

## Catch Word #105 – Blah blah blah

### Transcript

Maura: Hello everyone. This is Maura.

Harp: And Harp.

Maura: And we're back, with your Culips podcast.

Harp: Yes. Go to our website, Culips.com, that's C-U-L-I-P-S.com, because there you can become a member.

Maura: Oh yeah. And when you're a member, you have access to our transcripts for all our episodes, more detailed explanations of different expressions and words that we use in our episodes, and also a quiz to test yourself after you've listened.

Harp: Yes. And you can also like us on Facebook. We have a lot of activity going on on Facebook and a lot of comments and fun conversation.

Maura: Yeah. It's the best place to chat with us, and I love hearing from all the people listening.

Harp: Yeah. If you have a question, you can post it there and one of us will answer it.

Maura: OK. Now, today's episode is a Catch Word episode, and that's where we look at different slang or expressions that we use, we give you examples, we tell you how to use them.

Harp: And so today, we're going to look at slang we use when we're speaking but that aren't really words.

Maura: Yeah. And that probably sounds confusing, but just **bear with us**, hang on, and we'll explain what all of that means. So, we're going to look at slang that we use when we're talking and they're not really words; we use these slang terms to kind of fill in the blank when information isn't important or we forget something.

Harp: These aren't words you would write anywhere. It's only in spoken English.

Maura: Yup, for sure. But these words are pretty fun.

Harp: Yes. That's why we're gonna share them with you.

Maura: OK, so, let's start with our first slang term.

Harp: **Blah blah blah.**

Maura: It sounds so simple. It sounds like nothing, but it really is something that we use when we're talking, **blah blah blah**, and we usually say it fast, **blah blah blah**.

Harp: Yeah, **blah blah blah**.

Maura: And **blah blah blah** is the slang term that we might use when someone is telling a story and they don't want to give all the details, so instead of all of these details, they say **blah blah blah**.

Harp: Yeah, it's when you're telling a story and you're trying to give a little bit of context but you don't want to give all the little details in the story, you just wanna kind of shorten it to get to the important, the **juicy**, part of the story. So you say **blah blah blah**.

Maura: Right. When you say **blah blah blah**, it means that some things were still happening, time was still passing, maybe someone was still talking, but the details of what was actually going on aren't important so you can just pass over it.

Harp: Yeah. Let's give some examples with this.

Maura: So, guess what?

Harp: What?

Maura: Well, just yesterday, I was walking down the street with Sam.

Harp: OK.

Maura: And we were just on the way to get something to eat, we were walking along, you know, Sam's telling me about his new job, and all of the people that he works with and **blah blah blah**, and then suddenly there was this huge explosion **out of nowhere** and a building fell down behind us.

Harp: No way!

Maura: Yeah, it was crazy.

Harp: Wow.

Maura: So, there's an example when we can use **blah blah blah**.

- Harp: Yes, because the important and exciting part of the story was the loud explosion. It wasn't the story that Sam was telling, it was the explosion, so you used **blah blah blah** to cut out the boring details.
- Maura: Right. And I was just using **blah blah blah** to replace all of the things that Sam was telling me, like you said, Harp, they're not really interesting details so I didn't have to say what each thing was that he told me but **blah blah blah** just showed that he was talking and **going on and on**.
- Harp: Yes. OK, so let's give one more example with **blah blah blah**.
- Maura: OK.

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|--------|---|
| Harp:  | Hey, I'm so sorry I'm late for lunch.                                 |
| Maura: | Yeah, where were you?   |
| Harp:  | Well I was in a business meeting and you know <b>blah blah blah</b> . |
| Maura: | Yeah, sometimes those meetings last forever.                          |
| Harp:  | I know. It would just not stop.                                       |

- Maura: So, there's an example where you're talking about a meeting and really, the details, of the meeting, **who cares**.
- Harp: Exactly. The excuse was that the meeting went long and it didn't really matter what happened at the meeting, so I just said **blah blah blah**.
- Maura: Right. And because you said **blah blah blah**, I thought people were talking a lot, like people do a meetings, and it goes longer and longer. But the details weren't really important.
- Harp: Yeah, exactly.
- Maura: OK, good. So, **blah blah blah** can be used any time you want to skip over some details or they're not important or they're boring. You can just say **blah blah blah**.
- Harp: Yes. OK, let's move on to our second slang expression.
- Maura: And this expression is just like **blah blah blah**, so it can be used to replace something that's not important or not interesting.
- Harp: Yes. Our second expression is **yadda yadda yadda**.
- Maura: I have to say that saying these expressions over and over again is kind of making me laugh.

- Harp: I know. It sounds like nonsense.
- Maura: Yeah, **yadda yadda yadda**. So, if we say this slowly, it sounds like **yadda yadda yadda**, but we always say it fast.
- Harp: Yeah, you would never say it slow like that.
- Maura: **Yadda yadda yadda**. So, we'll give you an example with **yadda yadda yadda**.
- Harp: Yeah, because like Maura said, it's used in the exact same way as **blah blah blah**.

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| Harp:  | Oh no, I'm so tired.   |
| Maura: | What? Where were you?  |
| Harp:  | I just said hi to Paul, and you know how he is. He just <b>goes on and on and on</b> . |
| Maura: | Oh yeah. That guy can talk forever.  |
| Harp:  | I know. It's like <b>yadda yadda yadda</b> . So boring.                                |
| Maura: | Oh yeah. Well at least you got out of there.   |

- Maura: So, there's an example with **yadda yadda yadda**, where someone was talking a lot.
- Harp: Yeah. In the example, Paul was talking a lot but it wasn't important conversation. He was saying nothing that was interesting.
- Maura: Right. But because of the way you said **yadda yadda yadda**, you could tell it wasn't very interesting.
- Harp: No, exactly.
- Maura: OK, good. So, remember, **yadda yadda yadda** is pretty much used just like **blah blah blah**, so whenever information is not important or you don't remember, it's not interesting, you can just skip over it.
- Harp: Yes, exactly.

- Maura: Something else that's interesting is that when you really wanna emphasize that something **went on and on and on**, or a person continued to talk and talk and talk, you can even extend these expressions. **Blah blah blah** is the normal length but you can also say **blah blah blah blah blah blah blah blah blah** to emphasize it, just like **yadda yadda yadda** is said three times, but if you wanna emphasize it, you can say it many times.
- Harp: Yeah.
- Maura: Go ahead, Harp.
- Harp: **Yadda yadda yadda yadda.**
- Maura: So, if you really want to emphasize that something or someone **went on and on and on**, you can use this many times.
- Harp: Exactly. OK, let's move on to our next expression.
- Maura: All right, our next expression is different from the first two. This one is **whatchamacallit**.
- Harp: This one's fun: **whatchamacallit**.
- Maura: So, this is a slang term made up of a few different words. This word is made up of other words: what do you call it.
- Harp: Yes. But when you say that really quickly, you get **whatchamacallit**.
- Maura: Yeah. So, *what do you call it* becomes **whatchamacallit**. It sounds so funny.
- Harp: It sounds so funny.
- Maura: Now we'll tell you when you use it. You use **whatchamacallit** when you can't remember what to call something, when you forget the name of something. Because even in your own language, sometimes you just don't remember a word that you should know.
- Harp: No, for sure. And this happens to me all the time, like, "Hand me that... oh, **whatchamacallit**, you know, the stapler. The stapler, hand it to me."
- Maura: Yeah, exactly. It's funny, because when we forget those little things, those little details that we should know, it's called a **brain fart**.
- Harp: Yes, it is.
- Maura: And they happen to everybody.
- Harp: Yeah, it's when you can't just... It's...

Maura: You just had one!

Harp: Yeah, it's when you can't remember the little thing, the name for something that you know what it is, but you just can't remember it.

Maura: So this is when using a word like **whatchamacallit** would be good. Now, even though, as we told you, this word comes from a question: What do you call it? We don't use it as a question, we use **whatchamacallit** to fill in the blank of whatever the word is that we forget. So, if we forget the word for a slipper, we could say "Can you pass me my **whatchamacallit**" and then **whatchamacallit** just replaces *slipper*.

Harp: Yes, exactly. Let's give an example for this expression.

Maura: Let's do it.

Harp: Hey, thanks for helping me fix my sink.

Maura: Yeah, yeah, no problem. I'm almost done. OK, can you just pass me the **whatchamacallit**?

Harp: What do you need?

Maura: The thing right there, the... Oh, what is the... Oh, it's the pliers, that's it.

Harp: Oh, the pliers. Here you go.

Maura: OK, thanks. I'll just be another ten minutes, then we should be done.

Maura: So, there's an example where someone didn't know the word for something, they had a **brain fart**, and so they used the word **whatchamacallit**.

Harp: Yeah. They knew what the tool was called, but they couldn't remember it right then, so they used **whatchamacallit**.

Maura: Yep. You know, there used to be a bit of a joke in my family with this word.

Harp: Really? What was the joke?

Maura: Well, my grandfather used to always say this word. Yeah, he would always forget words here and there, but a reason for that was that English actually was his second language.

Harp: OK.

Maura: So yeah, sometimes you forget little words, especially if English is your second language.

- Harp: That's cute that he would say that.
- Maura: Yeah. I mean, you don't wanna use it too much, I guess, but just enough so people don't think you're crazy.
- Harp: All right, let's move on to the next expression.
- Maura: OK. The next expression is a little bit like **whatchamacallit**, because it's also used when you forget something.
- Harp: Yes. The next expression is...
- Maura: **Whatshername** or **whatshisname**.
- Harp: Yes, **whatshername** or **whatshisname**.
- Maura: So this is used when someone forgets the name of a person.
- Harp: Yes, exactly.
- Maura: And it's not really a nice thing to do to forget someone's name, but this expression is used when the person is not around anyway, so it's not a big deal.
- Harp: Yeah, no, exactly. When you're talking about someone and you forget their name, you would use this expression.
- Maura: Like, for example, maybe you're at work and there's a new person who just started a couple days ago and you can't remember her name so when you're talking to another colleague, you might say, "Hey, did you meet, uh, **whatshername**?"
- Harp: Yes.
- Maura: That would be OK, especially if she wasn't there, because you don't wanna use this when someone's around. Because if someone forgets your name, you feel kind of unimportant.
- Harp: No, definitely. And remember, this is like **whatchamacallit**, where *what's her name* is an actual question, but here we use it to replace when you can't remember someone's name.
- Maura: Right. So when you don't remember the name, you fill in their name with **whatshisname** or **whatshername**.
- Harp: Yeah. And you normally say it really quickly and don't actually pronounce the *H*.

Maura: Right. We say it so fast that you don't hear *what's her name*, you hear *whats-er-name* or *whats-is-name*.

Harp: Yeah, because you're saying it so quickly.

Maura: Yup. So let's give an example with **whatsername** and **whatshisname**.

Harp: Let's do it.

Maura: Hey Jill, guess who I saw at John's party last night.

Harp: Who?

Maura: I saw, uh, you know, **whatshisname**, John's friend.

Harp: Who?

Maura: You know, John's friend. I don't remember his name, the guy that you went out with, like, last month and then you didn't talk to each other after.

Harp: Oh, Bill.

Maura: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I saw Bill.

Harp: Oh, interesting.

Maura: Yeah, interesting.

Maura: So there's an example where someone might say **whatshisname** or **whatshername** to replace the name of someone that they don't remember.

Harp: Yup. When you can't remember someone's name, you can say this expression.

Maura: But we should say, again, that it's not polite to forget someone's name, so you should never use this expression in front of people or with people you don't know very well or with people you just met, because it's a bit rude. You should just ask, "Oh, sorry. I forgot their name. What is it?" That's much more polite.

Harp: Yeah. Use this expression only with close friends.

Maura: All right, so, let's **blah blah blah blah**. Just kidding, let's go over the expressions we looked at today.

Harp: Let's do it. So we started with **blah blah blah**.

Maura: Right. And then we also looked at **yadda yadda yadda**.

- Harp: And then ***whatchamacallit***.
- Maura: And ***whatshername, whatshisname***.
- Harp: Yes. And remember, check out our website, Culips.com, that's C-U-L-I-P-S.com.
- Maura: And don't forget to check out becoming a member, because when you become a member, Culips just becomes that much more meaningful in your life.
- Harp: Yes, it definitely does. And it's more useful for you. Because you can listen and then listen again with the transcripts and make sure you understood everything. And also, those detailed explanations, they just give so much more information.
- Maura: Great. And don't forget to say hi to us on Facebook. We'll see you later.
- Harp: Bye everyone!
- Maura: Bye!

## Detailed Explanation

### To bear with someone

When most people see the word **bear** they think of the large animal. But **bear** has some other meanings too, and can even be used as a verb, as in this case. **To bear with something** or **someone** is to endure or to be tolerant. If someone asks you **to bear with them**, it means that they want you to be patient and tolerate what is happening, while you wait for something.

In this episode, Maura asks for you **to bear with Harp and her**. She says this because they introduce the topic for this episode by saying it is about expressions that aren't words! She wants the listeners **to bear with them** because it might be confusing at that moment, but soon they will explain more and make it clearer. Maura also says to hang on, which means to wait.

Here's another example with **to bear with someone**:

Henry (giving a speech): We are having some technical difficulties with the microphone at the moment, so please **bear with us** while we fix it.

This is often said as a request, like in the example above and in our episode, a person asking others **to bear with them**.

### Blah blah blah

**Blah blah blah** is a string of words that people say when they skip unnecessary and unimportant details. The speaker gives some information to introduce the story and then says **blah blah blah**, and we can imagine that things continue.

This expression is most often used when people are telling a story and do not want to explain all the details. **Blah blah blah** can also be used to mean that someone was talking a lot, but they did not say anything important.

As we say in this episode, people usually say three **blahs** in a row when using this expression, but they might say just two or they might say more than three. Saying more than three expresses that a lot of time passed and nothing interesting or important was happening. Using more than three **blahs** might also show that what was happening was really boring.

Here's one more example with **blah blah blah**:

Zack: How was the party last night?

June: It was pretty good. It was the usual, you know, people talking and dancing, **blah blah blah**.

There is also an adjective **blah**. If something or someone is described as **blah**, this means that it is boring, dull, and uninteresting.

Here's an example with **blah** as an adjective:

Jackie: The movie last night was OK. I thought it was a bit **blah**, though.

Luca: You're right. It wasn't that great.

### Juicy

**Juicy** can be used as slang to describe some information that is interesting and exciting, and also often improper or inappropriate. Gossip (stories about other people) is most often described as **juicy**. Of course, you can also call a fruit **juicy** if it has a lot of juice.

Harp uses **juicy** in this episode when talking about how to use *blah blah blah*. A person might use *blah blah blah* to skip any unimportant details and get to the **juicy**, most exciting, part of the story.

Here's an example with **juicy**:

Lila: Jon broke up with Helen and then that night I saw him on a date with someone it looked like he knew already.

Blake: That's **juicy**!

### Out of nowhere

Often when people are telling stories, an event might be surprising or seem to happen suddenly. This is why expressions like **out of nowhere** or **all of a sudden** are used so frequently. Saying that something happened **out of nowhere** is like saying that it happened so fast or was so surprising that you did not see how it happened.

Maura uses this expression when she is giving an example that involves a very surprising explosion. She had no warning that there was going to be an explosion, it just came **out of nowhere**.

Here's another example with **out of nowhere**:

Maddie: So what happened on your date last night?

Paul: I was having a great time and we were chatting away, and then **out of nowhere** she says that she wants to go home and doesn't want to see me again.

### Who cares

**Who cares** is an expression used in the form of a question, but it's not a real question with an answer. We say **who cares** when we mean that something was not important and no one cares.

Maura uses this expression when talking about the example of a boring meeting. She says **who cares** to mean that no one cares about the details of this boring meeting.

Here's an example with **who cares**:

Doug: Oh no! We forgot to get napkins that match the plates. Now the napkins won't match for the party tonight.

Ariane: **Who cares**. No one will even notice.

Saying **who cares** can be rude if what you're talking about is important to someone else. Use it with people you know well.

### Yadda yadda yadda

Here's the next slang way to skip uninteresting or unimportant information: **yadda yadda yadda**. **Yadda yadda yadda** is used in much the same way as *blah blah blah*. This is not usually written, but used in casual speech.

Here's one more example:

Henry: We were spending the night at home, and we'd just had dinner. So we got to talking, **yadda yadda yadda**, and then we got the strangest phone call.

Luke: What was the phone call about?

Remember, we often say **yadda** three times in a row, but you might also hear it only twice, or more than three times. Saying it more than three times means that a lot of time went by that was uninteresting.

### To go on and on

When someone or something **goes on and on**, it means that it continues in a boring, uninteresting way and it feels long. A thing can **go on and on**, like a movie or a speech. This means it's boring and seems to continue for a long time. A person can **go on and on**, like Harp says in this episode. A person who **goes on and on** talks for a long time about something that is not interesting to you.

You can also express how long and boring someone or something was by repeating **on and on**. Here's an example of that:

Jasper: How was your day at work?

Melissa: It was all right, but I had to go to a meeting and it was so boring! It just **went on and on and on and on and on**. I thought it would never end!

Whatchamacallit

This is a super long kind of word that is a blend of a whole question! **Whatchamacallit** has the meaning of *what do you call it* or some might even say *what did you call it*. The closest question that has the same sounds is *what you may call it*. A person uses **whatchamacallit** because they do not remember or do not know what something is called. It is also possible to have more than one **whatchamacallits**.

Here's an example with more than one:

June: Can you hand me the **whatchamacallits**? I'm trying to fix the door.

Antonio: You mean these little things here? Sure, here you go.

Other words used similarly to whatchamacallit

There are actually even more expressions to replace words that we don't know or can't remember the name for. Here's a short list of a few. There are even more depending where you are in the English speaking world.

Thingamabob/thingamajig

Doodad/doohickey

Whatsitcalled/whatdoyacallit

A brain fart

**Brain fart** is a relatively new term for when someone can't remember something that they know, or they say something strange that doesn't make sense. People might feel embarrassed when they have a **brain fart**.

We talk about **brain farts** in this episode because when people use the expression *whatchamacallit*, it might be because they can't remember something that they usually know.

Here's an example with **brain fart**:

Stewart: I'd like to introduce you to my friend... uh... um...

Julie: You can't remember my name!

Stewart: Julie! Julie! Her name's Julie. Of course, I know your name; we've been friends for years. It was a total **brain fart**.

Using the expression **brain fart** can be considered rude, especially because it contains the word *fart*. Only use this expression with close friends.

Whatshername/whatshisname

This expression is used when you can't remember the name of someone. We use **whatshername** for females and **whatshisname** for males.

Like we say in this episode, it can be quite rude to forget someone's name and refer to them like this. Only use this with close friends. Calling a person **whatshisname** or **whathername** implies that the person's name is not important to you. People are most likely to use these expressions when they are talking about people they do not know very well or do not care about.

Another variation on this expression is **whatshisface** and **whatsherface**. This is definitely rude and only used for someone you do not like or do not care about. To use this expression to talk about someone is disrespectful.

**Quiz**

1. **Stephanie: I'm a bit tired, so please \_\_\_\_\_ while I get ready. I'll probably be a bit slow.**

**Please fill in the blank.**

- a) bear
  - b) bear in mind
  - c) bear with
  - d) bear with me
2. **When using *blah blah blah*, why would someone use more than three in a row?**
- a) to express that something went on for a long time
  - b) to express that someone was surprised
  - c) to express that something was exciting
  - d) to express that something was short
3. **Which of the following is a juicy story?**
- a) Sylvie went back to school.
  - b) Sylvie found out her husband is not the father of her child.
  - c) Sylvie is happily married.
  - d) Sylvie went to a party last night.
4. **What is important to know about the expression *who cares*?**
- a) It is not actually a question.
  - b) It means that something is not important.
  - c) It could be considered rude.
  - d) All of the above
5. **Which expression is just like *blah blah blah*?**
- a) yiddish yiddish yiddish
  - b) yadda yadda yadda
  - c) snap crackle pop
  - d) boo-hoo

6. If something goes on and on, what does that mean?
- a) It turns on repeatedly.
  - b) It turns off repeatedly.
  - c) It lasts for a long time.
  - d) It lasts for a short time.
7. Which word is NOT similar in meaning to *whatchamacallit*?
- a) doodad
  - b) doohickey
  - c) dingdong
  - d) thingamabob
8. When someone has a brain fart, what happens?
- a) They cannot remember something they know.
  - b) They make a strange sound like *blah*.
  - c) They have a sharp pain in their head.
  - d) They take a nap.
9. Which of the following is like *whatshisname*, but even more rude and disrespectful?
- a) whatchamacallit
  - b) whatshisface
  - c) What is that person's name?
  - d) And Bob's your uncle

**Answers:**

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