

Chatterbox #70 – School

Transcript

Maura: Hello everyone. It's Maura.

Harp: And Harp.

Maura: And we're back with your Culips English Learning Podcast.

Harp: Check out our website, that's Culips.com, C-U-L-I-P-S.com, because there you can become a member. And when you're a member, you have access to the Learning Materials. Each Learning Material includes a complete transcript, a detailed explanation, and even a quiz.

Maura: Today's episode is a Chatterbox episode, and that's where we chat about all kinds of a different topics. Now, today we're going to do an episode that was suggested to us from Daniel, who is listening from Brazil. And we just wanna say thanks a lot for your suggestion, Daniel, because it was a great idea. And, again, thanks for letting us give you credit for that.

Harp: Thanks, Daniel.

Maura: In our episode today, first we're going to talk about the different kinds of students that you might see in a typical elementary or high school classroom.

Harp: OK. And then we're gonna talk about some classic scenarios.

Maura: And last but not least, Harp and I are going to share some of our own school memories from when we were in school.

Harp: And in this episode, when we say *schools*, we mean mainly elementary, junior high, and high school. Let's get started.

Maura: The first thing we're gonna look at is different kinds of students. Because there are kind of stereotypical students that you really do see in all different kinds of classes and you especially see these kinds of students in movies and TV shows.

Harp: Definitely. Whenever there's a show that involves a school environment, there's always each of these.

Maura: Right. So the first one is ***teacher's pet***.

Harp: Yes, **a teacher's pet**.

- Maura: And this is the kind of student who's always interested in learning and always wants to get really, really good marks at school, which is a good thing. Right, Harp?
- Harp: Definitely.
- Maura: But other students can find it kind of annoying.
- Harp: Yeah, 'cause this is the student that always answers the question, always puts his hand up, or her hand.
- Maura: Right. And this kind of student is always trying to be really nice to the teacher because this student wants good marks.
- Harp: Yes, definitely. This is the kind of student that **brings in an apple for his teacher**.
- Maura: Exactly. And if you think of the actual name, **teacher's pet**, well, a pet is like a little animal that's your friend. So if you imagine this student is like this little pet to the teacher, always following the teacher around, always wanting to be beside the teacher, kind of loyal like a dog might be.
- Harp: Yes.
- Maura: So even from your own experience, thinking back to classes you've been in, you might be able to think of **a teacher's pet**.
- Harp: Or maybe you were the **teacher's pet**.
- Maura: Maybe. Now, let's look at another kind of student.
- Harp: Yeah. Another kind of student is the **class clown**.
- Maura: Yeah, the **class clown**. And you'll notice that one of the words is *clown*, and a clown is a funny person, dressed sometimes in a costume, that's always telling jokes or doing tricks, and just trying to make people have a good time.
- Harp: Yes. So **a class clown** is someone who's always telling jokes in class, always trying to get a laugh out of people.
- Maura: Right. And **a class clown** is usually not mean, but they're just trying to have fun and get the whole class to have fun.
- Harp: Yes.
- Maura: Even though they're not trying to be mean, the **class clown** might still get in trouble from the teacher or **get kicked out** of class or sent to see the principal.

- Harp: Yeah, usually because they're talking when they're not supposed to be talking 'cause they're trying to tell a joke.
- Maura: Right. So, making jokes at inappropriate times or constantly talking could get the **class clown** in trouble. And so the teacher might not like the **class clown**.
- Harp: Yes.
- Maura: And often, in most classes, there is this kind of person, sometimes more than one, who's always telling a joke. And we have one more kind of typical student that you might find in a regular classroom.
- Harp: Yeah. The slacker.
- Maura: Yes, the slacker. **A slacker** is a kind of student who doesn't like to work and isn't motivated to do any school work, so they often don't **hand in their work** and they don't work well in class.
- Harp: Yeah. When there's an assignment in class, they often just **doodle** or **stare off into space** instead of doing their work.
- Maura: Yeah. **A slacker** can be found in a classroom but it can also be found at work. **A slacker** is just someone who doesn't like to work and doesn't work hard.
- Harp: Mmhm. And Maura, which kind of student were you?
- Maura: I have to say, I don't think I really fit any of the stereotypes, but if I had to choose, I would say I was something between the **class clown** and the **teacher's pet**.
- Harp: Interesting.
- Maura: I liked to do well and I liked learning, but I also liked to have fun and I was sometimes a bit too talkative.
- Harp: Interesting.
- Maura: What about you, Harp?
- Harp: I was definitely not the **class clown**. I was so shy when I was in school.
- Maura: Oh, well you really **came out of your shell** then.
- Harp: It's true. I would say I was the **teacher's pet** though. I really liked doing well in school, so...

- Maura: Oh, Harp. I had no idea. All right, now let's look at a couple classic scenarios. And by this we mean different situations or classic lines that you might hear or students might use in schools.
- Harp: Yes. So the first one is ***the dog ate my homework***.
- Maura: Which is such a classic line, when a student is supposed to **hand in an assignment** and they don't have it, usually because they didn't do it. Probably it's the slacker in that case.
- Harp: Definitely. It's such a classic excuse to try to get out of **handing in homework**.
- Maura: Right. So, this is the excuse that a student would give to their teacher: ***the dog ate my homework***. That's the reason why they don't have it done. No one actually uses this expression anymore because it's such a classic line, it's been used so many times, that it's a joke and if any student tried to use this line, it would never work. But like we said, this line has been used so many times that it's a joke.
- Harp: Definitely. Sometimes people even use it sarcastically, because it is so unbelievable.
- Maura: Right. Like, if a student didn't finish their homework, the teacher might say, "Let me guess. **The dog ate it?**" Because obviously there's no excuse and the student just didn't do their homework.
- Harp: Yeah, so this is definitely a classic scenario.
- Maura: Yeah. And this one you'll also hear in movies and on television. Little jokes will be made in reference to this, 'cause it's such a classic line.
- Harp: Definitely. I remember when I was young, I didn't have a dog and I always wanted a dog so I could try to use this excuse.
- Maura: Yeah, it's a fun one. And we have another scenario that I think most students at some time in their education experience.
- Harp: Yes. **To skip school**.
- Maura: Right. So, a student might **skip school** or **play hooky**. Now, **to skip school** means that you don't go to school for no good reason, which means you're not sick, you don't have a medical appointment. You just don't go to school because you don't **wannu** and you wanna have fun instead.
- Harp: Exactly. And you wouldn't have your parents' permission. Maybe you just want to hang out with your friends at the mall or something bad like that.

- Maura: Right. Now, some students **skip school** and their parents don't know where they are and the school tries to look for them because they're supposed to be at school. But when a student turns 18, they can legally sign themselves out of a class. So they might also **skip school** and just go hang out at the mall, like you said, but in that case they can actually sign themselves out. So the other expression that you can use in this scenario is **playing hooky**. This one's a bit older. I think my mom used to use it, and it's not as popular nowadays.
- Harp: Yeah. Kids nowadays would say that they **skipped school** or "Are you **skipping school**?"
- Maura: So these are some classic situations that students might find themselves in or some classic expressions that you could hear. All right, and now is the fun part, our own memories from school.
- Harp: It was such a long time ago.
- Maura: First of all, Harp, did you like school?
- Harp: I loved elementary and junior high school and I hated high school.
- Maura: What happened?
- Harp: It was just annoying. There was lots of gossip. I just wanted to be finished and be in university.
- Maura: It's true that in high school there is a lot of gossip and people are judging each other all the time. It's kind of exhausting.
- Harp: Definitely. The gossip just really annoyed me.
- Maura: Yeah. I agree that the gossip and the rumours are annoying, but I have to say that I really liked high school. I generally enjoyed school all the way along, but I really had fun in high school, not necessarily for the classes, but for the social part with so many friends and always hanging out and going to parties.
- Harp: You're still friends with your high school friends, right?
- Maura: Yup. Some of my friends from high school I still keep in contact with and even one of my friends from kindergarten.
- Harp: You're still friends with one of your friends from kindergarten?
- Maura: I know. Crazy, eh?

- Harp: Wow. You've known each other for a long time.
- Maura: Yes, Harp, I'm getting old. So, I was wondering, do you have any particular memories from when you were in school, any funny stories that you can recall?
- Harp: Um... I just really remember when we did, like, sleepovers at school or if we went on camping trips, and just that whole **slumber party** aspect of school.
- Maura: You slept over at your school?
- Harp: Yeah, we did it twice when I was in elementary school. And all of us, I think it was all the same grade, maybe grade six and seven together, so 12 years old and 13 years old, all slept in the gym together and we told ghost stories and played games. I don't know why, but we did this. Did you not have a **slumber party** at school?
- Maura: No, but I would have loved to.
- Harp: Yeah, it was really fun, actually.
- Maura: I think that some people might have done that to raise money, but I was never involved in it, so I don't really know.
- Harp: No, it wasn't to raise money. It was just a school activity.
- Maura: That's fun. You know, I have done a sleepover at a school as a teacher. But it wasn't even a sleepover, people were awake all night.
- Harp: Why? What were you doing?
- Maura: It was just an all-nighter, have fun kind of thing.
- Harp: Really?
- Maura: Yeah, and as a teacher, **let me tell you**, it was very tiring.
- Harp: That's so interesting. The kids stayed up all night?
- Maura: Yeah, yeah. It was fun.
- Harp: Wow. What about you? What are some memories you have from school?
- Maura: Well, like you, my biggest memories are from trips that we took. And I remember in some of my last years of high school going on camping trips. I particularly remember going on a winter camping trip and some friends and I along with the outdoor adventure club that we were a part of set up a tent and slept outside in the winter.

- Harp: You slept outside in the winter?
- Maura: OK. Now, wait for me to get to the end of story and it will sound more like me. So, the first night, my friends and I tried to sleep outside but we were sleeping in our snow pants and winter coats and everything and we were still so cold that we could barely sleep, but in the area that we were camping, there was a little cabin and so by the end of the night, pretty much everybody was in the cabin because it was just so cold.
- Harp: Oh my goodness. That is really funny.
- Maura: And then, the next day we were supposed to stay the night again, but one of my friends had her car because we drove, so we decided to leave because it wasn't fun and we were too cold. And ever since that experience, I've always said I will never go winter camping.
- Harp: Yeah, it doesn't sound like fun to me at all.
- Maura: It was very cold. So, it's funny, because we're talking about school, but when we start talking about the memories, you don't really remember the classes or the assignments. When you're finished school, you remember the trips and the people and the funny experiences that you had.
- Harp: Another thing that I remember are the school dances.
- Maura: Oh really?
- Harp: Yeah. Just getting excited that there was going to be a dance and thinking about the boys you wanted to dance with and trying to practice dance moves at home.
- Maura: Oh! Practicing dance moves at home! Maybe we should put a video of that.
- Harp: I'm not a very good dancer, so no.
- Maura: But yeah, there were a lot of fun and funny times in high school. All right, well, let's just go over what we talked about one more time.
- Harp: OK. So we started with talking about some types of students, some stereotypical images of students.
- Maura: Right. And the ones we talked about were the **teacher's pet**, the **class clown**, and the slacker.
- Harp: Yes. And then we talked about classic scenarios.
- Maura: Like **the dog ate my homework** and **skipping school**.

- Harp: Yes. And then we talked about some school memories.
- Maura: Oh, the good old days.
- Harp: The good old days indeed.
- Maura: So, thanks again Daniel for giving us this idea. It was fun, eh?
- Harp: It was a good idea.
- Maura: And don't forget to go to our website, Culips.com, that's C-U-L-I-P-S.com, and check out becoming a member.
- Harp: Yeah. And also go to Facebook and let us know if you have any ideas of what you'd like to hear.
- Maura: Yeah. We'll talk to you again soon. Bye!
- Harp: Bye everyone.

Detailed Explanation

A teacher's pet

A **teacher's pet** is a student who always tries to please the teacher by doing well on class assignments and participating in class discussions. Often, the teacher also likes the **teacher's pet** because this person is such a good student.

There are lots of other names for students who are the **teacher's pet**. Some are nasty; remember that often other students do not like the **teacher's pet** because the teacher seems to like that person more than others. These names can be used outside of the school setting too. Any person who is trying to impress a person in authority, like a boss, can be called these names.

Here's a short list of names that also mean someone is a **teacher's pet**:

Brownnoser	Kiss-ass
Bootlicker	Suck up

Here's one example with **teacher's pet**:

Dean: Do you see the way Mark always stays after school to ask Mr. Duncan questions about the homework?

Fiona: I know! He's such a **teacher's pet**.

To bring in an apple for the teacher

In Canada, the United States, and other countries, there has traditionally been the practice of students **bringing in an apple** as a gift to their teachers. It is still widely known, but no longer practiced. The reason any gift is given to the teacher is to show appreciation and gratitude, or to help the student get better grades.

Some believe this began because traditionally teachers' pay was not very high. A gift of food was given to help the teachers out. This was possibly also because many families at that time lived on farms and so could afford to pay teachers with food. Also, an apple is healthy and so by giving this gift, the student shows they care about the teacher's health.

Nowadays, the apple is associated with education, schools, and teachers. Most modern-day students have never given or seen another student **give their teacher an apple**.

Some students and parents may still give teachers small gifts, usually at Christmas or the end of the year. This is more common in elementary school than in junior or high school.

Apple-polisher is another name like *teacher's pet* that can be used to talk about a student who always tries to do things so the teacher will like them. **Giving a teacher an apple** or another gift might get that teacher to like that student.

A class clown

A class clown is a student who always wants to have fun and is often not concerned with learning. The **class clown** often makes jokes and inappropriate comments during lessons. Just like a clown, this person will do strange and funny things in class to get the other students' attention.

Here's a short list of names that also mean someone is **a class clown**:

Jokester	Prankster
Clown	Wisecracker

These other names could also be used outside of school for anyone who always likes to tell jokes or make people laugh.

Here's an example with **a class clown**:

Ms. Jones: Do you have any **class clowns** in your class this year?
Mr. Schmidt: Yeah. I think I have a couple of them!

To get kicked out

To get kicked out or **to be kicked out** means that someone asked you to leave a place, or an organized group, for a negative reason. After you **get kicked out**, you cannot return without permission. **To kick someone out** means to ask or force someone to leave.

Getting kicked out also means that the person did not want to leave.

In this episode, Maura and Harp are talking about class clowns when Maura says that sometimes a class clown may **get kicked out** of class. This means that the teacher asks the student disturbing the class to leave. Often, the reason a person **gets kicked out** is bad behaviour. A person could **get kicked out** of any public place, especially a bar, for behaving badly.

People who really refuse to leave a place after they are asked to leave may be made to leave by force. This expression is connected to being physically **kicked out** of a place. Now most of the time when this expression is used, it is not physical.

Here are a couple of examples with **to get kicked out** and **to kick out**.

Joanna: I can't believe I **got kicked out** of my program at school!
William: I guess that's what happens when you don't maintain the average they want you to.

Mr. Randall: I had **to kick a couple of students out of my class** the other day. They were throwing things around.

Mrs. Black: Sometimes you don't have a choice. You have to ask them to leave.

A slacker

Here's the third kind of student we look at in this episode. **A slacker** is a student who doesn't like to work hard and does not hand in work on time or at all. *The teacher's pet* and *the class clown* can only be used to talk about students. But a person can be called **a slacker** in lots of different situations. There is even a verb *to slack*, which means to not work hard or at all.

Here's an example with **a slacker**:

Theo: There's this guy in my group at school who's such **a slacker**. He's not doing anything!

Jermaine: That's so annoying. I hate working with people like that.

To hand something in

To hand something in is to submit your work to the person who is expecting it. Students often **hand in work** to teachers, and this is how it is used in this episode. A person could also hand in an important document to an authority. Work could also be **handed in** to a boss at work.

Here's an example with **to hand something in**:

Greg: Do you want to go out tonight?

Kevin: I can't. I have **to hand an assignment in** tomorrow morning and I haven't even started it yet. I'll be working on it all night!

We can also use **to turn something in** just like **to hand something in**.

To doodle

To doodle is to draw or write randomly. There is no reason **to doodle**. Most people **doodle** while they are in class or at a meeting, or doing something else. Harp says that people might be **doodling** in class while listening to the teacher.

Here's an example with **to doodle**:

Rebecca: What are you drawing?

Jackie: Oh, nothing really. I'm just **doodling** a funny face to pass the time.

To stare off into space

This expression, **to stare off into space**, means to be thinking about something else and not focusing on what is happening in that moment. A person who's **staring off into space** is looking in one particular direction, but is not actually looking at anything.

Over the years at Culips, we've seen a bunch of related expressions about people who are thinking about other things not related to where they are or what they are doing. For example, we could also say that a person who is **staring off into space** is zoned out.

Here's an example with **to stare off into space**:

Bethany: Look at Mike **staring off into space** over there. He always looks out of it.

Nathan: Either he's tired or thoughtful. I'm not quite sure.

To come out of your shell

A person who is shy and quiet might eventually **come out of their shell**. This means that this shy and quiet person becomes less shy and more talkative. When a person **comes out of their shell**, it might be temporary, for one day or during a specific experience, or a person might also **come out of their shell** as they grow up.

This expression is related to turtles. When a turtle is in his shell, he is alone and hidden from the outside world. When he comes out of his shell, he reveals himself and interacts with the outside. A shy person shows their personality more when they **come out of their shell**.

Maura says that Harp **came out of her shell**. Harp says that when she was in school she was shy. Harp is not a shy person anymore, so as she grew up she talked more and expressed her personality more.

Here's an example with **to come out of your shell**:

Pete: Dominic really **came out of his shell** last night at the party.

Oliver: Yeah, he's opening up little by little.

The dog ate my homework

The classic line that a student has for their teacher when they have not completed their homework is **my dog ate my homework**. The origin of this expression is not known, and it is hard to say if anyone ever actually used this excuse seriously. It is widely known and referred to in movies and on TV.

No one would try to use this excuse seriously today because it is known as a joke. People might even use this expression to talk about an excuse that was not good or believable.

Here's an example of *the dog ate my homework* being used in this way:

Brian: What are you going to tell the teacher about your class assignment?

Terry: I don't know. I'll just tell her **my dog ate it**.^{*} I'm going to fail this class either way.

^{*}In this case, Terry will probably not use that excuse, but he uses the reference to say that he will not take the time to think of a good excuse.

To skip school/to play hooky

When students do not go to a class without having a good reason, this is called **skipping school**. As long as there have been schools, there have been students who **skip** when they don't want to go to class. **To skip** means to pass over something. In this case, students are passing over classes by not attending. This expression can also be used by just using the verb **to skip**.

Here's an example with **to skip (school)**:

Stan: Aren't you going to class now?

Heather: No, I'm **skipping**. See you later!

As we say in this episode, we also have the expression **to play hooky**. This is an older expression and it is not used as much today as it was in the past.

Wannu

Wannu is not a word and so does not really have a certain spelling. **Wannu** represents how the words *want to* may sometimes sound when spoken by a native English speaker.

Most often, we hear about *wanna*, which is also not a real word, but has become so common that it can now be written in this slang form. When the words *want to* are said quickly, sometimes they sound like *wanna* and sometimes they can sound like **wannu**.

If you want to listen again to hear this pronunciation, Maura says, "You just don't go to school because you don't **wannu** and you wanna have fun instead." Maura says **wannu** and then immediately after, she says *wanna*. There is no difference in how these mispronunciations are used. **Wannu** can always be used for *wanna*.

A slumber party

A slumber party is when two or more kids or teenagers sleep at one person's home. At **slumber parties**, kids usually play games, watch movies, or talk all night. *To slumber* means to sleep, but it is not commonly used. A **slumber party** can also be called a sleepover. The kids sleep over at a friend's house.

Harp had **slumber parties** at school. As discussed in this episode, some schools have events where students are invited to stay the night at school. In some cases, the students sleep and in other cases the students stay awake all night. In some cases, the students raise money for their school or a charity, and in other cases it's just for fun.

Let me tell you

This is a little expression that is used right before you tell someone something! It's a little expression that means exactly what it says. A person might say **let me tell you something** when it is particularly important or they think that they have some special knowledge or experience that they can share.

Maura says **let me tell you** before she says that as a teacher, doing a sleepover at school is tiring. In this case, because Maura works as a teacher, she has experience and can share that it is tiring.

Here are a couple more examples with **let me tell you**:

Maria: **Let me tell you**, Friday night's party was crazy.

Sharon: Oh, really? What happened?

Adam: I think that studying at university is a lot of work and can cause a lot of stress for students.

Chris: I agree. **Let me tell you**, I was so stressed out as a student.

Quiz

1. Which of the following explains the connection between teachers and apples?

- a) Most teachers' favourite fruit is an apple.
- b) Students used to bring teachers apples.
- c) Teachers are always hungry after a class.
- d) none of the above

2. What is the name for a person in class who always tries to tell jokes and does things to make other students laugh?

- a) a class crack
- b) a chatterbox
- c) a teacher's pet
- d) a class clown

3. Josh was speaking really loudly so the librarian _____ of the library.

Please fill in the blank.

- a) kicked him
- b) kicked him out
- c) kicked him in
- d) hopped, skipped, and jumped out

4. Which type of student does little or no work?

- a) a teacher's pet
- b) a class clown
- c) a slacker
- d) a brownnoser

5. What does *to doodle* mean?

- a) to sleepover
- b) to draw randomly
- c) to talk randomly
- d) to talk in class

6. Curtis is really starting to come out of his shell this year.

What kind of person was Curtis in years past?

- a) loud and talkative
- b) quiet and shy
- c) angry and tired
- d) friendly and energetic

7. Which is the classic line when students have not done their schoolwork?

- a) The cat is out of the bag.
- b) A little birdie told me.
- c) The dog ate it.
- d) A snake stole it.

8. When English speakers say *want to* what can it sound like they say?

- a) watcha
- b) wannu
- c) woulda
- d) wanga

9. What is a slumber party?

- a) when two or more friends sleep at one place
- b) a party at school
- c) a party where no one sleeps
- d) a party when everyone sleeps

Answers:

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