

Real Talk #034 – Talking about movies you hate

Episode description

Have you ever watched a really bad movie and been at a loss for words on how to describe just how terrible it was? If so, look no further! In today's Real Talk episode, Andrew and Jeremy give some useful words and phrases to talk about movies that just aren't your thing.

Fun fact

The original title of the classic American film Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid was The Sundance Kid and Butch Cassidy. The names were reversed when Paul Newman, who was one of the biggest movie stars in the world at the time, took the role of Butch.

Expressions included in the study guide

- Letdown
- Bummer
- Snoozefest
- To drag on
- Off-putting
- To pass on [something]



Transcript

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.

Andrew: You're listening to the Culips English Podcast. To download the study guide for this episode, which includes the transcript, detailed vocabulary explanations, real-world examples, and a quiz, visit our website, Culips.com, C-U-L-I-P-S.com.

Hello, everybody. My name is Andrew.

Jeremy: And I'm Jeremy.

Andrew: And you're listening to Culips.

Welcome back to Culips, everyone. You are listening to Real Talk, and this is the series where we teach you the English expressions that you need to know for real-world situations. And, Jeremy, today we are going to teach everyone how to talk about movies or TV shows that you don't like.

Jeremy: This situation comes up a lot.

Andrew: I agree. And this is actually the sequel to the last Real Talk episode, where we taught everyone how to talk about movies and TV shows that they do like. So if you haven't heard that episode yet, maybe it would be a good idea to go back and give it a listen and then come back to this one or, really, I guess it doesn't matter, just as long as you listen to both. But, anyways, today we'll learn about how to talk about movies and TV shows that you don't like.

But, just before we get started with that, I wanna remind everyone that the best way to study with this episode is with our study guide. And you'll get the transcript, detailed vocabulary explanations, real-life examples, a quiz, and more in the study guide. So definitely visit our website, Culips.com, and check that out.

Jeremy: So, Andrew, have you ever seen a movie that you just absolutely hated?

Andrew: Yeah, I think I've seen a lot of movies that I've absolutely hated, because I'm quite a picky guy when it comes to movies. There are a lot of movies that I watch on Netflix for about 20 minutes and then I either turn them off or I fall asleep because they're so boring.



- Andrew: As for movies that I've seen in the theatre that I hated in the end, well, usually this doesn't happen too often, because I only go and see movies from my favourite directors or that have my favourite actors in them. So I usually know that I'm going to go see a movie that I will like. But I think it was a couple of years ago now, I went and watched Captain America at the movie theatre, and I'm not really a fan of superhero movies. I find them to be pretty boring, actually, which I know is an unpopular opinion, so I apologize.
- Jeremy: They are very exciting. There's lots of action in them, right?
- Andrew: Yeah, yeah. But the story is so derivative and so unoriginal, it's the same story time after time after time. That's what I find boring.
- Jeremy: It's redundant, is what you're saying, right?
- Andrew: Exactly. That's a great word, redundant.
- Jeremy: I agree, I agree.
- Andrew: Jeremy, what about you? Can you think of a time that you saw a movie that you absolutely hated?
- Jeremy: Actually, it was a hero movie, I think a Marvel movie, that I saw maybe a couple of years ago now. I have a young son, so anyone who has young children knows that you don't get to go to movies very often when you're taking care of children. So I haven't been to the movies in a long time, but the last movie I remember disliking was Doctor Strange.
- Andrew: Doctor Strange.
- Jeremy: Yeah, it's the same as what you said, I felt like the storyline was very cheesy and the action was over the top. They just had too much going on in the movie and I really didn't like it. Actually, also, I recently saw Ender's Game. Have you seen Ender's Game?
- Andrew: I haven't, no.
- Jeremy: I read the book recently, and I really enjoyed the book and I heard there was a movie. So I checked out the movie and I thought it was disgraceful. It was a disgrace to the book. They changed everything, they took out some of the best parts of the story, and they didn't develop the characters very well. I was extremely disappointed.

- Andrew: That happens often when books are turned into movies or TV shows and, yeah, I know exactly what that's like from, you know, series like The Chronicles of Narnia and Lord of the Rings. I mean, these were still pretty good movies, but a lot of people said they were different from the books.
- Jeremy: Yeah, in this case, and with Ender's Game and with Lord of the Rings, I think the reason is in the book the author writes everyone's thoughts out and you know what they're thinking. You know their strategy; you learn about their personality. But in the movie, you just see their face and you can't learn much from a person's facial expressions. So I think that's why.
- Andrew: I totally agree with you there. Well, Jeremy, today what we're going to do is listen to an example conversation about movies and TV shows. And after we listen to it, we'll go back and take a close look at it and break down all of the expressions we heard. And we'll also teach you some other useful vocabulary related to talking about movies that you don't like.
- Jeremy: Sounds great. Let's get started by listening to the first example conversation.
- Andrew: OK.

- Friend 1: Did you see the latest Game of Thrones episode? What did you think about it?
- Friend 2: Yeah, I did. It was kind of a **letdown**, don't you think so?
- Friend 1: Yeah, I totally agree. I was really looking forward to this season. But it's not what I expected at all.
- Friend 2: Yeah, it's kind of a **bummer**.
- Friend 1: Exactly, like, why do you have to spoil such a great show on the last season?
- Friend 2: At least it's not as bad as the latest superhero movie that came out.
- Friend 1: Do you mean Avengers: Endgame? I heard that movie was amazing.
- Friend 2: Yeah, most people say that, but I thought it was a total **snoozefest**. It was 3 hours long and I felt like it **dragged on** forever. But, I mean, superhero movies really aren't my thing, anyways.
- Friend 1: They aren't really my cup of tea, either. Maybe I'll **pass on that one**. I heard there is a new thriller coming out this Friday that I'll check out instead.



Andrew: OK, so, Jeremy, now what I would like to do is go back and take a closer look at this example conversation that we just heard and pick out some of the key expressions and key vocabulary that we heard in the conversation.

And so I guess we should start with a very important question and how to answer this question, and that is, what did you think about it? What did you think about it? What did you think about it? If you tell a friend that you just saw a movie, your friend is going to ask you this question 100% of the time, right? "Oh, how was it? What did you think about it?" This kind of question, so how can we answer a question like this when it comes to a movie that we don't like?

Jeremy: Well, you want to give your opinion, right? So you can say something like, "I think" and then after that you can add something like, "I think it was really bad, I think it was a terrible movie" or you could just say, "It was terrible."

Andrew: In the example that we just heard, when the two friends were talking about Game of Thrones, they said that the final episode was kind of a **letdown**. It was a **letdown**. What does it mean if something is a **letdown**?

Jeremy: Well, it means you had high expectations for the thing, and it did not meet your expectations. So it let you down. If someone promises you something and in the end they don't keep their promise, then they are letting you down. So in this way, the movie or the TV show can let you down.

Andrew: Yeah, it just means disappointing, right? If something lets you down, it's disappointing. It means you have high expectations for something and those high expectations weren't met.

Jeremy: It doesn't feel good, that's for sure.

Andrew: Yeah, doesn't feel good, that's for sure. I agree. If we go through the example conversation a little bit more, the two friends said that the final season of Game of Thrones was a **bummer**. It was kind of a **bummer**. And this was another kind of a **bummer**, this is more of a slang expression, I suppose. It's not as formal. **Letdown** is not really slang at all, but **bummer** is definitely slang. And they mean the same thing, right? It's another disappointing thing.

Jeremy: Yeah, a **bummer** to me, a **bummer** seems a little bit different in that you don't have to have expectations. It's just something that makes you feel bad. "Aw, it's raining today, what a **bummer**." Right?

Andrew: Right.



Jeremy: If you say what a **letdown**, that means, “Oh, I thought it was gonna be sunny today, but it’s not, it’s raining.” To me that seems like a **letdown**, but **bummer** can be both.

Andrew: Yeah, that’s a very good point, that **bummer** is just a negative thing that makes you feel bad but, you’re right, you have no expectations. It’s just you feel bad because of something, that thing is a **bummer**. But you’re right, **letdown** definitely has an expectation built into it.

Jeremy: And bum is a slang word for your butt. The thing that you sit on, so I think a **bummer** is something that makes you sit down, kind of or brings you down. So it has this down sort of “aw, bad” meaning.

Andrew: I don’t know if that’s true or not, but I think that’s useful to remember the expression. So I think it’s a good analogy there.

Let’s just throw out a couple other expressions that our listeners could use when they’re talking about a movie they don’t like and answering this question, how was it? So we said you could say just kind of straightforwardly, it was terrible, it was bad. A little more advanced, we could say it was a **bummer** or it was a **letdown**. But are there any other expressions we could use in this situation?

Jeremy: Well, sometimes if you say it was terrible and someone else in your group, someone near you has also seen the movie and maybe they maybe liked the movie. They might have thought it was a good movie. If you say it was terrible, you might cause an argument or make them feel bad or something. So instead you can say something like, “It wasn’t my style” or like in the example conversation, “It was not my cup of tea.” That means the same thing. “It wasn’t my style; it wasn’t for me.” “I didn’t like it.” These kind of expressions say this is just my opinion, you can have your own opinion. I don’t wanna fight about it, I don’t want to argue, this kind of thing.

Andrew: Yeah, and to go back to us at the start of this episode, we said that we’re not really huge fans of superhero movies. They’re not our cups of tea, right? But that doesn’t mean we don’t think they should exist and that people shouldn’t enjoy them, if they find them enjoyable. I think that’s awesome. But for me, personally, it’s just not my cup of tea. It’s not my style.

Jeremy: Another way to comment about the movie is to make a specific comment about the acting or the character development. So in the beginning of this episode when I mentioned Ender’s Game, I enjoyed the book because the character development was very good. I felt like I understood all the characters very well. But in the movie, there was almost no character development, so I was very disappointed in that.

- Jeremy: So you can say the acting sucked, for example. Sucked is a slang term, to say that it was bad, very bad. The acting was terrible; the action was boring. You can make a comment like this about one specific aspect of the movie.
- Andrew: Right, or the story was nonexistent.
- Jeremy: Yes.
- Andrew: Kind of saying that the story was terrible, right? Or you could talk about the dialogue, too, the dialogue was poorly written. I've heard these kind of comments before.
- Jeremy: Or the main character was annoying.
- Andrew: The main character was annoying. Or you could even talk about the soundtrack, right? The soundtrack was terrible. The soundtrack was annoying. Or, and this is maybe just me, but when I go to the movie theatres these days, I find it to be so loud. "Wow, the soundtrack was too loud." Why is it so loud?
- Jeremy: I agree. You could say that the music was **off-putting**. It was so loud, it was **off-putting** or the music didn't go with the story, for example. It didn't go with it, they don't match, or it's **off-putting**, means it made me feel strange, **off-putting**.
- Andrew: Yeah, just puts you into a bad mood. Makes you not like it.
- Jeremy: Yeah.
- Andrew: So to go back to that example conversation quickly here at the end, we heard the two characters talking about a movie, instead of Game of Thrones, they transitioned to talking about Avengers: Endgame. And one of the friends didn't like this movie. In fact, he thought it was a total **snoozefest**. And I love this expression, **snoozefest**.
- Jeremy: It's a funny expression.
- Andrew: It's very funny. So snooze means to sleep, kind of a light sleep, like a nap, right? You're snoozing, you're not really deeply sleeping, kind of a light sleep. So, and fest is short for festival, so a **snoozefest** is then just something that is very boring and so boring that you may fall asleep while you're experiencing it.
- Jeremy: We sometimes add the word "total" on the front to emphasize the expression. "It was a total **letdown**." "It was a total **snoozefest**." "It was a total **bummer**." You can say things like this.



- Andrew: Totally, totally. And I feel like this kind of, and I don't wanna say it's slang, but it's a little informal to use "total" or "totally" as an intensifier, but it's really common these days. I do it all the time.
- Jeremy: I do, too.
- Andrew: It's almost more common, I would say, to hear "total **snoozefest**" rather than "**snoozefest**." This is a good set of words to learn together, a collocation, total **snoozefest**. So anything that you find is boring, you can say it was a total **snoozefest**, and you'll make your friends laugh with your knowledge of English slang. OK, there is one final aspect of the example conversation that we should check out, and that was when one of the friends said that he would **pass on that one**. Meaning that he's not going to watch Avengers, he's going to **pass on that one**. He wants to watch a different movie instead. So if you **pass on something**, it just means you skip it, right?
- Jeremy: You let it go by. If your friend is offering everybody, I don't know, shots of vodka and you say, "Oh, I don't want to drink any of that. **I'll pass**, no thank you. **I'll pass on that one**."
- Andrew: Yes, exactly. I'll skip.
- Jeremy: Yeah, skip.
- Andrew: Yeah, it's just a very polite way to say that you don't want to participate in an activity or don't want to watch something or attend an event. Any kind of situation like this.
- Jeremy: Yeah, I agree.
- Andrew: Cool. Well, Jeremy, I think we covered a lot of ground here today.
- Jeremy: Yeah, we did.
- Andrew: And I think now all of our listeners should be ready to go out and watch terrible movies so that they can talk to their friends about them. What do you think about that?
- Jeremy: Go watch some bad movies, everyone.
- Andrew: So after you watch one of these terrible movies, please get in touch with us and share your opinion using some of the expressions that you learned here today. You can contact us many different ways. Check out our social media, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, we're everywhere. Just search for Culips English Podcast and you can find us. Or you could email us; our address is contact@Culips.com.



- Jeremy: If you wanna get the transcript and practice exercises for this episode, head over to the website to download it, Culips.com.
- Andrew: We will be back soon with another brand-new episode and we'll talk to you then. Bye, everyone.
- Jeremy: Bye.

Detailed Explanations

Letdown Noun

A **letdown** is a disappointment, or something that makes one feel disappointed. When one's expectations are not met, that experience could be described as a **letdown**. Common words that go with **letdown** are "total" or "bit of a." If you want to express an experience that was really disappointing, you can use the phrase total **letdown**, but if an experience was just slightly disappointing, you can use the phrase a bit of a **letdown**.

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

Marcy:	How was the movie on Friday?
Dana:	Ugh. The movie was a total letdown , actually.
Marcy:	Oh no! I know how excited you were for it.
Dana:	Yeah, I went to the midnight showing and everything, but it was not worth it at all. Save your money—don't go see it.

Chris:	Did you finish the series? What did you think of the ending?
Hank:	To be honest, it was a bit of a letdown .
Chris:	Yeah, I thought so, too, but I didn't want to ruin it for you.
Hank:	The characters just sort of gave up at the end of the book. The author really messed up, in my opinion.

Bummer

Noun (slang)

Bummer is similar to the word letdown. **Bummer** is used to describe a situation that is disappointing, unfortunate, or in any way negative. **Bummer** is often used as a response to hearing someone else's bad news using phrases like "that's a **bummer**" or "what a **bummer**." Check the example dialogues to see these phrases in a natural context.

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

Frank:	I waited in line for 3 hours for the new iPhone XVI release, and they sold the last one to the guy in front of me! I am so unlucky.
Jarvis:	Man, what a bummer .
Frank:	Such a waste of time.
Jarvis:	Did the store offer a discount coupon to the people who turned up to the event but couldn't buy a phone?
Frank:	Yeah, like 5% off or something like that.
Jarvis:	Well, that's better than nothing, right?

Cindy:	Oh no! The rain ruined my perm. I just got it done this morning.
Vivian:	That's a bummer . Maybe if you tell them what happened, the salon will do it again at a discount.
Cindy:	I doubt it.
Vivian:	It's worth a shot! Just call and ask.
Cindy:	You're right. I'll call now. Thanks for the advice.
Vivian:	Anytime, girl.

Snoozefest

Noun (slang)

Snoozefest is a slang word used to describe an extremely boring event or period of time. As mentioned above, total in this case means completely. Total is used to put emphasis on a word. Therefore, if you call something a total **snoozefest**, it is extremely boring, enough to put you to sleep.

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

Grace:	That meeting was a total snoozefest ! Why do I work here again?
Alondra:	To make money? Pay rent? Not starve?
Grace:	Those are all good points. Ugh. Maybe I should buy a lottery ticket or something.
Alondra:	Yeah, that will definitely NOT be a waste of money.
Grace:	Don't be sarcastic with me! I'm serious.

Tyrone:	Did you see the remake of Aladdin?
Titi:	Yep. It was a bit of a snoozefest , though. I was yawning during some bits.
Tyrone:	Nothing's ever as good as the original.
Titi:	Maybe it's also the fact that we're adults now. I mean, musical movies just don't hold the same appeal as they did when I was a kid.



To drag on

Phrasal verb

If something **drags on**, then it continues much longer than originally expected. For example, a meeting that was originally supposed to end at 3:00 is **dragging on** if it hasn't ended by 4:00.

Here are a couple more examples with **to drag on**:

Victor:	Hey, did you ever get the money from that car accident you were in?
Min-Jun:	Ugh, no. The insurance claim I made has been dragging on forever! I won't see the money until I'm dead, at this point.
Victor:	Have you tried calling them?
Min-Jun:	Yeah, at least 20 times. They're moving slower than a turtle in peanut butter.

Regina:	How was the Harry Potter musical? It's two parts, right?
Tory:	It was absolutely magical! I loved every minute of it. However, I went with my boyfriend and he was not a fan.
Regina:	He doesn't like Harry Potter?
Tory:	Nope. Never read the books. The musical is 6 hours long, you know. He said it dragged on and on . I was disappointed he didn't like it, but you can't please everyone.
Regina:	You should have brought me instead! You know I'm a total Potterhead.

Off-putting Adjective

Something is considered **off-putting** if it makes you feel uncomfortable or if you find it unpleasant and unattractive. People also have the ability to be **off-putting**. A bad attitude or an awkward situation could be described as **off-putting**.

Here are a couple more examples with **off-putting**:

Carly:	How did the date go?
Freda:	Oh, I don't know. He was all right, but he had this extremely weird laugh. It was a bit off-putting , if I'm being honest.
Carly:	Oh, that's unfortunate. Is it a deal breaker?
Freda:	I think so. I cringed a little every time he laughed. That is not a good start to a healthy relationship.
Carly:	I agree. Well, it was worth a shot, anyways. Better luck next time.

Hector:	Dude, why did you bring Zach to my party?
RJ:	Why not? He's a nice enough guy.
Hector:	No man, he's weird. He gives me a weird vibe.
RJ:	I'll admit, his awkwardness is a little off-putting , but he's new to town and doesn't have many friends. Cut the guy a break.
Hector:	Fine, but if he does anything freaky I'm kicking him out. Got it?
RJ:	Got it.



To pass on [something]

Phrasal verb

There are a couple of meanings for the phrasal verb **to pass on [something]**, but in this episode we'll focus on just one, which is to skip or decline an offer. If someone invites you to a party and you don't want to go, then you can reply by saying, "**I'll pass**" or "**I'll pass on this one**." Whenever you want to decline an invitation or suggestion, you can use this phrase.

Here are a couple more examples with **to pass on [something]**:

Mikey:	Hey, wanna check out a movie after school?
Gorge:	Which one are you thinking of seeing?
Mikey:	The new Spider-Man movie looks good.
Gorge:	I'll pass. I'm not a fan of Marvel movies.
Mikey:	No sweat, bro. I'll ask Frankie if he wants to go with me.

Mom:	Jenny and I are going to the store. You wanna come, too?
Sara:	No, I'll pass. But can you get me some chips while you're there?
Mom:	Original or sour cream and onion?
Sara:	Sour cream and onion, please!
Mom:	You got it, sweetie. We'll be back soon. Don't answer the door to strangers.

Quiz

- 1. What does “snooze” mean in the phrase total snoozefest?**
 - a) sneeze
 - b) something boring
 - c) a short sleep
 - d) drunkenness

- 2. What slang word could you use as a reply when someone tells you some bad news they’ve experienced?**
 - a) ballin’
 - b) bummer
 - c) ditto
 - d) ratchet

- 3. Which has the opposite meaning of “I’ll pass on that”?**
 - a) I’ll skip that
 - b) Not this time
 - c) I’m down
 - d) Thanks, but no thanks

- 4. True or false? A letdown is something that completely meets one’s expectations.**
 - a) true
 - b) false

- 5. Which of the examples below is an example of something dragging on?**
 - a) attending a 1-hour meeting
 - b) shopping at the grocery store for 40 minutes
 - c) going to a theme park for 6 hours
 - d) watching a single movie for 5 hours

Writing and Discussion Questions

1. Among the phrases you learned today, which one was your favourite and why?
2. Which movie genre is not your cup of tea, not your style?
3. What was one of the worst movies you've ever seen? How so?
4. What is something that is considered popular in your country that you are not a fan of?
5. What is something that you considered a total snoozefest?

Quiz Answers

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

Episode credits

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