Catch Word #163 – Testing the waters

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:
- **'cause**: because
- **gonna**: going to
- **kinda**: kind of
- **wanna**: want to

Transcript

Harp: Hello everyone. This is Harp.

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

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

Andrew: When you become a member, you get access to our Learning Materials, which are great for helping you study English. You get transcripts of all our episodes, along with detailed explanations of the key expressions, and quizzes also, which will help you test your comprehension.

Harp: Yes. So make sure you go there, sign up, and become a member. And if you're on Facebook or Twitter, come on over and say hi and you can leave us suggestions for upcoming episodes or some questions about some previous episodes.

Andrew: So, Harp, how have you been doing this week?

Harp: I've been pretty good. Busy, busy, but I'm good. How about you?

Andrew: You know what? I had an awful week.

Harp: Oh no! Why?

Andrew: I have been just completely sick all week.

Harp: Aw. Well, I hope you feel OK now.

Andrew: I feel a little bit better but you might be able to hear in my voice today; it's a little funny, because I'm just a little congested.

Harp: OK. Well it sounds OK to me, so I hope the listeners are OK with it as well. Let's get started?

Andrew: Yeah. Let's start with today's episode. Today we have a Catch Word episode.

Harp: Yes. So that's where we look at some expressions, we explain them, we give you some examples, and we just teach them to you.

Andrew: And today's expressions are all related to a certain type of situation. And before you commit to doing something, you want to get more information. You want **to suss the situation out**.

Harp: Yeah. So it's when you're being kind of cautious and you're kind of examining the options before you decide to commit to an action.

Andrew: Exactly. And I think we can just get to the expressions.

Harp: I think we should start.

Andrew: So, our first expression is *to test the waters*.

Harp: Yes. *To test the waters*.

Andrew: Mmhmm. Plural, right? *Waters*.

Harp: Yes. I've heard some people say *to test the water*, but normally it's *to test the waters*.

Andrew: Mmhmm. And what does *to test the waters* mean?

Harp: So basically, *to test the waters* means when you're not really sure about an action so you're approaching it very cautiously. You're not making a rash decision. You're being very cautious about it.

Andrew: Exactly. You're testing something out, right?

Harp: Exactly. So you're… You're kind of maybe talking to some friends about an action and seeing how they're going to react. Or you're talking to your boss about a new project. You're… You're **testing the waters** to see if this is a good idea, a good action to take.

Andrew: Exactly. Because committing 100% to doing something right from the start sometimes is a foolish idea. You need to try things slowly.

Harp: Yup. You need to get all the information you can, get a lot of reactions from people before you make a final decision to act on something.

Andrew: Exactly. And so this is **testing the waters**. And this expression… I think it has an interesting origin.

Harp: Oh yeah? Tell me about it.

Andrew: Well, if you think, you know… Sometimes before you go swimming, you wanna put your hand or your foot into the water to test the temperature before you jump in, right?

Harp: Yes.

Andrew: And so, this is just literally an extension of that idea. Putting your finger in the water to test the temperature is the same thing as trying out something before you commit fully to that thing.

Harp: Yup, exactly. So if you imagine someone sitting on a dock in a lake, they put their foot in the water just a little bit to see how cold it is before they jump in completely.

Andrew: Exactly. They don't want to freeze. OK, so I think we can get to some examples with this expression.

Harp: Hey, do you wanna go try that new pizza place today for lunch?

Andrew: You know what? I'm actually gonna **work out** this afternoon. I don't think I can do that. Sorry.

Harp: Oh. I didn't know you went to the gym.

Andrew: Yeah. Well, it's a new thing for me. I just got a one-week trial pass to the gym. You know, I don't know if I can commit fully to going every week but I'm just gonna **test the waters** and see how it goes.

Harp: Oh. That's a good idea. So they give you a one-week membership?

Andrew: Yeah. It's a free membership. You should go down and pick one up. We could **work out** together.

Harp: Hmm. I'm gonna go check it out at lunch time.

Andrew: OK. Sounds good.

Harp: So in this example, we had two colleagues talking about a gym membership. And before buying a one-year membership, the one colleague was talking about how he wanted **to test the waters** to see how it went at the gym and how much he could go and how often he could go before he jumped in and bought a full-year pass. So he **tested the waters**.

Andrew: Exactly. And a lot of gyms do this, where they offer a limited-time trial membership, where you can **test the waters** before committing fully to a longer and more expensive gym pass.

Harp: Yup. A lot of gyms do this, and I'm actually gonna be doing this next week. I'm gonna try out a new **high-intensity interval-training** gym and it just sounds scary so I definitely need to test it before I go full.

Andrew: A lot of my friends… You know, the yoga studios around town, they offer one-week free passes? And some of my friends, they just keep using the free passes at different studios so they don't have to pay for a membership.

Harp: That's a pretty, pretty smart idea, actually.

Andrew: Every week it's a new place.

Harp: So they're not really **testing the waters**. They're just trying to get a good deal.

Andrew: Yeah. They're just **cheap**.

Harp: All right, let's give one more example with ***to test the waters***.

Andrew: OK.

Andrew: How did your meeting this morning go?

Harp: Pretty good. They didn't accept the full proposal to… to buy a lot of advertising in the paper but they're gonna buy space for this Sunday and we're gonna **test the waters**, see if we get a lot of traction.

Andrew: OK. So I guess the idea is that if ad is successful, you'll do a bigger and fuller advertising campaign in the future.

Harp: We're gonna monitor the sales for different stores and see if it worked.

Andrew: Sounds good!

Andrew: In that example, we heard two coworkers discussing the new advertising campaign for their company. And at the meeting, it was decided that the company would place only one ad in the Sunday paper **to test the waters**, to see how much money and interest the ad would generate, before they

committed to a bigger advertising campaign.

Harp: Yup. And this is an expression that's often used in business, because companies like to try to be, kind of, smart when they spend money rather than just diving right in. They **test the waters** on different initiatives.

Andrew: Yeah, that's true. That's very true.

Harp: OK. Let's move on to our second expression today, which is *to put out feelers*.

Andrew: Exactly. *To put out feelers*. This is a strange-sounding expression, to me: *to put out feelers*.

Harp: Yeah, definitely. The first time I heard it I thought, "Hmm. That's an interesting-sounding expression."

Andrew: And maybe it will make more sense if we explain what feelers are.

Harp: I think that will definitely help.

Andrew: So, what are feelers?

Harp: They're actually the thin parts attached to an insect's head and they're used to touch things.

Andrew: Right. So if you think of a little bug, like, an ant, maybe… You know how they have those two… they almost look like arms coming off the top of their heads? And they're always moving around. And that's how the ants sense the world. That's how they feel things. And that is where this expression comes from. Those are the feelers in the expression.

Harp: So, *to put out feelers* is really when you're trying to find out what people think about something that you might do. You're trying to gauge their reaction to something you might do in the future.

Andrew: Precisely. You want to know what other people think of an idea that you have. You make a suggestion to learn about other people's reactions before you do something.

Harp: Yup. So if you're talking to a friend, you could say something like, "I'm thinking about doing this," and you're waiting to see their reaction and getting some feedback on it. You're **putting out feelers**.

Andrew: Well, I think we can move to the examples.

Harp: I think we should.

Andrew:	How was your family dinner last week?
Harp:	It was pretty interesting, actually. You know, my brother brought up a really interesting idea.
Andrew:	Oh yeah? What was that?
Harp:	Well, he's kind of thinking about running for city councillor. So, he wanted to get my opinion. He was **putting out feelers** to see how we all reacted to it. And I think it's a great idea.
Andrew:	Yeah? You think that he could win?
Harp:	I think he could win and I think he would be great at it.
Andrew:	Yeah! Well, you know, I would definitely vote for him.
Harp:	Cool! That's good to know. I'm gonna tell him that.
Andrew:	All right.

Harp:	So, in this example, we had two friends discussing a family dinner. And at that dinner, the brother **put out feelers** to see what the family thought if he ran for city council.
Andrew:	Exactly. He has the idea that he wants to run for city council, but before fully committing to this decision and this course of action, he wanted to get the opinions of his family members, because he trusts them and respects them. And he just wants to know what they think before going ahead with his city councillor plan.
Harp:	Yup. So he **put out feelers** to see what their opinion was.
Andrew:	Yeah. Well, let's go to another example.

Harp:	So, how's work going?
Andrew:	You know what? I'm kind of bored at the company that I'm working for right now.
Harp:	Oh yeah? So are you thinking of maybe finding a new job?
Andrew:	Yeah. I'm not in a huge rush or anything to find a new company to work for, but I am thinking about it. I've put out a few resumes to different **headhunters**. I'm just **putting out some feelers** to see what's going on.
Harp:	That's a good idea. Test the market before you decide to go head-on into looking for a new job.

Andrew:	Yeah. I don't want to quit my current job and be unemployed or something but it's just like I said. It's really boring and I want something new.
Harp:	Cool. Let me know how it goes.

Andrew: So, we just heard two colleagues talking about employment. And the male colleague was just not very happy with his current job. He wants to find a new job but he's just **putting out feelers**. He's doing it slowly and seeing if there's any interest from other companies before he quits his current job to go and work somewhere else.

Harp: Yup, exactly. He was **putting out feelers**, seeing how the job market was, before he decided **to make the leap**.

Andrew: Mmhmm. Because finding a new career is a huge decision and sometimes you just need some information about how things will be after you make a big change like that.

Harp: Yes. So, our last expression is *to float an idea*.

Andrew: *To float an idea*, yes. *To float an idea*.

Harp: Yes. So *to float an idea* is that you do the same thing. You suggest something that you're planning on doing or an action that you're thinking about doing and you're getting some reaction to it.

Andrew: Mmhmm. You **float an idea** when you want other people's opinions. You want to see if they accept your idea or if they reject it. You want their feedback before going ahead.

Harp: Yup. You want them to let you know if they think you'll be successful or if it'll be a big failure. You **float an idea** by them to get their opinion on it.

Andrew: Exactly. When I think about this expression, I think of something good floating to the top and something bad sinking to the bottom.

Harp: Yeah, that's a good way of thinking about this expression, *to float an idea*. When it's good, it floats to the top. That's a nice way of looking at it.

Andrew: Yeah. You know, we have that expression *the cream rises to the top*. The best things go to the top. And when something sinks, it's always bad. So when I think of this expression, you **float an idea** because you want other people's opinions. Hopefully it's good and floats to the top. That's just my thinking.

Harp: I like it. It makes sense to me. I think we should give some examples with this expression.

Andrew:	Mmhmm. I think you are right.

Harp:	Hey. How was your day?
Andrew:	I had a fantastic day, actually.
Harp:	That's great. What made it so fantastic?
Andrew:	Well, you know how I was telling you about that new idea for a marketing campaign that I had a work?
Harp:	Yes.
Andrew:	Well, I finally **got the nerve to float the idea** by my boss, and he loved it!
Harp:	Ah, that's great! So you guys are gonna do it?
Andrew:	Yeah. Well, I mean, he has to go and talk to his bosses about the idea but he was really excited and it just… It feels good to have my opinions and my ideas validated.
Harp:	Nice. So I hope that they accept it and that you get to implement it.
Andrew:	Yeah, me too! My **fingers are crossed**.
Harp:	Nice.

Andrew:	We just heard from two friends discussing their day. And one friend had a really great day because he **floated a new idea** by his boss about a marketing campaign for his company and his boss loved it. So he suggested a new way to market something, and the boss was happy and interested in his idea.
Harp:	Yes. Exactly. He **floated the idea** past his boss and the boss loved it.
Andrew:	Yeah, perfect. That's a good-news situation. That's why you want **to float something by somebody in the first place**.
Harp:	Yup. So let's give one more example with this expression.

Andrew:	Have you made a decision yet about whether you want to take your job promotion in Europe?

Harp:	Well, I **floated the idea** by my husband and he hated it. He got really stressed out. He wants to stay here close to his mom, and we get a lot of help from his mom with the kids so we're gonna decline it.
Andrew:	But it's such a good opportunity for you.
Harp:	I know. Maybe later.
Andrew:	OK. I understand.

Harp: So in this example, we had two friends discussing a potential job promotion. And the colleague **floated the idea** by her husband. But the husband did not think it was a good idea because of many reasons. So she declined the offer.

Andrew: Mmhmm. She suggested the idea of moving to a different country, but he just wasn't interested.

Harp: Yup. So, in this situation it's good that she got the opinion before making the decision. That's what's the key in all of these expressions, is that you get the feedback of the people around you before you make a decision.

Andrew: Precisely.

Harp: OK, so I think we should do a quick recap of all the expressions we talked about today.

Andrew: The first expression was *to test the waters*.

Harp: Yes. And the second expression was *to put out feelers*.

Andrew: And we ended with *to float an idea*.

Harp: And make sure you check out our website, Culips.com. That's C-U-L-I-P-S.com. And sign up and become a member so you can learn even more about these expressions and their variations.

Andrew: Yup. We got a lot of good information for the Learning Materials for this episode.

Harp: Yes. And remember to come over to Facebook or Twitter and say hi to us.

Andrew: Yup. We love to hear from you!

Harp: Bye everyone.

Andrew: Bye bye.

Detailed Explanation

To suss something out

When you **suss something out**, you realize, understand, or discover something. In this episode, Andrew explains that the three main expressions for this episode are used when you want **to suss something out**. In other words, when you want to understand a situation more fully or you want to discover more information about a situation before you commit to making a decision, you want **to suss it out**.

This expression is mostly used by speakers of UK English; however, as Andrew demonstrates in this episode, it is also sometimes used by Canadians.

Here are a couple more examples with this expression:

Scott: Are you going to go to Bill's birthday party tonight?
Mel: I'm not sure. Do you think it will be fun?
Scott: I think so. I'm going to go.
Mel: Can you do me a favour then?
Scott: Sure. What would you like?
Mel: When you get to the party, can you **suss it out** for me? If it looks like it'll be a fun party, then send me a text and let me know.
Scott: OK, sure. I can do that for you.

Josh: Hey, could I borrow your laptop for a day?
Tina: Sure. Is your computer still broken?
Josh: Yeah. But I think I've got it all **sussed out** now. I just need to get some software from your computer and load it onto mine. Then my computer will be operating again.
Tina: OK, sure. No problem. You can borrow my computer.

To test the waters

When you **test the waters**, you find out more information about a situation before making a decision or doing something. This is one of the main expressions covered in this episode.

As Andrew and Harp explain, this expression originates from what we do when we want to find out the temperature of water. Before swimming in a pool or a lake, it is common to dip your toes in the water to find out the temperature. We **test the waters** to get more information about the water's temperature before we get into the water.

Here is one more example with this expression:

Katie: Hey, I heard you are going back to school. Congratulations.
Claire: Well, sort of. I just signed up for one class. I'm going **to test the waters** and see whether I like it. If I think it's a good fit, then I'll commit to full-time studies next year.
Katie: Wow. That's awesome. Good for you!

To work out

To work out is a phrasal verb that means to exercise. In this episode, Harp and Andrew talk about working out and Harp says that she is going to start a new exercise program. When you do physical exercise to keep your body healthy, you are working out.

The noun form of this verb is **a workout**, and this refers to a session of exercise. The image below shows some people working out at a gym. Each one of them is doing **a workout**.

Here are a couple more examples with the expressions **to work out** and **a workout**:

Barbra: Last year I made a New Year's resolution to go to the gym at least three times a week **to work out**.
Daniel: That's a good goal. Are you keeping to your schedule?
Barbra: I have been, actually. I'm really proud of myself.
Daniel: Yeah, that's awesome. Good for you.

Ali: Hey, you want to grab a coffee later this afternoon?
Scott: I'd love to, but I have **a workout** scheduled with my personal trainer. Do you have time tomorrow afternoon instead?
Ali: Yeah, any time after 2pm would be good for me.
Scott: Cool. I'll send you a text tomorrow and we can figure something out.
Ali: Perfect.

High-intensity interval training
In this episode, Harp mentions that she's planning to start a new exercise program called **high-intensity interval training**. Sometimes this type of exercise is referred to by the acronym *HIIT*.

High-intensity interval training is a unique exercise strategy. Exercisers perform a short and intense session of aerobic exercise followed by a more relaxed recovery period. Then the cycle starts again. For example, an exerciser might run quickly for 1 minute and then spend 15–20 seconds walking to recover. This pattern continues for the full workout.

HIIT workouts usually last for 30 minutes and are beneficial for improving exercisers' endurance, body image, and metabolism.

Cheap
A person who is **cheap** doesn't like to spend money. In this episode, Andrew says that his friends are **cheap**. This is because instead of signing up for a regular membership at a yoga centre, they take advantage of the free trial passes that yoga centres give out. They cycle through different yoga centres in the city without ever having to pay for a membership pass.

Cheap people hate spending money except when they absolutely have to. Even when a **cheap** person has to spend money, they will often try to save money by using a coupon or buying something on sale.

Although looking for ways to save money is not a bad quality, the adjective *cheap* has a negative connotation to it. If you call someone **cheap**, you risk offending that person. Some more polite alternatives to this expression include: economical, thrifty, or frugal.

Here's one more example with this expression:

Fredrick: Did you ever go on any vacations growing up?
Jill: Yeah, but my parents were always too **cheap** to take us anywhere exciting.
Fredrick: What do you mean?
Jill: Well, some of my friends got to go to Europe or Mexico, but all my family did was go on camping trips.
Fredrick: Camping is fun too.
Jill: Yeah. It was OK, but I was always jealous of my friends.

To put out feelers
If you want to gauge someone's opinion before you commit to something, you can **put out feelers** and make a suggestion to see what the other person's reaction will be. When you **put out feelers**, you get other people's opinions on something by asking a question or making a suggestion. The reactions you get can then help you to make a decision or commit to an action.

As Harp and Andrew explain in this episode, feelers are the antenna on an insect's head that help them to sense their environment and find food. Here is a picture of an ant in which you can see the large feelers on the top of the ant's head in this photo.

Just like ants use their feelers to learn about the world, people **put out feelers** to get information or opinions from other people before making decisions.

Here is one more example with this expression:

Lisa: Did you hear that I'll be moving to Toronto next year?
Gina: Oh no! Why are you leaving me?
Lisa: I have to relocate for work.
Gina: Have you started looking for a new place to live?
Lisa: No. And that's why I wanted to talk to you, actually.
I know you have some connections in the real estate industry. Do you think you could talk to your colleagues and see if someone would be willing to help me find a house?
Gina: No problem at all. I'll **put out feelers** and see what I can find for you.
Lisa: That would be fantastic. Thanks.

A headhunter
A headhunter is someone who find and recruits talented employees for businesses. In one of the dialogue examples in this episode, a businessman is considering finding a new job. In order to see whether any companies are interested in hiring him, he distributed his resume to a few **headhunters**.

Headhunters have many connections to businesses that are looking for new employees. So getting in touch with **a headhunter** is a good idea if you are looking for work.

Headhunters are sometimes also called recruiters, because they recruit employees for companies. The information technology (IT) industry relies heavily on **headhunters** to find employees for tech companies.

Here are a couple more examples with this expression:

Jeff: How did you end up working for Google?
Val: I was recruited right out of university by **a headhunter**. Because I graduated in the top 5% of my class, I had a lot of job offers to choose from.
Jeff: Wow. And you chose to work for Google?
Val: Yes. It seemed like the best fit for me.

David: I heard that you're leaving the company.
Paul: Yeah. **A headhunter** offered me a job that pays 30% more than what I'm making right now. I'd be stupid not to take it.
David: Well, congrats and good luck with the new job.
Paul: Thanks a ton!

To make a leap
In one of the dialogue examples in this episode, a businessman is contemplating leaving his job for a new one. But before he **makes a leap** and quits his job, he is going to put out feelers to see whether there are good employment opportunities available.

In this context, *to make a leap* is a shortened version of the expression *to make a leap of faith*. When you **make a leap** (of faith) you make a decision even though you're not sure what the consequences will be.

The image on the right illustrates this concept well. A businessman is leaping across a stony gap. He has made the decision to jump but is unsure of how the future will be. There is no turning back, but he has faith and trusts that his decision will benefit him in the future.

Here are a couple more examples with this expression:

Sherry: Congratulations on your wedding anniversary! 35 years! That's a huge accomplishment.
Emma: Thanks so much. You know, Thomas and I got married very young. I was only 18! But I'm so glad that I **made that leap of faith**, because we've had such a great time together for all these years.

Maria: I've been debating quitting my job and travelling around the world for a couple of years now. I think it's time that I stop thinking and start doing. So I'm just going **to make the leap**. My last day at work is in a month and then I leave for South America!
Isabelle: That's awesome! Good for you. But aren't you worried about finding a job when you get back from your travels?
Maria: Of course I'm worried about that, but I'll solve that problem when I get back. Who knows what the future will hold for me?

To float an idea
When you **float an idea**, you make a casual suggestion to see whether other people are interested in your idea. When want to find out what other people think about one of your ideas, you can **float the idea** by casually bringing it up in conversation. By doing this, you can get other people's reactions to your idea before you make a decision.

Here's one more example with this expression:

Sarah: So, I was thinking that we should go on a weekend getaway sometime next month. Don't you think it would be fun? Just us and our husbands!
Louisa: A couples' retreat! I like the sounds of it! I should probably **float the idea** by my husband though, to see what he thinks.
Sarah: Of course. See what he thinks and then get back to me.
Louisa: Sounds good.

To get the nerve to do something
In one of the dialogue examples in this episode, an employee **gets the nerve** to float an idea by his boss. In other words, he develops the courage to speak to his boss about his new idea. When you **get the nerve to do something**, you develop the courage to do it even though it's difficult or frightening. You act bravely and do something that scares you.

The opposite of this expression is ***to lose your nerve***. We use this expression when we lose confidence and cannot complete an action that we once believed we could do.

So, the expression ***nerve*** is related to confidence. When you **get the nerve to do something**, you gain the confidence and courage to do something that scares you. On the other hand, if you **lose your nerve**, you feel discouraged and cannot go through with an action that you previously believed you could do.

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

Henry: Guess what?
Hakim: What?
Henry: I finally **got up the nerve** to ask Jenny out on a date.
Hakim: And what did she say?
Henry: She agreed to go out with me! I can't believe it. We're going out on Saturday.
Hakim: Awesome. Congrats, man!

Sunny: How did your white-water rafting trip go last weekend?
Justin: It's a little embarrassing, but in the end I **lost my nerve** and didn't go.
Sunny: Oh no. Really?
Justin: Yeah. My friends went and they all had a great time. But something about being in a little boat and going down a rushing river just scares me to death.
Sunny: Yeah, I agree with you. I would never go white-water rafting. It doesn't sound fun to me at all.

<u>To cross your fingers</u>
The expression ***to cross your fingers*** comes from the superstitious belief that if you **cross** your index and middle fingers, good luck will come to you.

This gesture originated in the early days of Christianity. The first Christians used this gesture to identify themselves to each other during times of persecution and harassment. By the 16th century, Christians in England used the gesture as a way to ward off evil spirits. They would **cross their fingers** whenever someone coughed or sneezed because they believed that these were signs of the presence of evil.

These days, we **cross our fingers** or use the expression ***to cross your fingers*** when we hope that something will go well or that someone will be a success.

In one of the dialogue examples in this episode, a man says his **fingers are crossed** after he floated an idea for a new marketing campaign by his boss. In other words, he really hopes that his boss likes the idea and that his company uses the marketing campaign in the future.

Here are a couple more examples with this expression:

Sean: So, today's the big day, hey?
Yuri: Yup. I finally have to take my driver's exam. I'm so nervous.
Sean: Don't worry. You'll be fine.
Yuri: I really hope so. Anyways, wish me good luck!
Sean: Good luck! My **fingers are crossed**!

Ian: How is the job search coming along?
Dorothy: I still haven't found anything yet. I'm starting to get discouraged. I've been looking for over a month! I did have a promising interview last week, though. So I'm **crossing my fingers** that things work out with that company.
Ian: Yeah, hang in there! Things will work out for you!

<u>In the first place</u>
In this episode, Andrew says that the reason you float an idea by someone **in the first place** is so that you can get their opinion. In this context, *in the first place* is used when we want to state the most basic or essential reason for doing something. So in other words, the essential reason why we float an idea is to get feedback from other people.

Just like when you win a first-place prize you are the most important person, when something is done **in the first place**, it is done because it is the most important thing to do.

Here are a couple of examples with this expression:

Davis: Hey, Mark! Funny running into you here at the mall. Did you know that there is a huge sale going on today?
Mark: Absolutely. That's why I came here **in the first place**. I'm crossing my fingers I can get some good bargains.
Davis: Yeah, me too. Happy shopping!

Melody: You've been to Hawaii, right? How is it?
Lina: Yeah! It's amazing.
Melody: What about the surfing? Did you go surfing while you were there?
Lina: I sure did. That's the reason I went to Hawaii **in the first place**. The surfing is amazing. Some of the best in the world. Are you planning a trip there?
Melody: I sure am. My boyfriend and I are going next month!

<u>Quiz</u>

1. What does a headhunter do?

a) recruits employees for companies
b) hunts exotic animals
c) searches for missing children
d) recruits fans for sports teams

2. What does the acronym HIIT stand for?

a) huge-investment internet trading
b) heavy-insanity intense transposing
c) high-intensity interval training
d) hopeful insurance-intermediate trust

3. What is a more polite alternative to the adjective _cheap_?

a) thrifty
b) coupon-clippy
c) ungenerous
d) penny-pinching

4. From which religion did the expression _to cross your fingers_ originate?

a) Judaism
b) Islam
c) Buddhism
d) Christianity

5. If you have the nerve to do something, how do you feel?

a) depressed
b) excited
c) insecure
d) courageous

6. What is a feeler?

a) an insect's antenna
b) a person who is very emotional
c) a cleaning product
d) a genre of music

7. **If you have discovered more information about something, you have _____.**

    Fill in the blank.

    a) filled it up
    b) sussed it out
    c) carried it down
    d) floated it by

8. **What do you do when you make a leap of faith?**

    a) say a prayer for help
    b) jump over an obstacle
    c) make an important decision
    d) take a long time to contemplate making a decision

9. **What is another word for exercise?**

    a) a workup
    b) a workout
    c) a workaround
    d) a workin

Answers:

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