

## Chatterbox #137 – Meet Suzanne

### 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

### Transcript

Andrew: Hey everybody. This is Andrew and you're listening to another episode of the Culips podcast. Make sure to check out our website, at [Culips.com](http://Culips.com), [C-U-L-I-P-S.com](http://C-U-L-I-P-S.com). And while you're on our website, I recommend signing up and becoming a member.

When you become a member, you get access to a bunch of really great learning materials. These include transcripts of each one of our episodes, detailed explanations of all the difficult or idiomatic expressions that we talk about during our podcast, and you also get a quiz to test your comprehension and see just how much you've learned with us. So, go over to our website, [Culips.com](http://Culips.com), and become a member today.

One more announcement before we get started. I wanted to thank everyone who has sent us a message through our Facebook page recently. We've been getting a lot of very positive and encouraging messages and this is just great. We love to hear from you and we love to read your words of encouragement. So please keep it up and thank you so much.

We've also been getting a lot of great episode suggestions recently. And these are great. This is awesome. We are gonna try really hard in the future to turn some of these suggestions into actual Culips episodes. So, as always, if you have a really great and interesting idea for a podcast, send us a note, send us a message, and we'll see what we can do with your idea.

Andrew: OK. Now that business has been taken care of, we can move on with the show. Today we have a very special program for you. I recently had a conversation with my friend Suzanne, and in this episode, you're going to get a chance to hear our chat. So without any more delays, here it is, my interview with Suzanne.

Hello, Suzanne.

Suzanne: Hello, Andrew.

Andrew: Thank you so much for coming on the podcast.

Suzanne: It's a pleasure, It's exciting.

Andrew: Yeah! And I guess maybe we could start with you giving a brief introduction of yourself. Who are you, Suzanne? Could you tell our listeners?

Suzanne: Sure. So I am, right now, a master's student at **Concordia**, and I am studying applied linguistics, and I'm kind of older to be coming back to school. So I'm in my mid- to late 30s.

Andrew: OK.

Suzanne: The lower part of the late 30s. And so I've come back to school later than most people go to do their master's. And I'm originally from Brooklyn, New York, and yeah. I grew up most of my life in New York City, which is a big, big city and a great place to be an artist, which is what most of my life I have done. So, yeah, I'm an artist from New York and I'm studying science in Montreal.

Andrew: So you're a student, an artist, and a native New Yorker.

Suzanne: And a New Yorker, yeah.

Andrew: Awesome. And that's actually how we know each other, is from school. Because we... I guess we're colleagues at school.

Suzanne: Yeah. Of course!

Andrew: And we have worked on lots of projects together and done of lots of interesting things, I think.

Suzanne: Yeah. Different presentations. Thinking things up and creating interesting presentations.

Andrew: A lot of **thinking on the spot**.

- Suzanne: Yeah.
- Andrew: And a lot of work, yeah, exactly. OK, so I guess maybe I will start by asking you about New York.
- Suzanne: OK.
- Andrew: And why did you move to Montreal? To me, my opinion of New York is always that it's the biggest city, well not the biggest city, but one of the biggest cities in the world. It's such an interesting, happening place. Why would you want to leave New York to come to Montreal?
- Suzanne: That is an interesting question and one that I get very often.
- Andrew: Oh yeah?
- Suzanne: Yeah. People ask me, *Why? Why? Wait? Why, if you're... What are you doing here in Montreal?* As though this city isn't awesome. I'd never been to Montreal up until about... I guess about 5 years ago. I was a waitress at **the Marriot Marquis** in Time Square for 8 years, supporting myself, supplementing as an artist... supplementing my income. And I met my boyfriend, Olivier, who's from France. He was visiting **the Marriot** and he was my customer. And we met and we emailed each other for about a month and a half, and then I... I came for my first time ever to Montreal. Actually my first time ever to Canada, which is a little bit ridiculous because I lived in New York. I was not very far away, all this time.
- Andrew: No. I think not very many Americans actually come to visit Canada.
- Suzanne: They should!
- Andrew: They should.
- Suzanne: It's awesome!
- Andrew: Yeah, but...
- Suzanne: It's awesome.
- Andrew: It's a common story, I think.
- Suzanne: I think so.
- Andrew: So don't feel bad.

Suzanne: And also, like you said, when you're in New York City, you have kinda everything you want, all the time. So it's easy to not travel. It's easy to just stay there and experience cultures in New York City. Anyhow, I... After 4 years of being long distance with my boyfriend, New York to Montreal, I decided to make the move to move here. And I applied to **Concordia's** applied linguistic program because it was... had to do with what I was already working on in my career. So it was really exciting. So it was kind of... First it was my boyfriend and then it became about the master's and I was really excited to study that, as well.

But one of the things I really liked about moving to Montreal is: in New York, I lived there for 26 years, so most people that don't live in New York are visitors of New York. And it's kinda, like, I don't know how to explain it. When you visit New York, it's so much better. People... I mean, New York is amazing. I love it. It's part of who I am, but it's quite funny when you visit New York, you're like *I can live here. Oh yeah! This is amazing. This city is incredible. it's so much fun!*

But you don't realize, because you don't have an apartment. You're not paying the rent in New York. You're not trying to find a job in New York. You're not running on the subway every day with the millions of people who don't shower, or whatever. So it's actually harder to live there than it is to visit. And after 26 years, I have found that Montreal is a really... a more human-sized, community-oriented city, more so than New York, and I really enjoy that, so...

Andrew: Yeah.

Suzanne: That was a long answer.

Andrew: No, that's great. So, I've heard that expression, if you can make it in New York... If you can make it there, you can make it anywhere. So I guess you're well prepared to go anywhere you want to.

Suzanne: Yeah. It's really true. I mean, I know that that's kind of a cliché, but it's harder to find an apartment in New York City than it is to find, like... than it is to kind of find a little bit of fame. It's... I mean, just think of it. You have **Naked Cowboy** in the middle of the street. It's easier to be **Naked Cowboy** than to find a place to live. It's hard. There are just a lot of things that are hard. And the society there is really run by, like, who you know. And when you move there, and you don't know anybody, it can be very daunting and overwhelming.

Andrew: So, I guess, other than the sense of community that you notice, what are some other big differences between, I guess, the USA in general and living in Canada? I guess language is one that jumps to mind. That's probably really big. Because we speak English and French here in Montreal.

Suzanne: Definitely. And I think that's a big one. All over Canada and all over the US as well. Spanish is becoming a very, very widely spoken language in the US. In fact, my family lives in Texas. So, in Houston, and when I travel there, every sign is in Spanish as well. Not just in the airports but also for, like, gas stations and any kind of public service places, things are also in Spanish. And you can easily find waiters and service attendants and stuff that speak Spanish fluently. However, we don't have... In the US, there is actually no official language. So if you google it, I encourage you to google it, you can actually see that there is no official... English is not the official language. There is no official language. And the four **Founding Fathers**, or whatever, actually put that in the... I don't know if it was the Constitution. I think so. The idea was to include every culture. The idea was to welcome people who didn't have a place, who wanted... as a... to create **a melting pot**. And so in order to do that and to welcome people, you can request any kind of document in any language you need it to be in. So it's not automatically given to you in English.

There is no official language, whereas in Canada, it's English in most of Canada and French as a second language. And then in parts of Canada, like Quebec, it's French first and then English second. So that's really different.

Um... I think also the US is very consumer driven. There are a lot more things you can get there. Like, things for really cheap because they get imports for cheap, you know. So there are many things in New York City and in the US that you're like, "How is this only \$5.99? It's a whole toaster! It doesn't make sense!"

Andrew: So the prices are better in the States. Is that what you're saying?

Suzanne: I think it's, yeah, I think, like, the Walmarts and the, you know, there are just big consumer centres where you can find very cheap things. And sometimes I think the quality also suffers a little bit, too, because of that.

Andrew: And Canadians love this, because we often go across the border. There are lots of little towns near the Canadian–American boarder, on the American side, where you can go shopping with outlet malls and we even get the American TV commercials that air in Canada that advertise, *Come across the border*.

Suzanne: No way!

- Andrew: Yeah. Yeah, as a kid my parents would drive down to the States to go shopping because it was cheaper.
- Suzanne: Yeah. It's really cheaper. It is. I just went, actually, to Texas for a wedding, for my cousin's wedding. And I went shopping with my mom, at, like, a sporting goods store, because I like to exercise and couldn't I always have more exercise equipment and clothes and stuff?
- Andrew: Yup.
- Suzanne: And it was insanely cheap, to the point where I started getting that consumer itch where I was like, "Oh my gosh! I'm going to have to take this and this and this and this." I had to stop and go, "Oh my gosh, Sue! You need to chill out because this is crazy." You know? This is where you start to, like, "More, more, more." Get into that mindset, so...
- Andrew: That's good. OK, I'm going to switch the subject totally. I'm gonna change it completely. Because you have a brand new puppy and he's kind of... I don't know where he is. He was running around a bit earlier and now he's settled down somewhere. The dog's name is Skoshi. And why did you decide to name him Skoshi? Is it him or her?
- Suzanne: Him.
- Andrew: Him.
- Suzanne: Yup. He is a Nova Scotia Duck Tolling **Retriever**. And this is a, not necessarily new race of dog, but it's a very different, like... You really hear more Golden **Retriever** or... You know.
- Andrew: Yup.
- Suzanne: This kind of thing. Or Labrador **Retriever**. He's a Nova Scotia **Retriever**. And so, because I'm from the US and my boyfriend is from France, we wanted to, kind of, keep the Canadian name. So we call him Skoshi. For Nova Scotia.
- Andrew: That's really cool. And so a Duck Tolling?
- Suzanne: Yes.
- Andrew: Tolling. So that means he likes to get ducks. Is that what that means?
- Suzanne: Yes. So he's a hunting dog. So basically the hunter... The idea is, so, the hunter has a gun, I guess.
- Andrew: Yup.

Suzanne: And the... So he likes to swim. And he likes birds and he likes to retrieve a lot. So he... And he has a red... reddish coat with white. So, like, it kind of... His tail will get really puffy and he has that little white puff at the end, which kind of makes it look like a fox or something. And he gets in the water and he makes commotion and the ducks fly up. They... They fly up out of the lake or the river and then the hunter can, *pew pow pow pow*, shoot the ducks and then they *woooo*. I can't whistle very well. *Wooooo pow*. Like, they fall into the water.

Andrew: Yup.

Suzanne: And then the dog goes back into the water, swims and retrieves it, bites the duck and retrieves it and brings it to the hunter. And you have dinner.

Andrew: And I was surprised. I was over at your house the last time, maybe a month ago or so...

Suzanne: Yeah.

Andrew: And he was just a small little dog and then when I came this morning. I was like, "Wow! He's really grown!"

Suzanne: Yeah. He's... He has maybe gained... Now he's almost 12 pounds. And I think when you saw him, he was maybe 6 pounds or 5 pounds? So he's almost, like, doubled his size.

Andrew: Yeah!

Suzanne: In the, like, the last 3 weeks. I think you saw him the first week we got the dog, actually.

Andrew: OK. I guess we're almost finished here, but I wanted to talk about one more thing before we wrap it up.

Suzanne: OK.

Andrew: And that is... Well, one of the reasons I wanted to have you on the podcast is because you are very accustomed to and have lots of experience with recording.

Suzanne: Yes.

Andrew: And you do some voice acting and also audiobook recording.

Suzanne: Mmhmm.

Andrew: Could you talk about that for just a minute?



- Suzanne: Sure. So, I actually have, in the past 3 years, gotten into audiobook recording. Like, books on tape. I actually just got a five-book deal, which is very exciting.
- Andrew: Can you tell us what book...
- Suzanne: Yeah.
- Andrew: ... you're doing? Or is that a secret?
- Suzanne: No. It's... It's actually this series of five books that are, like, young adult. And... but they're comedy. It actually takes place in the '80s and it's this... It follows this girl through high school and college. Each book is a year of her, like, school life. And she is a girl who moved from the north to the south, which, I did that myself as a young child. I moved from New York to Texas for a little while, so it's quite funny. She meets all these crazy characters and *they're, you know, they talk like this* and they have these accents from the south. And I do a lot of accents in my book recording. Um... which is really fun for me, because it's like... You feel like the characters are really coming to life. And it's really interesting when you have to do a male character as a woman. And in the last book I just did, each chapter would... It would alternate between the female lead character and the male lead character. And so I would have to, basically, narrate **first-person** as a man. And that was very difficult.
- Andrew: So really, it's not just reading. It's a lot of acting that's involved too.
- Suzanne: Yeah.
- Andrew: To bring these stories to life.
- Suzanne: All the dialogue. When you have to act out the dialogue and the exchanges between the characters. It's really fun to play all the characters, you know? To be able to make the rhythm and the comic timing how you want it to be, you know?
- Andrew: Mmhmm.
- Suzanne: And because also I edit a lot of the books on tape that I'm doing, I get to mess around with the timing so that if I recorded it, maybe not the best way, it wasn't as funny, I can maybe shorten the distance between the lines and make it funnier, so...
- Andrew: So you **wear a lot of hats** in the process.
- Suzanne: Yes.



Andrew: You do the editing. You do the reading. You do the acting. **The whole kit and caboodle.**

Suzanne: It's a lot of work!

Andrew: No, I bet. That sounds like a really big job.

Suzanne: Yeah.

Andrew: And how long does it take to complete a whole book?

Suzanne: It really depends on the book. For example, the one I just recorded, it was the fourth book with these characters. So I already knew these characters. I already knew how I was going to, you know, what they're... how they talk, the pace of how they speak. And I knew the writer, so I know her humour as well. And so this one, recording it was quite fast. Maybe, like, 1 week to record about 29 chapters. I'm saying 1 week; I'm not working every hour of every day. I mean, maybe it's, like, 4 hours a day.

Andrew: Right. You couldn't talk into the microphone all day.

Suzanne: No.

Andrew: That would be exhausting.

Suzanne: Yeah. It is exhausting.

Andrew: Yeah.

Suzanne: And I do have that puppy. So after... I would say the longest part is the editing time. The editing time takes about maybe, like, 10 days of maybe 6-hour days. Because you're really going through and cutting out extra breaths, sounds that don't quite make sense. Maybe you have to rerecord certain words that "Oh, I don't think that sounds, like, you know, I'm supposed to say *Springfield*, you know, *County*, and it sounds like *Sprin... Springfield*", like it's too fast or something. So you have to change the recording.

Andrew: You have to go back. So a very big job, overall.

Suzanne: Yeah.

Andrew: Great! So, now the last thing I want to do with you, if you don't mind, is to ask you five random questions.

Suzanne: OK.

Andrew: This is how I like to end every interview and I think it just gives us a very good sense of your personality and what type of person you are.

Suzanne: OK.

Andrew: So I've prepared five random questions.

Suzanne: Cool.

Andrew: OK. So question number one: Do you consider yourself a morning person or **a night owl**?

Suzanne: Hmm. Good question.

Andrew: Oh yeah?

Suzanne: Well. I would say, before the puppy...

Andrew: Yup.

Suzanne: I was... I don't have a one-line answer.

Andrew: OK.

Suzanne: I surprise myself with how I'm a morning person, like, how I've become a morning person, with doing schoolwork and having a puppy. And the puppy wakes you up at around 6:45 to go to the bathroom, and so I've had to train myself to be more of a morning person the last, you know, the last, I would say, few months, as well. But when I lived in New York City, I was definitely **a night owl**.

Andrew: The city that never sleeps.

Suzanne: Yeah. I was definitely one of those people who enjoyed going out and dancing till, like, about 4am.

Andrew: Oh my gosh.

Suzanne: Or singing karaoke.

Andrew: Yeah. There we go.

Suzanne: Till about four in the morning.

Andrew: Always fun.

Suzanne: Yeah.

- Andrew: Good answer. Let's go to question number two. If you won the lottery, what is the first thing you would buy? Or what would you do with the money?
- Suzanne: This is gonna... The first thing that came... I'm just gonna say the first thing that came to my head.
- Andrew: Sure.
- Suzanne: And this probably is super boring, but I would pay off the rest of my debt, like, all of my college debt. And, you know, I am American, so we all have *college debt* stamped across our head.
- Andrew: Right. Yeah.
- Suzanne: Yes. I would take care of all of that then I would like to buy, like, a chateau and vineyard or something somewhere in Europe.
- Andrew: Yeah.
- Suzanne: And eventually live there.
- Andrew: That would be so amazing.
- Suzanne: Yeah. I would love to be in, like, the mountains, like, going to pick mushrooms and have a little farm... Not farm, I don't know about farm, but you know, just, like, a garden.
- Andrew: Just a kind of...
- Suzanne: Like, a vineyard. I would love to, like, make wine.
- Andrew: Yeah. That would be so cool. Grow some grapes.
- Suzanne: That's it.
- Andrew: OK. Let's move on to question three. What household chore do you hate to do?
- Suzanne: Ugh. I hate washing dishes.
- Andrew: Washing dishes?
- Suzanne: I hate it.
- Andrew: That's funny, because that's actually one of my favourite ones to do.
- Suzanne: Why? Why is it your favourite?

- Andrew: I don't know. It's just... It's easy and it's fast. Actually, the reason that I like to do the dishes is because I can listen to the radio while I do it. I have a radio in my kitchen. That's the only time I listen to the radio. I can sort of catch up on the news or whatever. I'm still an old-fashioned guy; I listen to the radio to get my news.
- Suzanne: I listen to the radio too.
- Andrew: Yeah?
- Suzanne: I used to listen to sports radio.
- Andrew: No way!
- Suzanne: Yeah. That was my favourite thing to do. I actually... You just inspired me. Maybe I will begin listening to the radio while doing dishes, so it'll make it... maybe make me like it.
- Andrew: Yeah. It'll be much more enjoyable, believe me.
- Suzanne: I hate dishes.
- Andrew: All right. Dishes. Let's move on to the next questions. What are your thoughts on rollercoasters?
- Suzanne: I really like rollercoasters. I don't know if I love them, but I really, really like them. I used to be a big, humongous fan of, like, those things that spin, like, **the Tilt-A-Whirl**.
- Andrew: Yeah, yeah.
- Suzanne: Or the things that make you spin or, you know, this kind of thing. Like, in all different directions.
- Andrew: Yeah.
- Suzanne: And, um, as I get older, they make me want to throw up.
- Andrew: That... That's my problem too. I get sick.
- Suzanne: You get sick on rollercoasters? Or is it the...?
- Andrew: Yeah. I don't think I would go... I don't think I would throw up, but I would just feel sick.
- Suzanne: Yeah.

- Andrew: You know, I'd feel nauseous. Let me do my last question. Who is the most famous person you have ever met?
- Suzanne: Well, I have, actually, some famous friends.
- Andrew: Oh really?
- Suzanne: That are my really close friends, um, so... But I think that maybe is... doesn't count because I knew them before they were famous.
- Andrew: Aha. So it's not the same.
- Suzanne: I don't know. Do I tell you that? Am I, like, **name-dropping**? Well, I don't know.
- Andrew: Well, let's... Let's just... Who is a celebrity that you've met randomly?
- Suzanne: OK. Oh.
- Andrew: Has that happened to you?
- Suzanne: Well, I'll tell you... It wasn't random, but I did meet Bill Clinton.
- Andrew: Whoa.
- Suzanne: I, like, won an award and I, like, got to meet Bill Clinton and that was pretty awesome. I met Bill Clinton and Hillary and this was back in 1995? 6?
- Andrew: So he was still the president at the time.
- Suzanne: He was the president at the time.
- Andrew: Wow.
- Suzanne: Yeah yeah. Totally. And he was super cool and Hillary was super cool. They were just so smart and so kind and so welcoming and really brilliant speakers. When you are there and they're speaking... And then we got to, you know, go up and, like, shake their hand, and, like, mingle with them.
- Andrew: Yeah.
- Suzanne: In this, like, award ceremony sort of thing.
- Andrew: Yeah.
- Suzanne: But when you... When they're speaking live they're... I mean, there is a reason why he was president, because he was very electric in his speaking

and very warm. And I really remember that. And it was super cool because I got to perform for him at the Kennedy Center.

Andrew: Wow!

Suzanne: Performance. So that was an amazing experience.

Andrew: Did... Did Bill play the saxophone?

Suzanne: No! I wish!

Andrew: That's my favourite, well not my...

Suzanne: Oh man. I wish.

Andrew: That's not my favourite thing about Bill Clinton but that's an endearing thing about him, I think, is that he's a saxophone player.

Suzanne: I agree, I agree. I think that we were cheated, actually. He should have played for us. Definitely.

Andrew: Maybe next time. If you get to meet him again you can ask him.

Suzanne: Next time.

Andrew: Yeah. Good. OK, well, Suzanne, thanks so much.

Suzanne: Thank you.

Andrew: And before we end, I wanted to give you the opportunity to talk about your website, as well.

Suzanne: Oh yeah.

Andrew: Because I know that you have a website. And so maybe you could just quickly tell us what it's all about and what you do online.

Suzanne: Sure, sure. So I teach pronunciation, both in English... I teach English pronunciation and I also teach actors accents and dialects. So meaning that, say, an actor needs to speak with a southern, like, accent from Texas or an Australian accent or something like that. That's what I teach.

And I have a website. It's called **accentguru.com**. Like the word *accent*, A-C-C-E-N-T-G-U-R-U.com. And, actually, my email is **suzanne@accentguru.com**. And, yeah, there are some lessons up there, some free clips and free things that are fun and funny. And, yeah, you can book a session with me, a Skype session. And I basically plan a lesson for, you know, tailor-made for the person. And, yeah, that's what I do.

Andrew: Awesome. That's great. So if you're listening to this podcast and you were thinking about maybe taking some lessons to improve your English accent, I recommend checking out Suzanne's website and maybe booking a session with her on Skype, 'cause she would be a great teacher and would be happy to help you try to speak better English, I suppose.

Yeah, OK. Well, thanks a lot, Suzanne!

Suzanne: Thank you, Andrew.

Andrew: So there it is. That concludes my interview with Suzanne. I hope you enjoyed listening to it and found it entertaining and educational. That's it for now. Thanks for listening. Don't forget to check out our website at [Culips.com](http://Culips.com). We'll talk to you next time. Bye bye!



## Detailed Explanation

### Concordia University

In this episode, Suzanne says that she moved to Montreal to attend **Concordia**.

**Concordia** is a large university in Montreal. More than 45,000 students attend the university and classes are taught in English. **Concordia University** has two campuses in Montreal: one downtown and one in the Notre-Dame-de-Grâce (NDG) neighbourhood. Currently, **Concordia University** is ranked the seventh best school in Canada.

Montreal is a welcoming place for students. There are four universities in the city: two French schools (Université de Montréal and Université du Québec à Montréal) and two English schools (**Concordia University** and McGill University). Montreal is home to more students per capita than any other major city in North America.

### To think on the spot

When you **think on the spot**, you respond to a question or comment without previous preparation. In this episode, Andrew and Suzanne talk about doing a lot of **thinking on the spot** in grad school. Because grad school is a demanding academic environment, grad students have **to think on the spot** often. During graduate seminars or conference presentations, grad students are expected to participate by asking and answering many questions. There is a lot of pressure to ask and answer questions in an intelligent manner, and this is what Andrew and Suzanne mean by **thinking on the spot**.

For example, after a presentation, it is common for the audience to ask the presenter questions. If a member of the audience asks a question that the presenter wasn't expecting, the presenter has **to think on the spot**. The presenter has to think quickly to try to respond to the question in an acceptable way.

Whenever you have **to think on the spot**, you are in a pressure-filled situation where you have to respond to a question, problem, or condition without having any time to prepare.

Here are a couple more examples with this expression:

Clayton: I almost got into a car accident on my drive home last night.

Renee: Really? What happened?

Clayton: A truck cut me off. I was able to stay cool and **think on the spot**, and I swerved into the other lane. If I had slammed on my breaks, I would have been rear-ended for sure.

Renee: I'm glad you're OK.

Clayton: Yeah, me too. It was a close call.

Holly: Did you ever get into trouble when you were a kid?

Craig: Not really. I did do some bad things at school sometimes, like pranks and stuff, but I was always good at **thinking on the spot** and convincing the teacher that I was innocent.

Holly: A very valuable skill.

### The Marriott Marquis

**The Marriott Marquis** in New York City is a hotel where Suzanne worked. The hotel is quite famous and is located on Broadway, the area well known for musical theatre productions.

On the top of the hotel, there is a revolving restaurant; the only one in New York! **The Marriott Marquis** is also famous for its high-tech elevators and atrium lobby, which stretches for 45 stories.

In this episode, Suzanne talks about working at the hotel and mentions that she met her boyfriend at **the Marriott Marquis**.

### The Naked Cowboy

During this interview, Suzanne describes the problems people face when living in New York City. She mentions that it is more difficult to find an apartment in the city than it is to be **the Naked Cowboy**.

**The Naked Cowboy** is the nickname of a busker (a street musician) who performs in Times Square. He is famous because he sings on the street while only wearing a cowboy hat, cowboy boots, and a small pair of underwear. **The Naked Cowboy** positions his guitar in the middle of his body so that it creates the illusion that he is entirely naked.

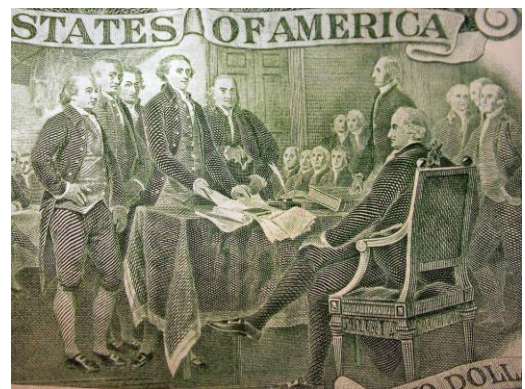
Although Suzanne's comment is a funny over-exaggeration, it is true that it is very difficult to live in New York City. There is a shortage of affordable housing and most people spend a lot of their income on rent. New York City is consistently ranked as one of the most expensive cities in the USA to live.

### The Founding Fathers of the United States of America

In this episode, Suzanne describes the official language policy of the American government. She says that **the Founding Fathers** created a language policy that was fair to speakers of all languages.

**The Founding Fathers** were the statesmen and politicians who signed the Declaration of Independence and helped create the independent country of the United States of America.

The most important **Founding Fathers** were Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson.



This image is from the American two-dollar bill. It shows a painting by John Trumbull that depicts **the Founding Fathers** signing the Declaration of Independence.

### A melting pot

American society is sometimes called **a melting pot**. The USA is a country full of immigrants, and people from all over the world move to the States. The idea behind the expression **a melting pot** is that an immigrant's American identity is more important than the identity of the country the immigrant came from.

So the American **melting pot** is a society where people from all over the world take on a new identity as an American after they immigrate. Their old identity is not as important as their new American identity.

Canada is similar to the USA because it is a country with a large immigrant population. However, Canadian society is often called a mosaic rather than **a melting pot**, because it is a multicultural society where immigrants' cultural identities are seen as being equally important as their new Canadian identities.

### A retriever

**Retrievers** are breeds of hunting dog. In this episode, Suzanne says that her dog is a Nova Scotia Duck Tolling **Retriever**. **Retrievers** are used by hunters when shooting game birds like ducks and pheasants. It is the **retriever's** job to retrieve the animals a hunter shoots. The most famous breed of **retriever** is the Golden **Retriever**.

Although **retrievers** were originally bred to be used by hunters, many people keep them as pets and do not use them for hunting.



### The first person

A story that is told in **the first person** is about yourself or yourself and someone else. The story is told from your perspective, using the pronouns *I* and *me* and/or *we* and *us*.

In this episode, Suzanne says that she had to act the part of a male character while she was recording an audiobook. The challenging part of this task was its **first-person** perspective. Suzanne had to read the male character's parts as if she were the male character.

In addition to **the first person**, there is also second-person and third-person perspective. The second person is when you talk about the people you are talking to. The subject of the second person is usually the pronoun *you*. The third-person perspective is when you talk indirectly about a person or a thing, instead of directly addressing it. A third-person statement usually has the pronouns *he*, *she*, *they*, or *it* as its subject.

Here are a couple more examples with this expression:

Katrina: I read a wonderful book last month about a man who travels the world.

Ismael: That's cool. What made it so special?

Katrina: It was narrated in **the first person**. I felt like I was able to peer into the character's secret thoughts.

Ismael: That sounds interesting. Mind if I borrow it?

Katrina: Nope, not at all. I'll bring it by your place sometime soon.

Ismael: Sounds good!

Wilson: My favourite kind of video games are **first-person** shooters.

Sheila: What's that?

Wilson: It's a type of action game where you see the world from the perspective of the main character. It's like you actually are the main character.

Sheila: Why do you like those games so much?

Wilson: I don't know. I guess they just make the experience feel real.

### To wear a lot of hats

Someone who **wears a lot of hats** has a lot of different jobs and responsibilities. In this episode, Andrew says that Suzanne **wears a lot of hats** because she performs many different tasks in order to complete an audiobook recording. She is responsible for the reading, acting, recording, and editing.

This is a relatively new expression. It was first used in the 1960s in the UK. In the 1960s many people wore hats. Many different trades and professions had unique hats that workers wore as part of their uniform. So, if you **wore a lot of hats**, it signified that you had a lot of jobs.

This expression is also sometimes said as **to wear many hats**. This means exactly the same thing as **to wear a lot of hats**.

Here are a couple more examples with this expression:

Damon: I'm so thankful for my mom.

Erika: Yeah, me too. I never realized how tough a job being a mom is until I became a mom.

Damon: Yeah. Moms **wear so many hats**. They have to manage the household, take care of the family, cook, and do all sorts of other things.

Erika: Yeah. They have so many responsibilities.

Ada: So what do you do for a living?

Oliver: I have two jobs. I work at the library Monday to Friday and then I work at a bar as a bartender on the weekends. In my spare time I'm an artist and I try to paint as much as I can.

Ada: Wow. You sure **wear a lot of hats**, don't you?

Oliver: It's true. Yes!

### The whole kit and caboodle

In this episode, Andrew says that Suzanne does **the whole kit and caboodle** when it comes to audiobook recording. In other words, Suzanne does everything required to produce an audiobook. She does the reading, acting, recording, and editing.

The expression **the whole kit and caboodle** means everything or all of it.

This expression has an interesting origin. The word **kit** refers to a soldier's supply bag; the bag where a soldier keeps his things. The word **caboodle** likely evolved from the word **boodle**, which is an old-fashioned word that means a large quantity of something. Around the mid-1800s, the expression **the whole kit and caboodle** started being used as an idiomatic expression that means everything.



Here are a couple more examples with this expression:

Abby: Whoa. I love your outfit. Is it new?

Amanda: Yeah. I went shopping last week and bought a new top, skirt, necklace... **The whole kit and caboodle.**

Abby: Wow. Lucky you! It looks great.

Amanda: Thanks!

Nate: I'm trying to sell the baseball cards that I collected when I was a kid. Do you know anyone who might be interested in buying them?

Walt: Oh, I bet my uncle would buy **the whole kit and caboodle.**

Nate: Really?

Walt: Yeah. He is a serious collector and is always looking to buy more cards. I'll let him know you're selling.

Nate: OK, awesome. Thanks a bunch.

### A night owl

**A night owl** is someone who likes to stay up late or who likes to work at night. In this episode, Andrew asks Suzanne whether she is a morning person (someone who likes to wake up early in the morning) or **a night owl**. Suzanne replies that she used to be **a night owl** when she lived in New York, but now she is definitely a morning person.

Usually, **night owls** find that they have the most energy at night time. **Night owls** who have to work early in the morning often find it difficult to get up and go to work.

This is a casual slang expression and should be avoided in formal writing. This expression is derived from the fact that owls are nocturnal animals (they sleep during the day and are awake at night). So when we use this expression, we compare a person to an owl.

Here are a couple more examples with this expression:

Jake: Wow. You look awful today. What time did you go to sleep last night?

Fannie: I don't know, sometime around 3am.

Jake: 3am! That means you only got a few hours of sleep.

Fannie: I know, but I'm such **a night owl**. It's hard for me to fall asleep early, even when I know I have to get up to go to work the next day.

Devin: I had an awful sleep last night.

Teri: Oh no! What happened?

Devin: My wife is **a night owl** and she was up all night working and making noise. She tries to be quiet but I'm a light sleeper and sometimes it keeps me up.

Teri: If I were you, I'd wear earplugs.

Devin: You know what? That's not a bad idea. Maybe I'll give them a try.

### The Tilt-A-Whirl

**The Tilt-A-Whirl** is a ride that is commonly found at theme parks, fairs, and circuses. It is a ride that spins people around in a circle very quickly. **Tilt-A-Whirls** also spin passengers up into the air, on an angle.

In this episode, Suzanne says that she used to really enjoy riding **the Tilt-A-Whirl** when she was younger.

The name **Tilt-A-Whirl** is a brand name, but it's also a very literal way to describe this ride. *To tilt* means to move into an angled or sloped position. *To whirl* means to spin around in circles. **The Tilt-A-Whirl** is a ride machine that spins people around in angled circles. Here's one more example with this expression:



Annie: Hey. I'm going to the fair next weekend. Would you like to come with me?

Jay: Sure. Sounds like fun. I haven't been to the fair since I was a kid. Do they still have **the Tilt-A-Whirl** ride?

Annie: Yup. I'm going to ride it for sure.

Jay: Yeah. Me too. That was my favourite when I was younger.

Annie: Yeah. It's so much fun.

### To name-drop

In this episode, Suzanne asks Andrew whether she should **name-drop** after Andrew asks her about meeting famous people. When someone **name-drops**, they mention the names of celebrities they know or have met in order to impress other people. Usually, hearing someone **name-drop** is annoying because it sounds like that person is bragging. Andrew replies to Suzanne that she shouldn't **name-drop** the famous people she knows, but instead just talk about a celebrity she met randomly.

When someone **name-drops**, they brag or boast about the famous people they know or have met. Usually, a person who **name-drops** pretends to know the celebrity better than they actually do.



Here are a couple more examples with this expression:

Kim: My boss is so annoying.

Cara: Why is that?

Kim: He went to Los Angeles last month on a business trip and while he was there he saw a movie star walking down the street. Now he keeps **name-dropping** him like they are best friends or something.

Cara: Oh, I know exactly how that feels. My friend does that too. She **name-drops** this celebrity she talked to for 5 minutes as if they're best friends.

Tracey: I don't want **to name-drop**, but guess who I just met?

Clint: I have no idea. Who?

Tracey: Brad Pitt!

Clint: No way!

Tracey: Yeah. I guess he is in town shooting a movie. I met him in a café drinking a green tea!

Clint: That's wild. Did you get his autograph?

Tracey: Yup. I sure did!

### A guru

In this episode, Suzanne mentions that her website is [accentguru.com](http://accentguru.com). **A guru** is a person who is an expert or a leader. Someone who is very talented and skilled at giving advice or instruction can be called **a guru**. Suzanne is an accent **guru** because she is talented at teaching people how to speak with accents that are different from their natural accent.

The word **guru** is a loanword from Sanskrit and means teacher or leader in that language. It was originally used to refer to Hindu religious leaders, but now it's also used to talk about people who are skilled at giving advice or instruction.

Here are a couple more examples with this expression:

Bryan: I saw a fashion **guru** on TV last night. He said that bright colours are going to be very popular this spring season.

Chelsea: That's perfect. I just bought a bright red blouse last week. I'm going to be very stylish!

Bryan: Yeah. You're all set!

Joel: What would you do if you were rich?

Ji Sun: I'd probably hire a lifestyle **guru**.

Joel: What's that?

Ji Sun: It's a person who helps you manage your life and advises you on what decisions you should make. A lot of celebrities have lifestyle **gurus**.

Joel: Very interesting answer. If I were rich, I'd probably buy a big yacht and sail around the world.

## **Quiz**

1. **What kind of dog does Suzanne own?**
  - a) a Chesapeake Bay Retriever
  - b) a Labrador Retriever
  - c) a Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever
  - d) a Golden Retriever
  
2. **Fill in the blank. A person who has many responsibilities wears many \_\_\_\_\_.**
  - a) shoes
  - b) hats
  - c) shirts
  - d) pants
  
3. **How many universities are located in Montreal?**
  - a) one
  - b) two
  - c) three
  - d) four
  
4. **What language was the word *guru* borrowed from?**
  - a) Sanskrit
  - b) Hindi
  - c) Arabic
  - d) Japanese
  
5. **Which of the following expressions means to respond without preparation during a pressure-filled situation?**
  - a) to think on the spot
  - b) to go on the spot
  - c) to put someone on the spot
  - d) to think of the spot

6. What are you doing if you are name dropping?
- a) changing your name after marriage
  - b) legally changing your birth name
  - c) talking about celebrities you have met
  - d) talking about naming a child
7. From which perspective is a story that is told using the pronouns *me* and *us* told from?
- a) the first-person perspective
  - b) the second-person perspective
  - c) the third-person perspective
  - d) the fourth-person perspective
8. Someone or something that can only do one thing well can be called which of the following?
- a) a one-trick pineapple
  - b) a one-trick pony
  - c) a one-trick puppy
  - d) a one-trick penguin
9. In this episode, which language does Suzanne say is increasing in popularity in the USA?
- a) Chinese
  - b) French
  - c) Spanish
  - d) Arabic

**Answers:**

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