

Catch Word #10 – Stone

Transcript

Harp: Hello everyone, this is Harp...

Maura: And Maura...

Harp: At Culips.com, with the **Catch Word** podcast.

Maura: In this podcast, we usually look at one word or one category and then we look at the different expressions and ways we can use that. Today we have one word, and that word is...

Maura: **“Stone.”**

Harp: **“Stone.”**

Maura: It's such a heavy word.

Harp: Exactly, it is.

Maura: So, first of all, **“a stone.”** How would you describe **“a stone”**?

Harp: Like a rock?

Maura: Exactly, it could be any size, round, or it could have edges. Usually, you find it in a forest, or in a natural place. Even at the beach.

Harp: And there can be precious **stones** like diamonds, there can be the semi-precious, I believe rubies, and then the worthless stones that are on the street.

Maura: Right. There's the pretty ones, and then the not-so-pretty ones. So that's **“a stone.”** Then we have some different idioms that use the word **“stone.”** The first one we have is...

Harp: **“Leave no stone unturned.”**

Maura: Yes, **“to leave no stone unturned.”**

Harp: I like this one because it always reminds me of the mystery novels that I read, like Nancy Drew. I loved her, and she always followed this, she would

leave no stone unturned. So she was very thorough in her examination of evidence and of clues.

Maura: Right. So we use this when you're looking for something and you're trying to find something, information or anything. If you really think about it, it's like you look under every **stone**. So you pick up every **stone** to see if there's something underneath it, which is obviously very thorough and detailed because that takes a long time.

Harp: Exactly, especially at a **stone** beach or a pebble beach.

Maura: Oh yes! OK, what else do we have?

Harp: Now the next one is a rhyme, it comes from a rhyme, I think, for kids.

Maura: For children.

Harp: And this one is:

Harp and Maura: **"Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me."**

Harp: Sorry, I always forget this one.

Maura: So, what does it mean?

Harp: So, it basically means that physical violence will hurt you—if someone hits you with maybe a **stone** or a stick. But when someone calls you a name or a mean word like maybe "jerk" or "geek" or "loser" or something like that, that this is just a word—it doesn't hurt you.

Maura: It doesn't have to hurt you. You don't have to take it personally. So, kids can be really quite mean to each other.

Harp: Very mean.

Maura: And call each other names, so sometimes I think parents say it to their kids to make them feel better and kids say it, maybe, to each other. So if I say "Hey Harp, you're a jerk..." you say...

Harp: I would say, **"Sticks and stones..."** and so forth, the whole expression, but yeah, parents use it to help their children deal with the meanness that kids can be.

- Maura: OK, what other one do we have?
- Harp: We have: **“Cast the first stone.”**
- Maura: Yes.
- Harp: And now, this is from the Bible.
- Maura: I think so.
- Harp: Yeah, and I can’t remember the full expression, but how would you describe this? It comes from the tradition of **stoning** someone when they do something wrong or sinful.
- Maura: Which, unfortunately, still happens in some countries where if someone has done something illegal then they actually throw **stones** at the person.
- Harp: So it’s a very cruel practice.
- Maura: Right, and was probably around when they created the Bible.
- Harp: Exactly!
- Maura: But it means that, right, you can’t get someone in trouble for doing something wrong because probably, yourself, you’ve done something wrong too. So if you’re going to get mad at someone else, you have to look at what you’ve done as well.
- Harp: Exactly, so you shouldn’t judge other people too harshly until you judge yourself.
- Maura: Exactly, that’s a good way to use it. **“Stone,”** what else do we got with **“stone”**?
- Harp: Well one that I discovered when I was reading “The Bridget Jones’ Diary,” yes, I know, the men out there can laugh at me, but I liked it. I thought it was a great book. But she would weigh herself every day and she used **“stone,”** and I didn’t understand this at all, because in Canada, we use kilograms or pounds, but in England, they use **“stone”** as a weight.
- Maura: Yeah, it is really funny. I don’t know where it came from, but maybe we’ll include that in Lipservice, we’ll figure out where it came from. Right, especially when they’re talking about how much they weigh.

- Harp: Yeah, exactly.
- Maura: So we checked it out and one **stone** is equal to seventeen pounds, approximately.
- Harp: So it leads to a very complicated measuring system because you have to figure out one measure would be seventeen and then to... it's too complicated for me. I can't get the math.
- Maura: Well, when someone from England tells me how much they weigh and they use "**stone**," honestly, I don't understand how much it is 'cause I'm not familiar with it myself.
- Harp: Me neither.
- Maura: One more we can probably look at: "**stone-faced**." So, in this one, we're describing someone's appearance, obviously their face. So someone who is **stone-faced**, what do they look like?
- Harp: No emotion. They are not smiling, they are not laughing. They do not look upset, they almost look emotionless.
- Maura: So like a **stone** they're not moving, they're not showing any signs of happiness, or if they're angry or not, we don't know. But I was thinking this could be good if you're playing poker, right, because in poker you don't want anyone to know what you're feeling—if you have a good hand, or a bad hand.
- Harp: I have a really bad poker face. I cannot be **stone-faced**. When I have good cards, if someone looks at me, they know, because I have the biggest smile on my face.
- Maura: OK, cool, and the other one...
- Harp: This one's a little bit funny, and it may be inappropriate, but we'll say it anyway because it is used often in movies and in popular culture.
- Maura: Especially like university, high school kind of pop movies, you know.
- Harp: Yeah!
- Maura: They definitely use this one.
- Harp: Yeah, so this one is "**stoned**" or "**stoner**."

- Maura: Right, so you can call someone a “**stoner**” or you can say they are **stoned**. Yeah, and what does that mean, Harp?
- Harp: Basically, that means that they have done some drugs, usually marijuana or pot, as it’s called, and so they’re **stoned**, they’re “high.”
- Maura: And a **stoner** is someone who does it fairly often.
- Harp: Yes, I would say often.
- Maura: And my guess is that maybe this comes from the fact that when you smoke marijuana, you don’t move and you’re like a **stone**, you sit on your couch, you watch TV, you eat food, probably. But you don’t do much else.
- Harp: Exactly!
- Maura: So we’ve covered a lot about “**stone**.” There’s still probably more, but there are some basics for you.
- Harp: And so that about wraps it up for the Catch Word podcast.
- Maura: So please check out our Lipservice at Culips.com if you want some more information, and for now we’re like **rolling stones**, we’re out of here.
- Harp: Bye everyone!
- Maura: Bye!

Detailed Explanation



A stone

A **stone** is a natural hard formation of minerals. This is the scientific explanation. Here is a photo of just some types of **stones**. We can also call **a stone** by other names like “rock,” or, for a small one, “pebble.” (Harp says “pebble” in this episode)

Here is a short list of precious **stones** or semi-precious **stones**. These special **stones** can also be called gems.

- Diamond
- Ruby
- Emerald
- Jade
- Sapphire

Leave no stone unturned

This expression simply means that we look everywhere to try and find something or accomplish something. If we **leave no stone unturned**, we have tried everything to solve the problem and we went slowly to check all the details.

Since there are two negatives in this expression, “**no stone**” and “**untuned**,” they cancel each other out. It is like saying in a positive way, we turned every **stone**. We always use this expression in the double negative, “**to leave no stone untuned.**”

Nancy Drew

Harp said that the expression “**to leave no stone untuned**” made her think of Nancy Drew. Nancy Drew is a children’s (specifically girl’s) book series. It is an old series, first starting in 1930! Nancy Drew is the main character and in every book there is a new mystery that she must solve. Some titles include, *The Secret of the Old Clock* and *The Clue of the Dancing Puppet*.

Most recently, in 2007, there was a movie made called *Nancy Drew* which is based on these mystery novels.

Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me

This expression can have little changes in it. When Harp and I were recording this episode we had trouble agreeing on the words! The way that I know it is: “**Sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me.**”

This expression means, like we said in this episode, **sticks and stones** hurt (physically) but words or names don't hurt (physically). It is a good rhyme for kids because they can say hurtful things to each other. It is good if kids learn to not be hurt by these names.

Here is another similar one that I knew when I was a kid:

I'm rubber. You're glue. Whatever you say bounces off me and sticks to you.

This is probably not a good one for kids because it will just continue the name-calling. It means that if you call me a name, the name goes back to you. Not nice, is it?

Jerk / geek / loser

These are all cruel names people call each other. It is never polite to say things like: "You are a **jerk**." Kids may call each other names, but it is very rude to do this as adults.

"**Jerk**" means the person is not nice.

"**Geek**" (or "nerd") means the person is socially awkward, quiet, and usually intelligent too.

"**Loser**" means that the person is not cool or popular.

Cast the first stone

The full expression is "**Let he who is without sin cast the first stone.**" And like we mentioned in this episode, this expression comes from the Bible. This expression means that only someone who has not made mistakes, or who is perfect, can cast (throw) the first **stone** at another person. Who has never made mistakes? Nobody.

It is a warning to people that they should not judge someone else's mistakes because they themselves have also made mistakes.

We also mentioned "**stoning.**" This is the act where people throw **stones** at another person until the person dies. In some countries people are still punished this way for breaking the law.

The part in the Bible where this expression comes from is about a woman who is **stoned** for committing adultery (being with another man while married).

Stone (weight)

In this episode, according to research done by Yoshi, one **stone** was equal to 17 pounds. But now, according to my research, it says one **stone** is equal to 14 pounds. So let's say that I am right!



The plural form of “**stone**” is also “**stone**” without an “**S**.” Some sources say you can also say “**stones**” but I have never heard “**stones**” used for weight.

This is also not an official form of measurement anymore. Even though “**stone**” is not being used officially, it is still the most common measure when people talk about their own weight in the UK.

The Bridget Jones’ Diary

Have you already heard of this series? This was a book series that was made into very popular movies. It is a comedy about a woman (Bridget Jones) who tries to improve herself and find a man at the same time.

“**Stone**” is used in these books and movies because it is British. Bridget records her weight, and other details of her life, in her diary.

Stone-faced

Is a **stone** alive? No. So, does a **stone** move? No, it doesn’t. From this it is easy to see that someone who is **stone-faced** does not move their face to show any emotion, happy or sad.

As Harp mentioned, being **stone-faced** is a great way to win poker. If your face does not show if you have good cards or bad cards then you will be more difficult to beat.

Harp also told us that she does not have a good poker face because she is not good at being **stone-faced**. Better luck next round, Harp!

Stoner/stoned

Both “**stoner**” and “**stoned**” refer to someone who has done drugs or is “high.” We say someone is high when they have taken illegal drugs. You can say that someone is high or **stoned**. “**Stoned**” is used for softer drugs like marijuana.

When someone often gets **stoned**, or takes drugs a lot, they are called “**stoners**.”

And as we said in this episode, the slang term “**stoner**” is often in new American movies for younger audiences.

A rolling stone gathers no moss

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I also mentioned “**rolling stones**” very quickly at the end of this episode. These two words have many connections. It is another expression we didn’t mention.

“**A rolling stone gathers no moss.**” This expression has two meanings. The first one is that if you keep moving (like a **rolling stone**) you will not have responsibilities or worries (the moss). The second is a bit of the opposite. If you keep moving (like a **rolling stone**) you will not have roots or connection to any place.

Here is a photo of moss. It is a green kind of plant that can grow on trees or rocks, usually in a moist or wet climate.

Like a rolling stone

It is also related to the Bob Dylan song called **Like a Rolling Stone**. This is a popular song from 1965 and it is still popular today. It is about a person who travels and doesn’t have much money and moves from town to town.

Rolling Stone

One more quick mention, **Rolling Stone** is also the name of a very popular American music magazine. It started in 1967 and slowly became very popular and is now considered an authority on music (to be an authority on something means that your opinion is respected).

Quiz (see the answers at the bottom of this *Lipservice*)

1. What is another word that means the same as “stone”?

- a) dirt
- b) rock
- c) water
- d) wood

2. If we check every detail when examining something, we _____.

- a) leave no stone unturned
- b) go to a pebble beach
- c) read Nancy Drew
- d) cast the first stone

3. “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.”
What does this expression mean?

- a) It means that all children are cruel.
- b) It means that you won’t be hurt if someone calls you a bad name (like “jerk”).
- c) It means that it hurts to have broken bones.
- d) It means that adults call children bad names.

4. “She is 9 stone.”
What are we talking about in this sentence?

- a) her height
- b) her weight
- c) her shoe size
- d) her beach

5. What is someone who smokes marijuana often called?

- a) Harp
- b) Maura
- c) Stoner
- d) Stone-faced

6. What is a good technique for playing poker?

- a) being stone-faced
- b) getting stoned
- c) smiling when you have good cards
- d) crying when you have bad cards

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

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