

Simplified Speech #7 – Valentine's Day

Episode Description

In this Simplified Speech episode, Andrew and our new co-host Suzanne talk about Valentine's Day! Suzanne tells a mysterious story about a secret admirer and Andrew talks about a haircut worth crying over. So take a listen; we think you'll love it!

Sample Dialogue

Andrew: How do we celebrate Valentine's Day? Or how do you celebrate Valentine's Day, Suzanne?

Suzanne: Well, the way I celebrate Valentine's Day... I remember, as a kid, in school, we would give little notes, kind wishes, or funny pictures on cards, and... to our friends in class. And now I give my boyfriend a little gift or a box of chocolate or we sometimes celebrate by going out for dinner.

Andrew: Nice!

Suzanne: Or a nice bottle of wine, perhaps.

Andrew: **There you go.** Yeah, I remember that too.

Expressions Included in the Learning Materials

- The roots of something
- There you go
- A valentine
- Snail mail
- To flirt
- Detention
- A 'do



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Note: The words and expressions that appear in **bold text** within the transcript are discussed in more detail in the detailed explanations section that follows the transcript.

Transcript

Andrew: Greetings from Montreal, Canada. I'm Andrew.

Suzanne: And I'm Suzanne. And you're listening to Culips.

Andrew: That's right. If you want to improve your English by listening to 100% natural conversations between native English-speakers, you've come to the right place.

Suzanne: Exactly. And before we get started with today's episode, I'd like to encourage you to check out the new and improved Culips website, at Culips.com. That's C-U-L-I-P-S.com.

Andrew: You can find all of our back episodes on our website and listen to them at your convenience, for free!

Suzanne: Wow!

Andrew: Yeah!

Suzanne: That's great. And you can also sign up to become a Culips member on our website. This will give you access to our learning materials, which will help you take your English to the next step.

Andrew: And if you're a social network user, we're on Facebook and we're on Twitter too, so make sure to follow us.

OK. So today, Suzanne and I are gonna do a Simplified Speech episode, and this is where we have a normal conversation, we just speak a little bit slower than we usually would in real life.

Suzanne: Yeah, just a little bit.

Andrew: Just a little bit. And today our topic is a very romantic topic.

Suzanne: That's right.

Andrew: It is Valentine's Day.

Suzanne: It's coming up very soon.

- Andrew: It's coming up very soon, indeed. And so, I wanted to start this episode by talking about the history of Valentine's Day.
- Suzanne: I don't even know the history of Valentine's Day at all. So please, enlighten me, Andrew.
- Andrew: I will. So, Valentine's Day originally started as a Christian holiday, and it was celebrated to recognize the importance of a guy named Saint Valentine.
- Suzanne: OK.
- Andrew: And he would go and help prisoners and ex-soldiers and people who weren't viewed highly in society. And he would marry them, actually. So if they wanted to get married, he would perform the ceremony. And I think that's where the romantic element of Valentine's Day comes in.
- Suzanne: Almost like an ancient Cupid, in a sense.
- Andrew: Exactly. So this is where Valentine's Day got **its roots**, but today we celebrate it totally differently.
- Suzanne: Completely different.
- Andrew: Yeah. How do we celebrate Valentine's Day? Or how do you celebrate Valentine's Day, Suzanne?
- Suzanne: Well, the way I celebrate Valentine's Day... I remember, as a kid, in school, we would give little notes, kind wishes, or funny pictures on cards, and... to our friends in class. And now I give my boyfriend a little gift or a box of chocolate or we sometimes celebrate by going out for dinner.
- Andrew: Nice!
- Suzanne: Or a nice bottle of wine, perhaps.
- Andrew: **There you go.** Yeah, I remember that too. When I was in elementary school, Valentine's Day was always fun because you would give and receive **valentines** to everyone in the class.
- Suzanne: Everyone, yeah.
- Andrew: And that went on for a little while, then as you get older, it stops, and you only give **a valentine** to the one you love.
- Suzanne: Yes. And it can be a little lonely.
- Andrew: Sure.

Suzanne: If you don't have someone special in your life, I guess. And so, one of my friends, she has a tradition where she takes little fun notes and cards and sends these cards to all of her friends still.

Andrew: She still does it?

Suzanne: She still does it and she's about 45 years old and she still sends cards to everyone. It's very nice.

Andrew: Wow. In the mail?

Suzanne: In the mail.

Andrew: Not in email.

Suzanne: No, in the paper mail. She buys cards.

Andrew: **Snail mail.**

Suzanne: **Snail mail.**

Andrew: Nice!

Suzanne: Yeah.

Andrew: That's really sweet.

So Suzanne, I'm wondering if you have any funny stories or memorable moments about a Valentine's Day from the past that you would like to share with us.

Suzanne: I do have a funny story. When I was a sophomore in high school, so it was 10th grade, I was living in Texas, and I was in a play. I was performing in a musical and there was this guy in school who kept leaving me notes at my... at my desk.

Andrew: OK.

Suzanne: At fourth period, OK?

Andrew: OK.

Suzanne: So in the day, there were, you know, eight periods or seven periods and in my fourth-period class, right after lunch, he would leave these notes on my desk. Every day for 1 week. And it was anonymous, so it was a secret.

Andrew: OK.

Suzanne: And he'd... So he didn't sign his name. And he would...

Andrew: He was a secret admirer.

Suzanne: A secret admirer, exactly.

Andrew: OK.

Suzanne: And he would write his notes, and they would be lines from my play.

Andrew: OK.

Suzanne: It would be dialogue from the script, like, that were **flirty**. They were lines that were supposed to be **flirtatious** and, kind of, showering me with love, in a sense.

Andrew: OK.

Suzanne: And every day, for 1 week... And all of my friends in my class were gathering around my desk and reading them and laughing and trying to say, "Who is it?" "Who is it?" "It's that one!" "It's that guy!" So finally, on the last day, it was Valentine's Day.

Andrew: OK.

Suzanne: And on my desk was a heart-shaped box of chocolate and flowers. And then, someone came into the classroom with a note, a pass. A hall pass. So meaning I had to go to the office. Someone was calling me into the office. So my teacher said, "OK, you can leave."

Andrew: OK.

Suzanne: So I left the classroom, and it wasn't a real pass. It was the guy. He got me out of my classroom.

Andrew: Yeah?

Suzanne: And he sang me a song.

Andrew: Oh my gosh!

Suzanne: He sang me a song!

Andrew: So wait. How old were you, again?

Suzanne: I was... So maybe I was 15.

Andrew: OK. Wow!

Suzanne: And he was a senior that year.

Andrew: OK, so he was older than you.

Suzanne: He was older than me. And he sang me a song, got on his knee, and asked me to his senior prom. I was so nervous and scared. I ran away! I didn't know what to do.

Andrew: Wow!

Suzanne: So I ran away. And I went back to class, told my teacher, and my teacher reported him to the principal and he got **detention**.

Andrew: Oh... What?

Suzanne: I never went to his senior prom.

Andrew: Oh, poor guy.

Suzanne: Yeah.

Andrew: He went to a lot of work.

Suzanne: I feel bad. He wrote lyrics to the song, too.

Andrew: Woah. Yeah, sometimes these grand gestures, they don't play out the way they do in movies.

Suzanne: Well, I didn't know this guy, so it wasn't something I was hoping for or expecting in any way. I didn't know him at all, so.

Andrew: Was it exciting to get the messages leading up to Valentine's?

Suzanne: I think so. It was exciting and nerve... I was nervous and a little scared and excited. And it was fun to share it with my friends.

Andrew: Mmhmm. That is a weird experience, though. It sounds very awkward.

Suzanne: It was awkward. And how about you? What's another funny Valentine's story?

Andrew: Well, I have a story that's funny in retrospect, but at the time it wasn't super funny for me. I was dating a girl when I was maybe 19 or 20 years old, and I think it was maybe our first or second Valentine's Day together. I don't remember. But a couple of days before Valentine's Day, I had gotten a haircut, and she hadn't seen me since I got the haircut.

Suzanne: OK.

- Andrew: So I went to go meet her on Valentine's Day and she saw my haircut for the first time and she hated it! She actually started crying when she saw my haircut. And it put me in a very awkward moment, because...
- Suzanne: Oh my goodness.
- Andrew: Yeah, it was weird. I was like, "Ugh. I don't know how to deal with this." You know? Like, it just set a very weird vibe for Valentine's Day, with **my new 'do**. What I had done was shaved my head. So it was pretty extreme, you know?
- Suzanne: OK.
- Andrew: I went from a lot of hair to nothing. It wasn't just a trim, it was a total change. I looked totally different and I think it surprised her.
- Suzanne: She cried!
- Andrew: She cried. But she was an emotional person; it didn't take much.
- Suzanne: OK.
- Andrew: But yeah, that's my funny Valentine's Day story.
- Suzanne: And it ended up not so good?
- Andrew: I can't remember.
- Suzanne: Did you have a fun time?
- Andrew: I'm sure it was fine in the end, yeah. We moved on. It was just the shock of my head was very surprising.
- Suzanne: Keep things simple on Valentine's Day.
- Andrew: All you Romeos out there that are thinking of shaving your head, maybe wait till after Valentine's Day.
- Suzanne: The 15th.
- Andrew: The 15th.
- Suzanne: Wait till February 15th, not the 14th.
- Andrew: Exactly. OK Suzanne, I think that's all we have time for today.
- Suzanne: OK. Well this has been fun.
- Andrew: If you like listening to Culips, make sure to tell your friends about us.

Suzanne: Definitely. Or you could leave us a review on iTunes. That would be great too!

Andrew: Mmhmm. And once again, remember our website is Culips.com, and it's the place where you can find all of our previous episodes and sign up for a Culips membership.

Suzanne: Thanks for listening everyone. We'll be back soon with a new Culips episode.

Andrew: Talk to you soon!

Suzanne: Bye.

Detailed Explanations

The roots of something

In this episode, Andrew explains that Valentine's Day got its **roots** from Saint Valentine. The expression ***the roots of something*** refers to something's start or origin. In other words, the celebration of Valentine's Day started because of Saint Valentine.

When we talk about a person's **roots**, it refers to their family history or ancestry. When we talk about something's **roots**, it refers to the origin, start, or beginning of that thing.

Here are a couple more examples with ***the roots of something (or someone)***:

Will: Do you know anything about your family's history?

Brian: Not really. I know that we have **our roots** in Europe but that's about it. What about you?

Will: I've just been doing some research online and I found out that my mom's side of the family is from Wales.

Brian: Very interesting!

Jean: I'm taking a music history class in school this semester.

Pablo: How is it?

Jean: Super cool! I'm learning all about the history of different genres of music.

Pablo: Tell me something you've learned.

Jean: Well, did you know that punk rock actually has **its roots** in blues music?

Pablo: No, I didn't! That's pretty neat.

Jean: I know, right?

There you go

The expression **there you go** is used when you want to encourage someone. It communicates that you think that person has made a good decision or is doing something correctly.

In this episode, Andrew says **there you go** to Suzanne after she tells him how she celebrates Valentine's Day. Suzanne says she might go out for dinner or share a nice bottle of wine with her boyfriend. Andrew thinks this is a good way to spend Valentine's Day, so he says **there you go** to Suzanne to let her know that he agrees with her plans.

So, when someone is doing something correctly, you can encourage that person by telling them **there you go**. When you say **there you go** to someone, you provide them with positive feedback.

Here are a couple more examples with **there you go**:

Viktor: Got any plans for this weekend?

Yumi: No, I have to work.

Viktor: That's a bummer.

Yumi: Yeah, but I'm taking a couple days off work next week and going on a trip to see my family in Chicago.

Viktor: Ah, **there you go**. That will be fun.

Yumi: Yeah, I can't wait.

Frieda: Could you show me how to delete files off my phone?

Maria: Sure. It's easy. First you have to navigate to your phone's settings screen.

Frieda: Like this?

Maria: Yup. Then go to the storage option.

Frieda: OK.

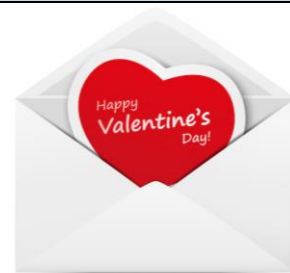
Maria: Then you can select the files you want to delete.

Frieda: Like this, right?

Maria: Yes, **there you go**. You got it.

A valentine

In this episode, Andrew and Suzanne talk about sending and receiving **valentines**. **A valentine** is a special type of greeting card that is given on Valentine's Day. Usually **valentines** are exchanged by elementary school students. The cards express feelings of friendship and love.



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

Hector: Are you sending anyone **a valentine** this year?

Ryan: No. I'm not 8 years old.

Hector: I know, but don't you think it would be romantic?

Ryan: I think it might be cheesy. I am going to ask a girl I met last week, Sarah, out to dinner on Valentine's Day though.

Hector: Nice! Good luck!

Ryan: Thanks.

Olivia: I miss being young. When I was a kid I used to receive so many **valentines**. Now I don't get any.

Rosa: I know. It's depressing, isn't it?

Olivia: Sure is!

Snail mail

Snail mail is a slang expression for the mail that is sent through the postal delivery system. It is called **snail mail** because in comparison to email, it moves very slowly, just like a snail.

In this episode, Suzanne says that one of her friends sends valentines via **snail mail**.

So, **snail mail** is an informal expression for mail that is sent through the post office.

Here are a couple more examples with **snail mail**:

Rebecca: A letter came for you today.

Todd: An actual letter? Like, **snail mail**?

Rebecca: Yep.

Todd: Wow. I haven't received a letter in the mail for at least 2 years. How exciting!

Salesperson: I think you're going to love your new cell phone.

Customer: Me too!

Salesperson: One more question for you before you go.

Customer: Sure.

Salesperson: Would you like to receive your monthly bill by email or **snail mail**?

Customer: Email is fine.

Salesperson: OK, great!

To flirt

In this episode, Suzanne tells a story about her secret admirer. For a week leading up to Valentine's Day, the secret admirer left notes for Suzanne that contained lines from a play she was in. The lines the admirer selected were **flirtatious**. When someone **flirts** with you or is **flirtatious**, they act in a way that makes you believe that they are romantically interested in you (even though they may not really be).

So, the messages Suzanne received were **flirtatious** because they expressed romantic interest in Suzanne.

Here are a couple more examples with **to flirt**.

Lee: I have a huge crush on the barista at the cafe. Do you think she's into me?

David: I don't know, man. I think she has a boyfriend.

Lee: But every time I go in there to order a coffee she **flirts** with me. I swear she's into me.

David: You sure she's not just doing her job? You know, a big part of a barista's job is to make the customers feel at home.

Lee: Maybe you're right, but I don't care. I'm going to ask her out on a date.

David: OK, good luck, but don't feel too disappointed if it doesn't work out.

Laine: I hate the new girl at the office.

Nancy: What's wrong with her?

Laine: She's such a fake. She acts all **flirty** with the managers but she's just trying to get a promotion.

Nancy: Well, if she actually gets a promotion just because she's **flirts** with management, that would be very unfair.

Laine: Yeah. I'm hoping management is smart enough to promote people who deserve it because of their work.

Detention

In this episode, Suzanne tells a story about her secret admirer. She says that he got **detention** for the romantic stunt he pulled! **Detention** is the name of a punishment that kids receive for misbehavior in primary and secondary school.

When a student receives **detention**, they have to stay in their classroom or in the school office during non-class hours. This could be during breaks, lunch, or before or after school. In extreme cases, when a student does something very bad, they may be forced to attend **detention** on the weekend.

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

Christine: Did you ever get into trouble when you were in high school?

Julie: I got **detention** once.

Christine: Really? What for?

Julie: I got caught cheating on a math test. What about you? Did you ever get in trouble?

Christine: All the time! I got **detention** more times than I can count!

Sam: Did you hear what happened to Wes?

Ethan: No. What happened?

Sam: He pulled a prank on his drama teacher.

Ethan: Wow! What did he do?

Sam: He stole everything from her desk!

Ethan: What an idiot. Did he get caught?

Sam: Yup. He's getting **detention** for a month!

Ethan: Harsh!

A 'do

In this episode, Andrew tells a story about a haircut of his that made his ex-girlfriend cry! He says that she didn't like his new **'do**. The expression **a 'do** is a shortened version of **a hairdo**. **A hairdo** is a hairstyle. So, Andrew's ex didn't like his hairstyle.

Frequently, we use the adjective *new* with **a 'do**. In fact, you probably won't encounter **a 'do** on its own without *new* very often. Next time you get a haircut, you can ask your friends if they like your new **'do**.

A 'do is a casual expression and should be avoided in formal contexts.

Here are a couple more examples with **a 'do**:

Pam: I love your new **'do**!

Kristen: Thanks so much!

Pam: Short hair looks great on you. How much did the hairdresser cut off?

Kristen: Almost 6 inches!

Pam: You're so brave! I'd never cut my hair so short. Anyways, I think it looks amazing.

Kristen: Thanks!

George: What are you up to tomorrow? Want to hang out?

Alex: I can't. I have a hair appointment.

George: No way. You're finally going to get your hair cut?

Alex: Yeah. I need a new **'do**. I haven't changed my look in a long time.

George: Maybe we could meet up after your appointment?

Alex: That might work. I'll text you when I'm done and we can figure it out.

George: Sounds good.

Quiz

Multiple Choice

1. What is detention?

- a) a workshop
- b) a punishment
- c) a vacation
- d) a hairstyle

2. Complete the definition by filling in the blank:

When someone acts like they like you romantically, they _____ with you.

- a) fling
- b) fight
- c) fright
- d) flirt

3. What is a 'do?

- a) a hairstyle
- b) a snowmobile
- c) a condominium
- d) a child

4. True or false? Snail mail is slower than email.

- a) true
- b) false

5. What is a valentine?

- a) a box of chocolate
- b) a bottle of wine
- c) a greeting card
- d) a piece of jewellery

Comprehension

- 1. What type of ceremonies did Saint Valentine perform?**
- 2. Why did Suzanne get called to the office?**
- 3. What event did Suzanne get asked to go to by her secret admirer?**
- 4. Why did Andrew's ex-girlfriend start to cry?**

Quiz Answers

Multiple Choice:

1.b 2.d 3.a 4.a 5.c

Comprehension:

1. Saint Valentine performed marriage ceremonies.
2. Suzanne got called to the office because her secret admirer created a fake note that called Suzanne to the office.
3. Suzanne's secret admirer asked her to go to his senior prom.
4. Andrew's ex-girlfriend started to cry because Andrew shaved his head and she hated it.

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