

Chatterbox #41 – Books

Transcript

Harp: Hello everyone! This is Harp.

Maura: And Maura.

Harp: And we're here at Culips, bringing you another fantastic English podcast.

Maura: Yes.

Harp: At Culips, we always give you lots of English expressions that you can hear on the streets in Canada and North America.

Maura: And if you go to our website, Culips.com, that's C-U-L-I-P-S.com, you can become a member. And then you have access to our transcripts, and a more detailed explanation, and a quiz to help you understand our episodes even more.

Harp: Yes. And we also want to say a *thank you* to everyone who's been donating. We really appreciate all the support to put out great episodes.

Maura: And today, we are going to give you a Chatterbox podcast, and that's where we chat about something interesting in our culture, something maybe that's happening in the news, or just a general topic of interest.

Harp: Yes. And today we're going to talk about **books**.

Maura: And this is definitely a topic that I'm interested in, Harp, **books**.

Harp: Yeah, 'cause we both love reading. So, we love **books**.

Maura: And there are so many different kinds of **books**. There's really so much to talk about about **books**.

Harp: Yeah, we might have to do a couple of episodes.

Maura: We might.

Harp: So, today we're gonna break it down for you. We're gonna talk about our favourite **books** and popular **books**. Then we're gonna talk about **book-to-movie** adaptations.

Maura: Those are always good.

- Harp: Mmhm. And then finally, we're gonna talk about trends that are happening with **books** and with reading.
- Maura: You're right, because there are some changes going on.
- Harp: There are.
- Maura: So first, let's talk about our favourite **books**, 'cause I'm excited to talk about **books**.
- Harp: Why don't you start? What's your favourite **book**?
- Maura: Well, you know, I find that question so hard to answer, because it's hard to have just one favourite. You know, you have favourites at different times in your life, and it's always changing; you're always adding **books** to the list.
- Harp: I agree completely. I have been a **bookworm** since I learned how to read. Since then, I have been devouring ever **book** that I **have my hands on**.
- Maura: For me, I go through phases. Sometimes I read a lot, and then sometimes I don't read very much, maybe because I start reading a **book** and I'm not interested, so it **turns me off** for a little while. But generally, I do love it.
- Harp: The only time when I'm not reading is when I make a conscious effort when I'm in school, because once I pick up a **book**, I have a very hard time **putting it down**.
- Maura: That is true with a really good **book**. You know, I was thinking about that question you asked me, what my favourite **book** might be, and I was thinking about one of my favourite **books**, which is *Me Talk Pretty One Day*.
- Harp: Oh.
- Maura: Yeah. It's by David Sedaris, and the title sounds very strange and funny, because it's not proper English.
- Harp: What is the title again?
- Maura: *Me Talk Pretty One Day*.
- Harp: Oh, interesting. What's the **book** about?
- Maura: Well, it's actually a **book** of short stories and personal essays, and they're really funny. I think it's really rare that you read a **book** that's funny, and his stories are hilarious. The story called *Me Talk Pretty One Day* is about his

experience learning French as a second language. And he imagines how he probably sounds when he speaks. That's why it's called *Me Talk Pretty One Day*. Do you have a top favourite, Harp?

Harp: I'm like you, I have so many favourites. One of my favourite **books** is *The Outsiders* by S. E. Hinton.

Maura: I've heard of it, but I've never read it.

Harp: I have a confession.

Maura: How many times have you read it?

Harp: I think over a hundred times.

Maura: Whoa, that's serious. I'm a bit worried about you.

Harp: I've read it so many times that now when I read it, I can read it really quickly, because I get to my favourite parts. I read the whole **book** again, but I'm a fast reader, so ...

Maura: It's funny, because that is a classic **book** that some Canadians might have read in school, and it's still being read in some schools. Did you read it in school for the first time?

Harp: No, I actually ... I read it before we had to read it in school, because I have an older sister and she brought it home. And, like I said, I'm a **bookworm**, so anything I **get my hands on** I read, and ... So I read it before I had to read it in school, and then I read it in school, and then I read it probably 90 more times after.

Maura: Honestly, you've got me really intrigued. I think I wanna read the **book**.

Harp: It's a fantastic **book**. I can read it now and I still love it. And the first time I read it, I think I was 11 years old.

Maura: Wow. I'm definitely going to put it on my **reading list**.

Harp: Yes, you should. *The Outsiders* follows a group of boys who come from a rough neighbourhood and they're friends, but they kind of become a family for each other and it follows the characters through just a couple of nights in their life, and how they all stick together, and some sad things that happen. It's really a coming-of-age **book**, so it's great.

Maura: Interesting.

- Harp: You should read it.
- Maura: Maybe I will now. Harp, was there ever a movie made?
- Harp: There was, and it has so many famous actors in it. So now Maura, you said that you like so many different **books** that it's hard for you to pick a favourite. What kind of **books** do you typically read? Do you have a favourite **genre**?
- Maura: Well, I really like modern **books**, so, **books** that have been written in the past 20 years or so. They can be a little bit satirical, like satires, and I also like when they have a bit of social commentary, too. Like I said, David Sedaris is a good example of that.
- Harp: OK. Can you give us a couple more examples of authors who write in this style?
- Maura: Sure. Another popular author, who just passed away recently, is Kurt Vonnegut. He wrote a bunch of crazy, interesting stories. And also, Tom Robbins is another author that I really like. What kind of **books** do you like to read?
- Harp: I like all sorts. Um, I like historical fiction a lot, where you get an idea of how people lived in a certain time.
- Maura: I'm **not really a big fan** of science fiction or fantasy, although I have read those kind of **books** and enjoyed them. But they're not something that I normally choose to read.
- Harp: Yeah, I agree with you. And you know, I don't like thrillers a lot, because I feel they stress me out. It's a **page turner**, I can't stop, I can't sleep. I just need to read and finish and make sure that the world is OK. They stress me out.
- Maura: That is true. When there's a lot of action in a **book**, like a really big **book**, a bestseller, it can kinda get your heart racing.
- Harp: Yeah. Sometimes I have problems, because I like to read at night before I go to bed and when it's a really good **book**, I have a hard time **putting it down** and going to sleep. So, there have been times in the past when I go to sleep at 5:00 in the morning because I just couldn't **put the book down**.
- Maura: Wow. I read, usually, at night before I go to bed too, but I've never stayed up that late. What usually happens to me is that after a little while I start to feel really tired and I really can't read anymore because I'm too tired, so I stop.
- Harp: Yeah, that usually happens to me, but sometimes you just come across

those **books** that you **can't put down** ... Well for me, anyway.

Maura: I also like to read when I'm commuting. Right now, with my job, I don't commute and I can't read on the way there. But in the past, when I took the bus to work, I really liked to read on the way there, especially if it was a good **book**, because it just made the time enjoyable and pass really quickly.

Harp: Yeah, I do that every day. I take my **book** with me on the bus and the metro and it makes the time go by so fast. Now Maura, let's go to our next topic of **book-to-movie** adaptations.

Maura: There are so many great **books** that have been turned into movies. And it almost seems like a trend lately that Hollywood is taking **books** and making movies out of them.

Harp: Yeah, definitely. And I think that there are varying degrees of success. I think there are so many movies from great **books**, but the movie isn't very good.

Maura: People always talk about that, too. After there's a movie made about a **book**, and many people have read the **book**, they always ask, "So, was the movie better than the **book** or was the **book** better than the movie?" And I would say almost all the time, people enjoy the **book** better than the movie.

Harp: One hundred percent, I agree with you. It is very rare for me to see a movie after I have read a **book** and think that the movie is better than the **book**. I can think of a couple of examples, but typically I like the **book** better.

Maura: Which movies have you seen where you enjoyed them better than the **book**?

Harp: For me, I loved reading the Harry Potter **books**, but I found that in the movie you could see everything, so it was like everything that you imagined in your head. It was visual and you could see it, so it was great. I loved the movies and the **books** for Harry Potter.

Maura: That's pretty awesome. I've read only the first Harry Potter **book**, and I read it when I was taking children's **lit** in university. And I know that a lot of people will be upset, but I'm not a big, crazy Harry Potter fan. But I agree, I really do like the movies. The movies are good.

Harp: Harry Potter was quite a phenomenon. You would see people lining up to get the **books** and then people lining up to get to the movies. It was a **must-see**, must-read phenomenon.

Maura: And people of all ages. For children and adults to be reading the same **book** is pretty awesome and amazing.

- Harp: Yeah, my mom read the whole Harry Potter series. It was cute seeing her read them.
- Maura: Oh, wow. Sometimes I think I should give it another try, because so many people love it.
- Harp: Do you know my favourite **book** that we talked about already, *The Outsiders*?
- Maura: Yeah.
- Harp: It was made into a movie.
- Maura: Yeah?
- Harp: And I actually loved it. I watched it when I was young and then I watched it again when I was older. And when I was older, I realized there were so many famous actors that were in this movie.
- Maura: Oh, wow. And as I was saying before, I'm **not really a big fan** of fantasy, but I did read *The Hobbit* in high school when I was young, which is the **book** before *The Lord of the Rings* series begins. And I saw *The Lord of the Rings*, all three movies actually, and I really did enjoy them. I remember going to see the first one in the theatre and being so impressed and so surprised by how much I liked it.
- Harp: Yes. So, *The Hobbit* is not the series, but it's a prequel to the series. They talk about the same characters that are in *The Lord of the Rings*. So, we read *The Hobbit* in school but we never read *Lord of the Rings*. I read *The Hobbit*, but for me, *Lord of the Rings*, it seemed really daunting. It's such a long **book**. It just seemed really difficult to read, to keep track of all the characters. But in the movie version, everything was laid out, you could see the faces, and it was so well done.
- Maura: Now, these examples we're talking about are rare. Like we said, most of the time, you read a **book** and then you see the movie and it's not quite what you'd hoped.
- Harp: I know. And for me, if I see a movie that comes from a **book**, I can't read the **book** after, because I'm thinking about the movie and it doesn't work. So it's like how I don't like **book-to-movie** adaptations. I can't go the other way around either.
- Maura: Yeah, I think I might have done that a couple times, but I don't like it. You know, I don't even like when they put the movie characters on the front of the

book. When I buy the **book**, I want an original cover that was designed for the **book**. I don't wanna see the actors from the movie on the cover of my **book**. I'm very particular like that. Now, one **book** that I really loved was *The Time Traveler's Wife*. And that **book** was recently made into a movie, just in the past couple years. And the movie really wasn't the same as the **book**. Because in the **book**, the story goes to the future and the past, and it goes all over the place. And the movie just couldn't show that the same way and it couldn't go as in depth.

Harp: Yeah, that's why I look **books** more, because you get more in depth, you get more involved with the characters. But for me, with *The Time Traveler's Wife*, I've only seen the movie and I really liked it, but I had no comparison to the **book**.

Maura: But, as you said, after you see the movie you can't read the **book**.

Harp: Nope.

Maura: So I can't try to convince you?

Harp: Maybe in a couple years when I forget more of the movie.

Maura: OK. So I'll come back to you in 2013 and lend you the copy, 'cause it's a really excellent **book**.

Harp: OK, sounds good.

Maura: So, the third topic we were going to discuss about **books** was trends.

Harp: Yes. And one big trend that I'm seeing with **books** is the popularity of **e-books**.

Maura: Mmhmm. So, people buy **books** online and then they read the **book** on some kind of special device for reading **books**, and it's essentially a computer screen. There are no pages to be turned, and there's no actual **book**.

Harp: An **e-book** is an electronic **book**, so you use the same screen and you can read thousands or millions of different **books** on the same screen.

Maura: Right. And it's not a regular computer screen, it's very thin and portable. So you might see people reading them on the way to work or in public places, just like a regular **book**.

Harp: And I can see the convenience factor. You don't have to carry a big, heavy

book. You can choose lots of different **books** and you can buy them online. So, just to clarify, you can download an **e-book** onto any computer. You can read it on your laptop, you can read it anywhere. But it's ... I think it's most popular when you have the **e-book** reader, which is the special device that's just a screen, and it's portable and you can take it with you.

Maura: Yeah.

Harp: Now Maura, we both love to read. Do you think you're gonna switch to **e-books** rather than paper **books**?

Maura: You know, I am a bit of an environmentalist, so you'd think I'd wanna save paper, but I really like having the **book**. I like having the cover to look at and to touch, and I can remember back when I was in school, and sometimes we had to do readings on the computer. And it really bothered my eyes, maybe because I wear contact lenses, I don't know. But I found it not comfortable to read on a screen.

Harp: Yeah, I agree. And after staring at the screen all day at work, I like to turn the computer off and just read a **book**. But for me, I don't buy **books** very often. I go to the library all the time. My library card is one of my favourite possessions.

Maura: See, that's smart. I'm a bit of a **hoarder** with **books** ... that... if I really love a **book**, I have to have a copy of it.

Harp: Oh yeah. I have some of my favourites, I own them. But I love the library.

Maura: That's smarter and cheaper, Harp.

Harp: Yup. And I have kind of a **dorky** story to tell about libraries and why I love them.

Maura: Well, now you have me intrigued. Tell us.

Harp: I remember when I was young and I learnt how to spell library, and I go so excited.

Maura: OK ...

Harp: It's because my last name is Brar, B-R-A-R. And my name is in *library*, L-I-B-R-A-R-Y. Brar is in library.

Maura: And what everyone listening can't see right now is that Harp's eyes are all lit up and she's very excited about telling this story.

Harp: I love libraries and I've loved them since I was very young. And to learn that

my name was in the word—so exciting.

Maura: That's so cute. And a little bit geeky.

Harp: It's so **dorky**.

Maura: But it is just more proof that you love **books**. And so do I. And really, at Culips, of course we love language.

Harp: Exactly.

Maura: If you guys liked this episode and wanna hear more about **books**, let us know, because, actually, Harp and I would love to make another episode about **books**. But we just want to make sure you out there wanna hear more.

Harp: Yeah, let us know if you love **books** like we love **books**.

Maura: Now, we'll go over what we talked about one more time. First, we talked about some of the **books** we love, our favourite **books**, and the different **genres** that we like to read.

Harp: Mhmm. Then we talked about **book**-to-movie adaptations.

Maura: Yeah. And the last thing we talked about was some of the trends that are happening with **books**.

Harp: Mhmm. Remember, you can always check out our website, Culips.com, because you can find over a hundred older episodes. They're older, but they're also fantastic.

Maura: Yes. The expressions that we used have not gone **out of date** yet, so you can always go back and learn more expressions.

Harp: Yeah, we always look at expressions that are used by native speakers in natural English.

Maura: Right. So, we hope you liked this podcast and we hope you like all the other ones too. So, this has been Maura.

Harp: And Harp.

Maura: And we'll talk to you again soon. Bye!

Harp: Bye everyone!

Detailed Explanation

Books

There are so many kinds of **books**. People generally use the word **book** to refer to all the different forms, but if you need to be specific, here's a short list of some types of **books**:

Picture books
Novels
Graphic novels
Comic books
Storybooks
Anthologies
Biographies
Non-fiction books

All the **books** that Maura and Harp talk about in this episode are novels.

Bookworm

A **bookworm** is a person who loves to read books. If you imagine a worm eating through the pages of a book, you can also imagine a person reading the pages of a book very quickly. The worm and the person both take in the book, but in different ways!

In this episode, Harp admits that she is a **bookworm**. This is actually quite an old word. It's been around for more than 400 years!

To have my hands on something

Sometimes we have expressions that really mean what they say! This expression, **to have my hands on something**, simply means that you have the item. Using this expression is a little different from just using *to have*, because it also implies that you finally have it after some time, or that you are happy to have the item in your possession.

You can also say **to get my hands on something**. This means that you would like to have the item, but something is preventing you from having it now.

Here are a couple of examples with the two expressions:

Ken: I can't wait **to have my hands on** the new Harry Potter book.

Manuel: I know. I'm really excited for it too.

Samantha: My brother's really looking forward **to getting his hands on** the new video game coming out tomorrow. He's standing in line for it today.

Brian: I don't even know which game that is. I know nothing about video games.

To turn off

To turn off is a two-word verb that can be used in a variety of ways. In this episode, Maura says that when she reads a book that's not interesting, it **turns her off** reading temporarily. Maura means that an uninteresting book makes her not like reading. When someone is **turned off** in this way, it means that something has happened so that they no longer like something that they previously did.

People can get **turned off** by anything. It could be a picture or a sound or some behaviour. You could be watching a movie and then something happens that **turns you off**, and makes you no longer enjoy the movie. You could be on a date with someone and something the person does or says **turns you off**.

Here are a couple of examples with **to turn off**:

Josh: I was interested in going to school in Toronto, but not anymore.

Rob: What **turned you off**?

Josh: The high cost to live in the city made me change my mind.

Aiesha: I was on a date with this guy last week, but halfway through the night I got **turned off**. He started talking about his ex-girlfriend.

Jon: Oh, no.

The opposite, **to turn on**, can also mean that something happens to make you like something even more!

Be a little bit careful if you use **turn on** and **turn off** in conversation, because these phrases can be used as slang to talk about romantic interest! To say that someone is **turned on** could mean that they are in the mood for romance.

A reading list

After hearing how much Harp loves *The Outsiders*, Maura says that she may put the book on her **reading list**. When people talk about putting a book on their **reading list**, it means that they plan on reading it someday. It doesn't necessarily mean that the person has an actual list of things to read.

Here's another example with this expression:

Ingrid: You should read *The Women's Room* by Marilyn French. It's a good book.

Shannon: I don't have any more room on my **reading list**. There are so many books I've been meaning to read.

Genre

A **genre** is a style of art, for example books or film. In this episode, **genre** was used to talk about different kinds of books. **Genre** is a French word that means style.

Here's a short list of different genres of novels you can read:

Mentioned in this episode

Coming-of-age
Satire
Science fiction (sci-fi)
Fantasy
Historical fiction
Thriller

Not mentioned in this episode

Action/Adventure
Biographical/Autobiographical
Horror
Mystery
War

Not a big fan of something

To say that you're **not a big fan of something** is a more polite way to say that you don't really like it. Maura says that she's **not a big fan of** science fiction, which means that she doesn't like it that much.

Here's another example:

Greg: Do you want to go see the new Arnold Schwarzenegger movie?

Kevin: I'm **not really a big fan of** action movies. Could we see something else?

You can also use this expression in the positive form, and say that you are a big fan of something, which means that you really like it.

A page turner

When a book, or any reading material, is described as a **page turner**, it means that it's a very good book. Some books are so interesting that as soon as you finish one page, you want to turn the page so you can continue reading to see what happens. That's where the idea for this expression comes from.

So, if you're reading something that's really exciting, and you always want to read more, you can call it a **page turner**. Here's another example:

Zoe: How's the new book you're reading?

Vince: Great! It's a real **page turner**.

To put a book down

Whenever this expression is used in this episode, it's used in the negative. Harp says that she had a hard time **putting the book down**, and that she couldn't **put the book down**.

To put a book down is quite literal, meaning to close the book, stop reading, and leave the book. People often use this expression in the negative, **can't put the book down**, to mean that the book is so good that they can't stop reading it.

Harp uses this expression to talk about her reading habit, which is that when a book is good, she can't stop reading it. Here's another example with this expression:

George: I love the new book I'm reading. **I can't put it down!**

Irene: Can I borrow it after you're finished?

Lit

Lit is short form for **literature**. **Literature** is written work that's published and respected by society. The word **lit** is often used when referring to a particular kind of **literature**, like in this episode when Maura says, "children's **lit**." To give you a couple more examples, we can also say *American lit*, or *chick lit*.

A must-see

The term **must-see** is used to talk about movies or TV, not books. This is because you see a movie, but you read a book. A **must-see** movie is a movie that is really good, one that everyone must see! Here's an example with this expression:

Margaret: You have to see the movie I saw last night. It's a **must-see**.

Freda: OK, wow! Maybe I'll go see it this weekend.

You can also say that something is *a must*. This can be used to mean that something must be seen, or must be done, or that someone must have an item.

E-books

E-books are electronic books that you can read on your computer screen or on numerous portable devices made for reading. Most of the time, when you see an "e" in front of a word in English, it means *electronic*. There are many traditional items that have become electronic. A good example of this is e-mail!

A hoarder

A **hoarder** is someone who **hoards**. **To hoard** is to keep many things, often for future use. In this episode, Maura says that she's a **hoarder** because she likes to have a lot of books.

There is an American television show, called **Hoarders**, about people who are **hoarders** and have entire houses or rooms in their homes full of objects. On this show, the **hoarders** get professional help to get rid of their stuff.

Dorky

The words **dork** and *nerd* are slang for a type of person who is not cool, and is often intellectual, without many friends. **Dorky** is the adjective. Often, in English conversation, we add a Y at the end of a noun to make it into an adjective. This doesn't mean that it's necessarily a real word, but it's done so often that native English speakers understand this with no problem.

Harp's **dorky** story was about her last name, Brar, being in the word *library*. Harp says this is **dorky** because the story is about the library and books, and reading all the time is generally considered a **dorky** thing to do.

Similarly, the word *nerd* can also become *nerdy*. *Geek* also has the same meaning as **dork** and *nerd*, and we can also make the word *geeky*.

Out of date

If something is described as **out of date**, it means that it is not new and is no longer in style or no longer relevant. It is old-fashioned or not modern. Nowadays, a lot of things go **out of date** quickly. When a new computer model is released, then older computers quickly become **out of date**.

Dan: Is this the latest schedule for the meeting next month?

Lyle: No, it's **out of date**. There's a new version I sent out.

The opposite of **out of date** is *up to date*, which means that it is the newest.

Quiz**1. What is a bookworm?**

- a) a worm that lives in books
- b) a person who eats books
- c) a person who loves to read
- d) the name of a book that's cold and slimy

2. Donna was on a date with a guy and he spoke with his mouth full of food. This behaviour made Donna not like him.

Which statement below is true for Donna?

- a) Speaking with your mouth full of food is a turn-on.
- b) Speaking with your mouth full of food is a turn-off.
- c) Donna did the same thing as her date.
- d) Donna asked him to go on another date.

3. What is another way to say *style*?

- a) genre
- b) gender
- c) general
- d) still

4. Peter is not a big fan of winter.

What does this mean?

- a) Peter is hot in the winter.
- b) Peter is cold in the winter.
- c) Peter does not like the winter.
- d) Peter loves the winter.

5. Tyler: This book I'm reading is amazing. It's a real _____.

Please fill in the blank.

- a) bookworm

- b) page turner
- c) turn-off
- d) must-see

6. *Lit* is the short form of which word?

- a) literature
- b) literary
- c) literal
- d) lighter

7. Which of the following can be described as a must-see?

- a) a person
- b) a book
- c) an activity
- d) a film

8. What is the adjective for dork?

- a) dorkish
- b) dorky
- c) dorked
- d) dorka

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