

Chatterbox #136 – Superheroes

Transcript

Harp: Hello everyone. This is Harp.

Andrew: And I'm Andrew. And we're back with another Culips episode.

Harp: Yes. Make sure you check out the website, Culips.com. That's C-U-L-I-P-S.com. Because there you can sign up and become a member.

Andrew: And when you become a member, you get access to our learning materials. And Harp, what do our learning materials include?

Harp: Detailed explanations, a complete transcript, and a quiz.

Andrew: That is right. So go to the website, and sign up, and become a member today.

Harp: Yup. And that's also the place where you can find all our older episodes.

Andrew: That is right. So, Harp, what's new? What did you get up to last weekend?

Harp: I actually went for a walk in the park, at Parc La Fontaine, which is close to my house. And it was just beautiful because it's fall and the leaves are changing colours. So it's just beautiful with the reds and the yellows. I'll miss summer, but the colours are beautiful.

Andrew: Yeah. It's always bittersweet when the seasons change because I'm really sad that summer's gone, but fall's here now and it's so beautiful, like you said. So, yeah.

Harp: Yeah. I'm not looking forward to winter, but fall's beautiful.

Andrew: That is right. Well, should we start today's episode?

Harp: Yup. Today we're going to do a Chatterbox episode, and that's where we chat. We talk about current events, or we interview people, or we talk about some fun different things. And today we're going to talk about something pretty cool.

Andrew: Yeah. Super cool, you could say.

Harp: Yeah! Cause today we're talking about superheroes.

Andrew: That's right. Superheroes and superpowers.

- Harp: Yup. So we're going to start with talking about our childhood and superheroes and all the shows and all the activities with comic books and all of that. Then we're going to talk about how popular superhero movies are right now.
- Andrew: Mmhm. That is right. Especially in the last, I'd say, about 10 years, superhero movies have just become really, really popular. And then we are going to finish today's episode by talking about superpowers and which ones we think are the coolest and which superpowers we would like to have if we were superheroes.
- Harp: Yes. So let's get started. So Andrew, growing up, did you read a lot of superhero comic books or watch superhero cartoons?
- Andrew: You know, I didn't really ever get into comic books, but I did watch a lot of superhero cartoons on TV.
- Harp: You know, that surprises me. You kind of strike me as a comic book kind of guy.
- Andrew: I'm trying to think what comic books... I read comic books, but never superhero comic books. I read, like, *Archie* and, yeah, I remember reading *Archie* a lot, but never *Spider-Man* or *Batman*. None of those comic books.
- Harp: Actually, that's true for myself as well. I only ever read *Archie*, but I read a lot of *Archie* comic books.
- Andrew: Yeah. *Archie* was great. But I do remember watching *Batman* and *Spider-Man* cartoons, also the *Batman* **live-action** TV show. It was actually made in the '60s, but reruns played all the time through my childhood. So I'd watch the *Batman* TV show and my dad would rent me the *Batman* movies and I just loved them; they were great.
- Harp: I know exactly what you're talking about. And I still love them now. If I'm at home and I'm watching TV and they come up, I love the old *Batman*! Where they would punch someone and instead of actually punching the person on the screen, it would show up like *bam* or *boom* or *pow*.
- Andrew: Exactly. And I always loved how Batman had such awesome equipment in his **Batcave**. Whatever the situation was that he found himself in, whatever crime he had to solve or person he had to help, he would have, like, really specialized equipment like a Bat helicopter or a Batmobile. I love that.
- Harp: Yup. He was pretty cool and had some pretty awesome equipment. I also remember watching a lot of superhero cartoons. I remember Saturday mornings waking up early, and my parents would still be sleeping, but my sister and I, we would get cereal and just sit in front of the TV and watch different cartoons and it was just such a Saturday morning experience.

- Andrew: One thing I also liked about these *Batman* and *Spider-Man*, the old *Spider-Man* cartoon, as well, is the theme song that starts every episode. They had really **catchy**, memorable theme songs. And I'm not going to sing them for you now, but if you were to go to YouTube or a site like that, you can look them up and they're just awesome. I still remember those theme songs.
- Harp: As soon as you said that, the song started playing in my head. So I know exactly what you mean.
- Andrew: Yup. Very memorable.
- Harp: Yeah. So cartoons. I watched quite a few. But no comics.
- Andrew: One of the reasons why I watched the old *Batman* TV show, like I said, was because my dad watched it when he was a kid. And I never really watched the *Superman* show, but there was also a *Superman* show, I've heard. And when my dad was a little boy, maybe 5 or 6 years old, he watched the *Superman* show all the time and he thought because he saw Superman flying that he could fly too. So one day he climbed up a tree and pretended he was Superman and jumped out trying to fly and I think he broke his arm or something like that.
- Harp: So he didn't want you to do the same thing? So he didn't let you watch *Superman*?
- Andrew: Yeah. Maybe that's why we never watched *Superman*, but I thought that was a funny story, that he was so into... that these shows were so realistic at the time that he believed that he could fly like Superman.
- Harp: I have a feeling that that's happened to a lot of kids, where they just think, "I can fly. I'm Superman."
- Andrew: Yeah, absolutely. I think it's a pretty common story.
- Harp: Yeah. So I actually think he did it to protect you; not to let you watch *Superman*. Because I'm sure you would have tried when you were kid.
- Andrew: Yeah. He **had my best interests at heart**.
- Harp: OK. Should we move on to the next topic? And you know, my favourite superhero when I was a kid was Wonder Woman.
- Andrew: Wonder Woman, yeah. She's **rad**.
- Harp: She's super cool. I still love her. And she's just, like, this warrior princess from the Amazon and she had all these cool weapons, like a **Lasso** of Truth and a tiara, which served as, like, this projectile thing that she could throw. It was amazing.

- Andrew: The **Lasso** of Truth.
- Harp: Yup. It was pretty cool. She would throw it and when you got caught by the **Lasso** of Truth, you had to tell the truth.
- Andrew: Aha. So you couldn't lie if you got caught by the **Lasso** of Truth?
- Harp: Yup. Exactly. She was pretty cool.
- Andrew: Yeah. That is really cool. Another memory I have of superheroes and comics and that sort of thing when I was a kid was for a little while, not very long, I actually collected superhero collectable cards. Did you ever do that too?
- Harp: Nope. And I don't even think I've seen them. So they're like hockey cards?
- Andrew: Yeah. They would look like a hockey card except they would have a superhero on it. And I think the cards that I collected were Marvel Comic cards. So all of the Marvel characters were on these cards and, I don't know, I used to be really into collecting hockey cards when I was a kid. That's a big thing for Canadian children to do is to collect hockey cards. But I guess somehow I got into the superheroes as well.
- Harp: And now were you one of those **hardcore** kids where you wouldn't take it out of the package so that it was, like, really collectible? Or did you open it and, like, trade with your friends?
- Andrew: I would always trade with my friends but I still have a couple of hockey cards that are in, like, these hard cases that I'm hoping one day will make me a million dollars or something.
- Harp: Yeah. I can't believe how valuable some of these collectible cards can become.
- Andrew: Yeah. It was crazy. That was so fun when I was a kid. There was a special book, it's called the Beckett, and you could look up your hockey card and see how much it was worth, which is hilarious to me, like, you could look, "Oh, this card is worth 30 cents and this one is worth a dollar," or something like that. And that would help you determine the value so when you traded with your friends all the trades would be equal.
- Harp: It's like a little stock market for kids.
- Andrew: Yeah. It teaches us how to be good adult capitalists, I guess. I don't know. It's funny.
- Harp: Did they have that same kind of book for the superhero cards?

- Andrew: I bet you they did. I don't know, I can't recall. I just know the hockey one. But I'm sure they did for the superheroes too.
- Harp: So for, like, superheroes, it was like you had to trade, like, two **Robin** cards to get one Superman card, probably?
- Andrew: Yeah. Something like that. Exactly.
- Harp: Oh, OK. Very cool. All right. Let's move on to our next topic, which is all about the popularity of superhero movies right now.
- Andrew: Superhero movies, yeah. It seems to me like every summer there're three or four new superhero movies that come out.
- Harp: Yeah. And these are usually **live-action**. They're not cartoons. And their special effects have gotten **out of control**.
- Andrew: Yeah. That's why people watch them, I think, is for the special effects especially.
- Harp: Yeah. And it actually seems they're geared towards, more, adults. Mainly, predominately, adult males, because a lot of guys I know **watch these religiously**. They'll go the day that the movie opens. It's pretty **hardcore**.
- Andrew: Yeah. And people dress up like the superheroes. It's a whole experience.
- Harp: That would be really uncomfortable, to watch a 2- or 3-hour movie dressed as a superhero.
- Andrew: Yeah. If you were, like, a Transformer or something in this big costume. I don't know how people do it. And if you were sitting behind one of those people and you couldn't see the screen?
- Harp: Yeah. That would be pretty annoying.
- Andrew: Very annoying. Yeah. So the first superhero movie that I can remember that sort of started this craze was *Spider-Man*.
- Harp: Yup. The first one, with Toby Maguire, I think.
- Andrew: Mmhmm. That's the first one that I can remember.
- Harp: I remember that was so popular. Everyone was going to watch it, and it was just everyone was talking *Spider-Man*, *Spider-Man*, and then they're always series, it seems. It's usually, like, one or two or three of these movies with the same cast and they follow the life of the superhero.

- Andrew: That's right. And also, I guess, the *Batman* movies. Maybe the *Batman* movies were first because in the '90s there was a couple of those that were popular as well. But *Spider-Man* or *Batman*, one of those.
- Harp: Yeah. And they're always redoing those. And *Superman*.
- Andrew: Always. I guess that's the cool thing is you can keep redoing these movies and as special effects get better and better they get more and more interesting.
- Harp: Yup. I've been around having a drink with friends where people will get into these very serious conversations about, like, who was the best Batman, which actor played Batman the best. And I'm like, "Is this a real conversation?" But people are very serious about superhero movies.
- Andrew: Yeah. They are. And sometimes I feel a little bit lost in these conversations because like I said, this is not something that I'm super interested in. But, yeah, it is serious stuff for a lot of people.
- Harp: Yup. I watched the latest *Transformers* movie and I did watch *Transformers* a bit when I was a kid because it would come on Saturday mornings. But I have to be honest; I couldn't really follow the movie, because I'm like, "Which Transformer is that? What's going on?" They all kept changing. It was too fast-paced and action-driven for me.
- Andrew: Yeah. I think the last superhero movie that I saw was actually the first *Spider-Man* Toby Maguire movie. I just haven't kept up at all because there's so much action, and I find the action is a little bit boring for me, actually. I'm more of a story guy.
- Harp: Yup. I actually agree with you and that's why actually I like the *Batman* movie, because it was like, hmm, I can kind of understand the, like, the story behind it. And it's more believable to me because it's more like he kind of discovered all these new technologies rather than, I don't know, he was bitten by a spider and became powerful. It just... To me, *Batman*, I get more.
- Andrew: You know what? I lied because I think that actually the last superhero movie that I watched was *Batman: The Dark Knight* with Heath Ledger as the Joker. A very **iconic** role.
- Harp: Yeah. That was actually really good, I thought. Like I said, I like the *Batman* movies but I feel like Heath Ledger was amazing as the Joker in that movie. He was really good.
- Andrew: Yeah. Very wicked, very scary.
- Harp: Yup. So that's the last one you've seen? That's been a couple of years.

- Andrew: I know I should... Maybe one day I'll get into it and catch up. I don't know. We'll see.
- Harp: Because I've seen the other ones after that move and they're all pretty good, actually.
- Andrew: Yeah? They're good? OK, well, if you recommend it then it's worth seeing for sure.
- Harp: And, you know, it's actually weird now that I'm thinking about it because these superhero movies, like you said, come out in the summer. But I don't like to go to the theatre in the summer. I like to be outside. I only go to the movies in the winter. What about you?
- Andrew: Yeah. Usually when it's nice and summery outside I want to be outside in the park or riding my bike, but yeah, I guess I would go see a movie in the winter. It's weird that they come out in the summer.
- Harp: I guess maybe if people are trying to avoid the summer heat and they want **AC** they would go watch a movie. But really we only get the heat for a couple of months. You've got to just enjoy it.
- Andrew: That's what some of my friends do, actually. They don't have air conditioning in their house so a good way to cool down is to go to the movie theatre for a couple hours and just be entertained and literally chill out.
- Harp: I guess, but I'd rather go to a park and sit under a tree.
- Andrew: Yeah. Me too, me too.
- Harp: OK. Let's move on to our last topic, which is superpowers.
- Andrew: Yeah. Superpowers. Now, there is a long list of superpowers that different superheroes have. I think the most obvious superpower is the ability to fly, like Superman.
- Harp: Yup. Another one is to become invisible.
- Andrew: Mmhmm. Or maybe you could read peoples' minds.
- Harp: Ooh. That's a good one.
- Andrew: You could stop time.
- Harp: Yup. Or you could, like, become super strong and lift anything or break anything.
- Andrew: Mmm. Just like the Hulk.

- Harp: Yes. Another one is when you can talk to animals. I've seen that.
- Andrew: Yeah. Or you could, well you said become invisible already, didn't you? You could be like Spider-Man and make webs and swing from them.
- Harp: Yup. You could freeze things or kind of immobilize things. Freeze things like actually from moving or freeze them with the temperature.
- Andrew: Ooh. Yeah. That's a good one.
- Harp: Another superpower is to shrink, but I don't really get that superpower because then you're just really small and everything's really big and they can just, like, pick you up and throw you. But that's a superpower.
- Andrew: Maybe if you wanted to get into somebody's house, like, go under their door. Or, like, break into a bank or something. I don't know what you would use that superpower for but I could see it being useful maybe. I don't know.
- Harp: I think it could be useful with another superpower. And I think that's the truth, is that usually you need more than one. You can't just have one.
- Andrew: I would be happy with one superpower, I think.
- Harp: All right. So, Andrew, the big question: What superpower would you pick if you could pick any superpower?
- Andrew: It is such a difficult question, isn't it? I think flying would be really, really cool. Flying would be nice.
- Harp: And, see, that's what I think as well. But, like, if it's just me and I'm flying, yeah, that's cool for me because I can see really cool things. But can I really help a lot of people? I'm not going to be able to pick up someone. I'm not going to be able to go find them out of a burning building and take them out. I would have to have super strength as well.
- Andrew: OK. Now I understand what you're talking about. Like, you need a combination of these superpowers.
- Harp: Exactly. So I would pick to be able to fly and be super strong.
- Andrew: That's a good combination.
- Harp: Yeah.

Andrew: I think, um, the thing about superpowers, and if you had them... I think there's actually a line in *Spider-Man*, "with great power comes great responsibility." Is that it? Because these things could be used for good and for evil. And I'm always thinking, "If I had a superpower, would I use it for good?" Or, like, if I could shrink down and crawl under the door of a bank, would I rob a bank? Like, I don't know. If I had this ability, would I become an evil person? I don't know.

Harp: And you know, that's actually funny because I've heard people... Like, I'll have conversations with friends at a party. And it's, like, "What superpower would you pick?" And then, "What would you do with that power?" And a lot of people, like, for example, to become invisible, they would go into stores and take a lot of clothes with them. Really, you need to use your superhero powers for heroic things! To save people!

Andrew: Yeah. Well, I guess if you look at superhero movies, there's always the villain, right? And the villains usually have superpowers too, and they're all doing bad things with those superpowers. So you've got to think that when you have these special abilities, some people do bad things, like the villains, and then there are the heroes that save everybody and they do the good things. So maybe it's in human nature that some people do good and some people do bad.

Harp: Yup. Probably. I know I wonder, like, what would be the first thing I would do if I could fly? Where would I go see or how would I even use it for good if I could just fly? What would you... Can you think of something though? I really think that I would need to be super strong at the same time.

Andrew: Well, this is actually sort of way off topic, but it just came into my head and it's kind of a funny story. I heard this story about a type of endangered bird that needed to migrate and they were having problems getting these birds to migrate down to, I think it was Florida. They were going from Canada to Florida. So what a guy actually did, this bird scientist, was he dressed up **an ultralight** airplane like a bird and he led them to migrate. You could save the birds by dressing up like a bird and flying with them. And you could save an endangered species. That would be nice.

Harp: That would totally work. I would do that! You know, dress up in a little bird costume, get the birds to follow me. I like it. OK. Any other ideas?

Andrew: That's all I can think of right now. You could be the bird lady.

Harp: I don't know if there are that many birds that need saving, but yes, I could definitely do that.

Andrew: Yeah.

Harp: I could maybe solve crime by flying there and trying to get the person to stop.

But, again, you kind of need some other powers. I would maybe be a police officer that could fly and get a 9-1-1 call and get there really quickly.

Andrew: Yeah. That could be cool. Or you know what another really awesome superpower would be? To be able to reverse time. So if you could... Um... Let's say you heard that there... Well, you learnt about a car accident, maybe, and then you go to the scene and you see that these cars have already crashed and people are injured, if you could back time up and then sort of divert the cars so they wouldn't crash. Something like that. That could be good.

Harp: Hmm. Really interesting. Because then you start thinking, well you saved those people but did you cause some other disaster with it happening? Will you constantly be just reversing time and...

Andrew: **The butterfly effect.**

Harp: Yes. This is complicated, to have superhero powers.

Andrew: Yeah. It's a big burden, I think, if you're a superhero.

Harp: Especially if you're not allowed to tell anyone because you don't want them to exploit you. I'm really, like, I'm really getting into this, Andrew. Like, I'm seriously thinking about these superhero powers.

Andrew: Maybe you are a superhero and you're just pretending right now?

Harp: It was my idea to do this episode, maybe this is my way of talking about it and how I can fly.

Andrew: Could be. You never know.

Harp: Yeah. And I'm asking you, like, how can I use my power, Andrew? So you have to give me more advice. We're being really silly.

Andrew: Yeah. So I guess that is it for today. In this episode, we did a Chatterbox, where we talked about superpowers, superheroes, and the villains, of course. And we started the episode by talking about our childhood memories of watching cartoons and reading comics. Maybe not superhero comics, but comics nonetheless.

Harp: Yup. Then we talked about the popularity of superhero movies right now and how they're big **blockbusters**.

Andrew: Mmhmm. And then we ended by talking about superpowers; which ones we think are the coolest and which ones we would want if we could become superheroes.

- Harp: Yes. And you may not be a superhero, but if you want to improve your English, you should go check out the website, Culips.com. C-U-L-I-P-S.com.
- Andrew: That is right. Thank you for listening and we will talk to you next time. Bye bye.
- Harp: Bye.

Detailed Explanation

Live-action

A movie or TV show that is made using real actors is a **live-action** movie or a **live-action** TV show. **Live-action** movies and TV shows are the opposite of animations. Real humans play the roles instead of animated characters.

In this episode, Andrew and Harp chat about the popularity of **live-action** superhero movies. Andrew also mentions that when he was a child, he watched the **live-action** Batman TV show.

A movie or TV show that uses CGI or computer graphics in combination with real human actors is still considered a **live-action** production.

Here are a couple more examples that use this expression:

Peter: Did you hear that a **live-action** movie of the video game Halo is going to be made?

Ron: Oh, really? I heard it was going to be a **live-action** TV show.

Peter: Oh, maybe that's true. Either way, I'm excited to check it out.

Gina: Did you ever watch Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles when you were a kid?

Sarah: Which series? The cartoon or the **live-action** movies?

Gina: The movies.

Sarah: Yeah, of course. They were really popular. Why do you ask?

Gina: I was thinking about watching them. Are they good?

Sarah: Yeah, they're great. Check them out for sure.

The Batcave

The **Batcave** is Batman's secret headquarters. It is located below his house, Wayne Manor. Batman stores all of his cool crime fighting gadgets in the **Batcave**, along with his Batmobile and some high-tech scientific equipment. Batman accesses the **Batcave** by sliding down the Batpole, which runs from the house to the **Batcave**.

Since this expression is only used when talking about Batman, it is not very common. Nevertheless, here's one more example with this expression:

Lee: I wish I had a **Batcave** under my house, just like Batman.

Tina: Yeah. It would be awesome to have a headquarters filled with cool crime fighting equipment.

Lee: Absolutely. I'd hang out there with all my friends and together we'd go around catching bad guys.

Catchy

A **catchy** song is one with a pleasing melody and that's very easy to remember. Pop music is usually considered to be the catchiest genre of music. We can also use **catchy** to describe slogans or advertisement phrases that are easy to remember or get stuck in our heads easily.

Here are a couple more examples with this expression:

Vince: This song is super **catchy**. Who is the singer?

Clyde: You don't know this song? It's *Thriller* by Michael Jackson.

Vince: Never heard it before.

Clyde: It's really famous.

Vince: Well, there is a first time for everything. Anyway, this is great!

Tess: I need something new to listen to. Can you give me some music recommendations?

Hal: Well, that depends. What type of music do you like?

Tess: All kinds, really. I especially like stuff that is **catchy** and easy to sing along to.

Hal: OK. Well then, you should check out a band called The Strokes. They're a fun rock and roll band.

Tess: Cool. I'll check them out.

To have someone's best interests at heart

When you **have someone's best interests at heart**, you want to make that person happy and safe, even though your actions might not successfully accomplish this. In this episode, Andrew and Harp chat about the *Superman* live-action TV show. Andrew mentions that he didn't watch this show. Harp replies that maybe his dad didn't let Andrew watch the show because if he did, he might try to mimic Superman's actions and injure himself. Andrew responds by saying that this might be true and that his dad probably **had his best interests at heart**.

Whenever you try to protect someone or make them happy, you **have their best interests at heart**.

This expression is often used when talking about parents' relationships with their children. Parents have to sometimes do things to protect their children that at first might seem unfair to their children. In the end, however, the parents are just doing these things to protect their kids and make them have a good life. In other words, they **have their kids' best interests at heart**.

Here are a couple more examples with this expression:

Jack: Hiring Mike Smith as the head coach was the best decision the team could have made.

Tilda: I agree. They never would have won the championship if it wasn't for Coach Smith.

Jack: Yeah. He really motivated the athletes. The players really connected with the coach because they knew **he had their best interests at heart**.

Tilda: I agree 100%.

Genie: Did you party a lot when you were in high school?

Flo: Nope. I didn't party at all.

Genie: Ah, so you were a geek then?

Flo: No, not really. My parents were really strict. They wouldn't let me hang out at parties.

Genie: That must have been the worst.

Flo: Sometimes it was frustrating, but I knew they just **had my best interests at heart**.

Rad

Rad is a slang expression that means really good or very cool. It is a shortened form of the word *radical*. Sometimes, the full word *radical* is also used to mean great or cool, but most often, this is shortened to **rad**.

This expression first started to be used in the 1970s by teenagers on the West Coast of the USA. The expression was made popular and common because of the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* cartoon and live-action movies.

Here are a couple more examples with this expression:

Jen: Want to go see a movie tonight?

Louise: Sounds **rad**, but I have to work. How about next week instead?

Jen: OK, sure. That works.

Bill: So, you've taken Jill out on three dates now, right? You must really like her.

Tim: Yeah, she's **rad**. We're having a great time together.

Bill: That's awesome. I'm so happy for you guys. You make a cute couple.

A lasso

A lasso is a long rope that is tied into a loop at one end. Cowboys use **lassoes** to catch animals like cows, horses, and sheep. In this episode, Harp explains that Wonder Woman's special weapon is the **Lasso of Truth**. Anyone who is caught by Wonder Woman's **lasso** is forced to be honest and obey her.

We can use **a lasso** as a noun to talk about the actual rope that a cowboy uses. We can also use **to lasso something** as a verb to talk about the action of catching something with **a lasso**, like a farm animal.

Here's one more example with this expression:

Diana: When I was a kid, I used to love going to the fall fair.

Raquel: I still love going to the fair. I love the food and all the entertainment.

Diana: The cowboy competition was my favourite.

Raquel: What was that?

Diana: It was a contest. The cowboy who could **lasso** the most cows in 2 minutes won.

Raquel: Sounds intense.

Diana: It was actually really fun to watch.

Raquel: Well, next time I'm at the fall fair, I'll have to check it out.



Robin

Robin is Batman's crime-fighting partner. He is also called the Boy Wonder because he is only a teenager. Together, Batman and **Robin** are known as the Dynamic Duo. **Robin** wears a colourful costume consisting of green tights, a bright red shirt, a yellow cape, and a black eye mask.

Robin made his first appearance in a *Batman* comic that was published in 1940.

To be out of control

When something is **out of control** (sometimes also spelled **outta control**) it means that it is really amazing, good, or cool.

When we use this expression, we can think of something being so cool or amazing that it is hard to control its amazingness. On a cool scale of 1 to 10, something that is **out of control** is an 11.

In this episode, Harp describes how the special effects in recently released superhero movies are **out of control**. In other words, the effects are very, very good and realistic. We can use the expression **out of control** to describe very cool, good, or amazing things.

Here are a couple more examples with this expression:

Isabelle: Wow. These tacos are **outta control**!

Frankie: Yeah. They're super delicious.

Hope: You're really good at piano. How long have you been playing?

Taylor: All my life, pretty much. I started when I was four.

Hope: You're really good, though. Like, **outta control** good.

Taylor: Well, you know what they say, practice makes perfect.

Hope: Very true!

To watch something religiously

Someone who **watches a TV show religiously** watches every episode of that show, without missing a single episode. When you **watch something religiously**, you follow it very carefully and make sure not to miss anything. We usually use this expression when we talk about TV shows, the news, financial markets, or sports.

We can imagine that a person who **watches a TV show religiously** watches it with the same regularity as a person who practises a religion prays or visits a place of worship.

For example, if someone **watches the stock market religiously**, it means they pay very close attention to financial news and always follow the stock market's movements.

Here are a couple more examples with this expression:

Pedro: I'm a big New York Yankees fan.

Corey: Me too. I **watch all their games religiously**.

Pedro: I follow them very closely too. When I lived in New York, I even had season tickets.

Corey: Amazing. I've only ever watched their games on TV. I'd love to see a game in real life sometime.

Agnes: I used **to watch the Simpsons religiously**, but now I don't watch it at all.

Karen: I know the feeling. I used to watch Saturday Night Live every week, but I lost interest in it and I don't watch it at all anymore.

Agnes: I guess it's hard for a comedy program to stay interesting over a long period of time.

Karen: Yup, exactly.

Hardcore

The adjective **hardcore** is used to describe people who have an intense interest or commitment to something or some activity. For example, a **hardcore** gamer is a person who really, really likes to play computer games and spends a lot of time playing computer games.

In this episode, Harp talks about **hardcore** superhero fans; the kind of fans who don't open collectible items because they don't want to spoil them and the type of fans who line up early on opening day to see a new superhero movie.

When a person is **hardcore**, they have a very strong passion or interest in a thing, a hobby, or an activity.

Here are a couple more examples with this expression:

James: I didn't notice until we went to the beach last weekend, but Felicia sure has a lot of tattoos.

Patsy: Yeah. She has been addicted to ink for years. Pretty **hardcore**, hey?

James: For sure.

Rick: My wife bought me tickets to see Jerry Seinfeld live.

Julie: No way! That's awesome. I'm so jealous. I've been a **hardcore** fan of his for years.

Rick: Me too. I can't wait!

Iconic

Something that is **iconic** is very popular and representative of the time when it existed. We use the adjective **iconic** to describe famous people and works of art, like movies, books, and fine artwork. It can also describe characters in movies or roles that actors have played in movies.

In this episode, Andrew mentions the actor Heath Ledger's **iconic** role as the Joker in the movie *Batman: The Dark Knight*. His role is **iconic** because it is very well known and famous. Heath Ledger's Joker role is one of the most famous roles in modern superhero movies.

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

Miranda: I read an article on the Internet yesterday about the world's biggest puzzle.

Lauren: How many pieces is it?

Miranda: 32,000.

Lauren: Wow! What image is on the puzzle?

Miranda: It features the artwork of Keith Haring.

Lauren: Who is he? I've never heard of him.

Miranda: He was an **iconic** artist who became famous because of his graffiti-style artwork. If you saw his work, you'd recognize it immediately.

Lauren: Awesome. Well, let's buy this puzzle! It'll give us something to do all winter.

Quinn: Who is your favourite Beatle?

Sunny: Definitely John Lennon.

Quinn: Why?

Sunny: He is the most **iconic** of the four. Why? Who is your favourite?

Quinn: Probably Paul McCartney. I just like his songs the best.

AC

AC is an abbreviation for air conditioning (or air conditioner). Many people commonly call air conditioning **AC** or **the AC**. In this episode, Andrew and Harp talk about going to the movie theatre in the summer. One of the reasons they think people do this is because movie theatres are always air conditioned. If you go to see a movie on a hot day, you can get out of the heat and cool down by taking advantage of **the AC**.

Here's one more example with this expression:

Stella: Want to come over to my house for lunch tomorrow?

Brenda: I heard it's supposed to be 35 degrees tomorrow. You don't have **AC** at your house, right?

Stella: No, but I have a fan.

Brenda: I hate the heat. Why don't you come over to my place instead? I'll pump my **AC** and we can stay cool and hang out.

Stella: OK, that sounds good.

An ultralight

An ultralight is a very small airplane that is only big enough to hold one or two people. In British English, **an ultralight** is called a microlight. Here's a picture of **an ultralight airplane**:



In this episode, Andrew tells a story about a scientist who led a flock of birds along their migration route by flying in **an ultralight**.

Ultralights are notorious for being dangerous. Because they are very light and small, and only contain a tiny engine, they can crash easily, especially in poor weather conditions.

Here are a couple more examples with ***an ultralight***.

Cindy: My brother just got his pilot's licence. I'm so proud of him. He's wanted to be a pilot for years.

Gerald: Please pass on my congrats. Why did he want to become a pilot?

Cindy: My grandfather used to have a small **ultralight**. He took my brother for a couple of rides when he was a kid and ever since then, my brother's been passionate about flying.

Gerald: That's amazing. I'm glad he was able to make his dream come true.

Rachel: When I was in Hawaii a few years ago, I took a sightseeing tour in **an ultralight**.

Pierre: That must have been such a beautiful experience.

Rachel: It really was. If you ever get the chance to do it, do it!

Pierre: You know what? I'm actually planning a trip to Hawaii next year. But there's no way I'll get into **an ultralight**. They're way too dangerous!

The butterfly effect

The butterfly effect is a scientific theory. It suggests that small events in the present can have a big impact on future events. The name of the theory comes from the idea that the flapping of a butterfly's wings could slightly change the conditions of the air around the butterfly, and that this could eventually lead to the formation of a hurricane.

Although this is a metaphorical example, **the butterfly effect** is also used in real life to describe certain weather phenomena.

In this episode, Andrew and Harp talk about superpowers and time travel. They mention that travelling back in time is problematic because small changes in the past could affect how the future unfolds. In other words, they talk about how **the butterfly effect** could cause problems when time travelling.

Here's one more example with this expression:

Lorenzo: I read a really cool book about time travel recently.

Kortnay: Oh yeah?

Lorenzo: Yeah. I don't want to give away the plot too much, but essentially the main character travelled back in time and affected the way history happened.

Kortnay: So, like, a **butterfly effect** situation?

Lorenzo: Yup, pretty much.

Kortnay: Sounds cool. You should lend me the book.

A blockbuster

Any movie that is very popular and makes a lot of money is **a blockbuster**. This expression is also used to describe movies that cost a lot of money to create and are very big productions.

A blockbuster is usually used to describe movies, but it is also sometimes used to talk about plays or videogames.

The expression **a blockbuster** was first used in the 1940s to describe powerful bombs that were used by the American Air Force. These bombs had the potential to bust or destroy a whole city block. The expression eventually began to be used to describe plays and movies that make a big impact and are very popular and successful.

So, **a blockbuster** is either a movie that is popular and successful or a movie that was expensive to create and contains many special effects or action sequences. As Andrew and Harp mention in this episode, most **blockbusters** are released in the summer.

Here are a couple more examples with this expression:

Anthony: Why do **blockbuster** movies never get nominated for Academy Awards?

Mariah: You're right that it seems like small-scale movies usually win all the Oscars. But think of Titanic. That movie was so popular, and it won more than 10 Oscars.

Anthony: Oh yeah. I guess you're right.

Pam: I haven't seen a movie for a while. Do you want to watch one next week?

Jose: Sure. But I want to watch something good. Are there any **blockbusters** out?

Pam: Probably. I'll check out the movie listings and let you know.

Jose: Sounds good.

Quiz

1. **What superhero series helped make the expression *rad* popular?**
 - a) *Batman*
 - b) *Superman*
 - c) *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*
 - d) *Transformers*

2. **What is the name of the scientific theory that suggests that small events in the present can produce big events in the future?**
 - a) the moth effect
 - b) the butterfly effect
 - c) the ladybug effect
 - d) the dragonfly effect

3. **True or false? A live-action movie can also contain computer-generated special effects?**
 - a) true
 - b) false

4. **What expression describes something that is so good it is almost unbelievable?**
 - a) out of control
 - b) out of mind
 - c) over-hyped
 - d) out of town

5. **What did the expression *a blockbuster* originally describe?**
 - a) an ambitious person
 - b) the size of a city block
 - c) the effect of a movie's popularity
 - d) the impact of a bomb

6. Fill in the blank with the correct expression:

Harvey: Do you want to go out for dinner tonight?

Robert: No. Tonight's Wednesday. My show is on TV tonight. I have to watch it.

Harvey: Wow. You really watch that show _____, don't you?

Robert: Yeah. I hate to miss even one episode.

- a) wisely
- b) philosophically
- c) religiously
- d) scientifically

7. What is an ultralight called in British English?

- a) a nanolight
- b) a megalight
- c) a superlight
- d) a microlight

8. What does *AC* stand for?

- a) aroma control
- b) air conditioning
- c) automatic cooling
- d) authorized circumstance

9. If you have someone's best interests at heart, what do you try to do for that person?

- a) make them happy by letting them do whatever they want
- b) make them feel sad
- c) expose them to danger
- d) protect them and make them happy

Answers:

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