff-hanger** is a story or situation that is very exciting because you do not know what will happen next. In this episode, Andrew mentions that part 1 of his road trip story was a **cliff-hanger**. This is because the story was not finished in part 1. The people listening to his story were left in a state of suspense because they did not know how the story would end.

Whenever the ending of a story or situation is unknown, and we really want to know how it will end, we can call it a **cliff-hanger**.

This expression originated in the era of silent movies. Many of these early films started by showing the hero in a dangerous situation. For example, the hero may have been tied to train tracks or hanging off a cliff by their fingers. By the end of the film, the hero usually worked their way out of the dangerous situation and defeated their enemies. However, at the start of the film, the hero's destiny was unknown. Because a common situation a hero was placed in was hanging from a cliff, the expression **a cliff-hanger** was coined to describe stories or situations where the outcome is unknown.

Here are a couple more examples with this expression:

Ivan: Did you vote today?

Georgia: I sure did. I can't wait to see who wins this election.

Ivan: Me too. I'm going to watch the results come in with some friends. Want to join us?

Georgia: That'd be great. It's going to be a real **cliff-hanger**.

Ivan: Yes. It will be very suspenseful. We won't know the winner until the last moment.

Bess: Oh no!

Shane: What?

Bess: I just finished my book. It's part 2 of a trilogy.

Shane: Did it end with a **cliff-hanger**?

Bess: Yes! Now I'm going to have to wait years for the author to write and release the third novel to find out what happens.

Shane: That's why I always wait for a series to be fully released before I start to read it. I can't handle the long waits in between books.

Independent music

In this episode, Andrew mentions that his band played at an **independent music** festival in Edmonton, Alberta. **Independent music** is made by bands or musicians who are not signed to major record labels. Instead, recording and touring is paid for by the band, without the support of a major record label.

The word **independent** can also be used to describe things like films, books, magazines, and newspapers that are created by small companies that do not receive financial support from a larger organization.

Very often, **independent** is shortened to **indie**. **Indie music** and films are very popular in Montreal. Many artists from around Canada move to Montreal for this reason.

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

Eugene: I heard about an **indie** film festival happening this weekend. I'm thinking of checking it out. You down?

Lynn: Sounds exciting. I love **indie** films. Yeah, let's go!

Karlee: Hey, turn this up! What is this we're listening to?

Erik: This is the local college **indie** station.

Karlee: They're playing some really good music. I'll have to listen to this station more often.

Erik: Yeah! To be honest, I didn't even know they existed. I just found it randomly one day while turning the dials on my car radio.

A bummer

A situation, thing, or event that is not fun, is boring, or is disappointing can be called **a bummer**. In this episode, Andrew describes his Calgary concert as **a bummer** because the audience was small. When a situation or event makes you feel unhappy, depressed, or bored, it is **a bummer**.

The word **bummer** originally comes from the German word *bummler*, which means a lazy person. In fact, we can use the word *bum* in English to describe someone who is homeless or lazy. (But be careful with this expression; it can be considered quite rude.) By the 1960s, the word **bummer** started to be used to describe a disappointing or boring situation. It remains a popular slang expression, especially among younger people.

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

Cassidy: Are you going to Jody's party tonight?

Sophie: No, definitely not. Jody is such **a bummer**. I can't handle being around that negative energy. Are you?

Cassidy: Yeah. I think I'm going to go.

Wade: Well, I got bad news. I didn't get the scholarship I was hoping I'd get.

Tamara: Aw, I'm sorry to hear that.

Wade: Yeah. It's **a bummer**, because that money would have allowed me to go to France to do research. I guess I'll just apply again next year.

The Lower Mainland

The Lower Mainland is the area that surrounds the city of Vancouver in British Columbia (BC). In this episode, Harp asks Andrew if he spent the majority of his time in BC in **the Lower Mainland**. Andrew replies that he did.

About 58% of BC's population lives in **the Lower Mainland**. This amounts to more than 2.5 million people.

Here's another example with **the Lower Mainland**:

Britney: Are you originally from Vancouver?

Dawn: Nope. I was actually born in New York City. My family moved to **the Lower Mainland** when I was in the fourth grade and I've been here ever since.

Britney: Wow. That's a pretty big move. What made your family come here?

Dawn: My dad's company transferred him to their Canadian office. It was either move or lose his job, so he decided to move.

Britney: Very interesting.

Dawn: Yeah, and I think he made the right choice. My whole family loves it here.

A pal

In this episode, Andrew says that one of his favourite things about his band trip was being able to spend time with his **pals**. The word **pal** means friend, and is an informal and casual expression.

Interestingly, **pal** is one of the only words to be borrowed into English from the Old Romani or Gypsy language.

A person who is your **pal** is your friend. Another expression that uses this word is *a pen pal*. A *pen pal* is someone who you correspond with only via mail, by sending letters to each other.

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

Adam: I wonder what ever happened to all our old **pals** from high school. I don't keep in touch with anyone any more. Do you?

Pattie: No, not really. I just stalk our old classmates on Facebook. It seems like most people have families and kids these days.

Adam: Wow. Things sure do change!

Carlos: Did you get up to anything interesting yesterday evening?

Kamal: Nah, not really. I just talked to an old **pal** on the phone and then watched some TV. What about you?

Carlos: Yeah. I had a pretty uneventful night too. Not much happened.

A totem pole

A totem pole is a sculpture created from the trunk of a big tree. **Totem poles** are a traditional work of art created by the indigenous (first and original) people of the Pacific Northwest coast of North America.

Often, **totem poles** display the figures of animals or people. There are many different types of **totem poles** and they can have many meanings. Sometimes they are used to tell stories or record important events.

In this episode, Andrew talks about Duncan, BC. This city is known as the City of **Totems** because many **totem poles** are on display throughout the city.

The picture on the right shows one of the **totem poles** that are located in Vancouver, BC's Stanley Park.



Here's one more example with **a totem pole**:

Haruki: How was your trip to Seattle?

Fuad: It was amazing! It's a really beautiful place.

Haruki: What did you like the best?

Fuad: I spent a day at the museum. It was fascinating. I learned all about **totem poles** and got to see some on display.

Haruki: That sounds interesting. I'll have to make a trip to Seattle sometime.

First Nations

The term **First Nations** refers to the aboriginal people of Canada. There are over 700,000 **First Nations** people in Canada, and they belong to 630 different groups or bands. The cultures and languages of Canada's **First Nations** people are diverse and fascinating.

To learn more about **First Nations** people and their culture, a good place to start is Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Nations).

A weasel

A weasel is a person who is tricky or sneaky and tries to avoid responsibility. In this episode, Harp says that Andrew's band mates are **weasels** because they don't have their driver's licenses. Because of this, they avoid the responsibility of having to drive on band trips.

There is also an animal called **a weasel**, and this is where this slang expression comes from. **A weasel** is a small animal with brown fur that moves very quickly and is very flexible. Because **a weasel** is able to run fast and act smart to avoid its enemies, we also use the word **weasel** to describe people who avoid responsibility or who are tricky.

There's also a similar expression that's a phrasal verb: **to weasel out of something**. When someone **weasels out** of a situation, they escape responsibility for something. For example, Andrew's band mates **weaseled out** of having to drive the van.

So, **a weasel** is a person who is tricky or irresponsible. This expression is not rude, but because it is a negative expression, you should be careful about calling a person you don't know well **a weasel**.



Here are a couple more examples with this expression:

Kent: Hey, did Ricky remember to pay you back the \$20 he borrowed last week?

Wendy: No. He still hasn't paid me yet.

Kent: That guy is such **a weasel**.

Wendy: Yeah! Honestly, when I lent him the money I knew I'd never get it back. That's just the way Ricky is.

Kent: He really needs to grow up and start being a bit more responsible.

Rashed: My kid is a little **weasel**. His teacher called me today and told me that he didn't hand in any of his homework assignments this week.

Yoko: Oh no!

Rashed: Yeah. I'm going to have a firm talk with him this evening.

Vice versa

Vice versa is an expression that is used when you want to say that the inverse of something is also true. For example, if John likes Jane and **vice versa**, it means that Jane likes John too.

Here are a couple more examples with this expression:

Anne: Now that you have a baby, you must be really tired.

Lisa: Yeah, it's true. I get a lot less sleep than I used to.

Anne: When I had my first child, it seemed like my husband and I never got to sleep at the same time. Whenever I was up with the baby, he was sleeping and **vice versa**.

Lisa: Yes, that sounds very familiar.

Stephanie: I'm going away on vacation next week.

Clayton: Wow, lucky you. Where are you going?

Stephanie: Hawaii for a month!

Clayton: Very nice! But who is going to watch your dog while you're away?

Stephanie: Oh, my neighbour will take care of him. Whenever she goes away I watch her dog and **vice versa**.

Game over

Game over is a slang expression that means the end or death of someone or something. In this episode, Andrew says that if he hit a moose while driving, it would be **game over**. In other words, if he hit a moose on the highway, he would likely die from the accident, because moose are such large animals.

This expression, **game over**, originates from video games. When you're playing a video game, if your character dies, then the game is over and you can no longer play. When this happens, many older video games would show the words **game over** on the screen. Recently, the expression has spread out of video game culture and is now a common everyday expression. It's used as a casual and not very serious way to talk about dying.

Here are a couple more examples with **game over**:

Mom: Make sure you always look both ways before crossing the street. If you're careless in the city, it could be **game over** for you.

Son: Yeah, yeah. I know, Mom.

Cory: Did you hear about the window washer who died yesterday?

Sara: No. What happened?

Cory: He was up on a ladder washing windows when the wind blew his ladder over. He only fell about 10 feet, but he landed on his head. Just like that, **game over**.

Sara: Oh no. That's so sad.

A ferry

In this episode, Andrew mentions that he saw some killer whales (also called orca whales) while riding the **ferry**. The **ferry** he's talking about is the boat that connects Vancouver and Victoria. This **ferry** is the most popular way to travel between the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island.

The distance between the mainland and the island is too far to build a bridge. So people have to fly or take **a ferry** to get to or from the island.

The **ferry** ride takes about an hour and a half. The **ferries** are quite large and carry many people and vehicles. The rides are very scenic and occasionally **ferry** passengers get to see dolphins or whales, like Andrew did.



Here's one more example with **a ferry**:

Miguel: Hey, I'm going to take the **ferry** tonight. Can we hang out while I'm in Vancouver?

Chelsea: Sure. Want to grab drinks later on?

Miguel: That sounds good. I'll text you when I get into town.

Chelsea: Perfect.

From point A to B

Going **from point A to B** means going from one place to another place. In this episode, Andrew talks about the responsibilities that come with being a driver. One of these responsibilities is making sure that all the passengers in a vehicle make it **from point A to B** safely. In other words, it is the driver's job to transport passengers from one place to another safely.

An alternative way to phrase this expression is to say **from point A to point B**. It has the same meaning as **from point A to B**.

Here are a couple more examples with this expression:

Tracy: Gas is so expensive these day that it's making it difficult for me to be able to afford going **from point A to B**.

Drake: I agree. I've started taking the bus. It's a much more affordable option.

Tracy: Yeah. I think I'm going to start doing that too.

Fraser: During the winter in Canada it can be difficult to get **from point A to point B**.

Andrea: I totally understand. I grew up in Alaska. The snow gets really deep there, too.

Fraser: Last year I even saw someone cross country skiing down the sidewalk.

Andrea: Yup. I've done that before!

To whip someone into shape

When you **whip someone into shape**, you train them to do a task or job very well. In this episode, Andrew says that he needs **to whip his friends into shape** because they don't have driver's licenses. In other words, Andrew needs to help his friends learn how to drive.

This expression has an interesting origin. It has actually evolved out of the expression *to lick someone into shape*. This expression was first used to describe how a mother bear licks her cubs when they are first born. After giving birth to her cubs, the mother bear licks the cubs to clean them. Before this cleaning, they just look like lumps, not bears. But after the licking is complete, the cubs look like actual bears — they have the shape of actual bears. So, we can think of the expression *to lick someone into shape* as meaning to help or train someone to become something or to become good at something.

From this original expression, others have evolved. Common variations are **to whip/knock/beat someone into shape**. These have a more violent tone, but they all mean the same thing: to train someone to become good at something.

Here are a couple more examples with this expression:

Soccer coach: Last year we didn't do very well. We didn't even make the league playoffs. Well, this year we're going to work harder. I'm going to do my best **to whip you into shape!** We're going to win the championship this year!

Soccer team: Yes coach!

Sherry: I was a little punk when I was a teenager. I must have driven my mom crazy. I used to sneak out at night and go party. I'd skip school all the time, too.

Frank: Wow. I never would have guessed that. You're such a mature, successful person now.

Sherry: Yes. My parents eventually put me into a strict boarding school. They were tough on me and **whipped me into shape**. It was there that I started to take life more seriously.

Quiz

- 1. What is the name of the district that surrounds Vancouver?**
 - a) the Main Lowlands
 - b) the Lower Lowlands
 - c) the Main Highland
 - d) the Lower Mainland

- 2. Music that is created without the support of a major recording label is called what?**
 - a) independent music
 - b) dependent music
 - c) impartial music
 - d) free music

- 3. Ron: My roommate is such a _____. He forgot to pay me rent money again!**

Fill in the blank.

 - a) weasel
 - b) rodent
 - c) snake
 - d) horse

- 4. Which of the following is NOT an English idiom?**
 - a) to whip someone into shape
 - b) to force someone into shape
 - c) to bear someone into shape
 - d) to knock a bear into shape

- 5. A cliff-hanger leaves you with a feeling of what?**
 - a) suspense
 - b) fear
 - c) happiness
 - d) heartache

6. A situation that is boring or disappointing is what?

- a) a goner
- b) a donor
- c) a bummer
- d) a corner

7. English borrowed the word *pal* from what language?

- a) Old Romani
- b) Roman
- c) Old Romance
- d) Russian

Answers:

1.d 2.a 3.a 4.a 5.a 6.c 7.a