

Simplified Speech #118 – Meet Pinky, Andrew’s new dog

Episode description

Animal lovers gather around! Whether you have a fur baby of your own or just love pets, you’ll enjoy listening to Andrew and Kassy talk about Pinky, Andrew’s new dog.

In this episode, two native English speakers talk about owning a pet. This English audio lesson is designed to help you improve your vocabulary with everyday words and conversations. It’s the best way to learn English, so you can become fluent in English. And you might just want to adopt a pet of your own!

Fun fact

It’s believed that dogs can tell time, especially if you have developed a set routine. Dogs will know when it’s time to go for a walk or when you’ll get home from work, which is why you’ll find them waiting for you at the door!

Expressions included in the study guide

- To come up in conversation
- To get the wheels spinning in [one’s] head
- The beginning of the end
- Foster failure
- Pet baby
- Zoo



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. The transcript has been edited for clarity.

Andrew: Hello there, everyone. My name's Andrew.

Kassy: And I'm Kassy.

Andrew: And this is the Culips English Podcast.

Hello there, friends. Welcome back to Culips. Today we have a Simplified Speech episode for you. Now Simplified Speech is the Culips series of features clear, natural and easy to understand conversations about fun or fascinating topics. And today we're going to talk about a topic that is both fun and fascinating, at least to me. It is my new dog, Pinky.

Kassy: Oh, that does sound fun. But before we do, I want to let everyone know about our study guide. So along with this episode, there is a transcript and study guide available for all Culips members. As you listen to this episode, you can follow along with the study guide. It's the best way to practice your English. And you can do that by becoming a Culips member. And you'll be supporting us and allowing us to keep making this amazing English content for you and people all over the world. There are also a bunch of other extras that you'll get when you become a member. So to become a member and get the study guide, just visit Culips.com.

Andrew: That's right. And we also want to give a shout-out to one of our listeners from Brazil, Prihlola, who left us a nice comment and a five-star rating on Apple podcasts. So the comment says, "If you learn English, definitely you should listen to this podcast. I listen every day when I go to work. Culips helps me to improve my English and achieve my goals. I'm grateful to learn with the Culips team." So Prihlola, thank you so much for that awesome review and that five-star rating on Apple podcasts.

Kassy: Yes, thank you so much for the awesome review. And everyone, leaving a positive review and a five-star rating on Apple podcasts or whatever platform you use to listen to Culips helps more English learners around the world find Culips and study with us. So even if you leave just a short one-word review, we'd really appreciate it. With that said, it's time to talk about today's topic. So Andrew, let's get started.

Andrew: Yeah, let's get into it. So, Kassy, do you remember last week, we were recording a Culips episode and I casually mentioned Pinky, my dog, and you were like "Andrew, you have a dog?" I've realized that I forgot to tell you, Kassy. It just didn't **come up in conversation**. And also, I realized that I haven't shared this news with the Culips audience, really. I've talked to our Culips members about this during our monthly live

streams. And there's a Fluency Files episode as well about Pinky, which is the Culips series that's exclusive for Culips members. So it's not like I haven't talked about Pinky before, but he's new to my family. And I haven't had the chance to talk about Pinky with the wider Culips audience. So I thought we could do that here today.

Kassy: Yeah, I'm looking forward to it. We can do kind of a Q&A, get to know all about Pinky.

Andrew: Yeah, so maybe I'll just explain a little bit about why my girlfriend and I adopted Pinky and how this all came to be that he is now a part of our family. For a long time, we've wanted a dog, you know. Usually on the weekends when I spend time with my girlfriend, who is actually now my fiancé, we go for a walk, and we enjoy walking around the neighborhood. And there's a nice path with the stream. Actually, there's one near my house and one near her house.

Kassy: You've got options on both ends there.

Andrew: We got options on both ends. And usually when we go for a walk, we go by the stream. And there are also lots of dogs around, you know, like every time we go out, we see many people taking their dogs for walks. And we always say ah, it'd be so nice to have a dog. Look at that dog. He's so cute. And it just really looks nice to take a dog for a walk. So we've been talking about it and we always said when we get married, and we get our own place and we live together, because right now we still don't live together. We thought, oh that would be perfect time to get a dog. So I guess that **got the wheels spinning** in my girlfriend's head a bit, because she started following some animal shelters on social media. And I think once she started doing that and started following different dog owners and different pet accounts on Instagram, I think that was the **beginning of the end**, right there. At that moment, it went from just talking to actively looking for a dog. And, you know, with the craziness of COVID, over the last year, we're also both working from home. So suddenly, she found herself with a lot more time on her hands as well. She doesn't have to wake up as early to go to the office and battle the rush hour traffic every day and all of that craziness. So I think those two factors combined, like she's at home, she has extra time. And also looking at these dogs on Instagram really made the decision easy.

Kassy: Yeah, I've actually heard that the number of pets being adopted really increased this year, because of you know, social distancing, and people working from home.

Andrew: Yeah, it makes so much sense. Like, as soon as we got Pinky, I was like, oh, yeah, this is so great. Like, it's really good. I wasn't really worried about my girlfriend, being at home every day. It wasn't like I was stressed out for her being lonely or something. But I think that is something that we've had to deal with. At least I've had to deal with it working at home, like not coming into contact with people every day, not talking with people every day. It's really easy to just stay inside all day too and not go out and get some fresh air. So yeah, I wasn't worried that my girlfriend was too lonely. But as soon as she got Pinky, because Pinky is living with her for now until after the wedding and we live

together, as soon as he came, and then suddenly she had to take Pinky out three or four times a day for walks. I was like, oh, this is really good for you, I think, just to get out of the house, get some fresh air, and then have somebody to talk to, right?

Kassy: Pinky, how's your day going?

Andrew: Actually, Pinky is deaf. He can't hear a thing. So you can, you can yell at him all you want. He won't even turn his head.

Kassy: Wow, that's interesting.

Andrew: Yeah, and we didn't really know that until we got him. You know, my girlfriend was speaking to him in Korean, because she's Korean, and we live in Korea. So obviously, that seems like what you should do, but he wasn't responding. So I was like maybe he speaks English. Let me speak to him in English. So I tried and he didn't respond at all, didn't even turn his head, didn't perk up his ears. And so we thought, oh, he's probably deaf. And then when we took him to the vet to get a checkup, the doctor confirmed that he doesn't hear very well, so.

Kassy: So you got him from a shelter, correct?

Andrew: Yeah, so Pinky came from a shelter. And originally, we were just planning on being temporary guardians. So this shelter was overrun with animals, unfortunately. And it was kind of a situation like, if they can't find a place for Pinky as soon as possible, then they probably would have had to put him down. So my girlfriend saw him on Instagram, and he looked very cute. And she was like, well, I don't know how long I'll be working from home. But at that time, this was now three or four months ago, it seemed like COVID was pretty bad and she'd probably be working from home, at least for the next few months. So she signed up, filled out the paperwork, and agreed to take care of Pinky for three months. So Pinky came over and he's around 12 years old. We're not really sure.

Kassy: He's really old for a dog.

Andrew: Yeah, somewhere between 10 and 12 is our estimate. We don't have great details about his past. However, we have seen some pictures from him at the shelter. And it's kind of sad to look back at his life. I'm not sure how nice of a life he's had. But he's called Pinky. Actually, his Korean name from the shelter was Pink Boy, Pink Boy. Because his skin is a little bit pink. So we changed that to Pinky, just kind of a cute nickname, didn't change his name too much. Not that he could notice because he can't hear but.

Kassy: Maybe he can read lips.

Andrew: Yeah, I don't know. He was quite scared when we got him at first, pretty timid. But he's very quiet, doesn't bark. He's very well behaved. And now that we've had him for about four months, he's really started to adjust. And now finally, I think we're starting to

see his real personality. I always wanted a dog that I could go running with. And Pinky is a kind of poodle mix, small to medium size dog poodle mix. And it was just not the type of dog that I could run with at all. So I was like, all right, well, let's see what he's like when I heard that my girlfriend was going to get him. Let's wait and see. And maybe he can go running with me. But no, he's not a runner. But we absolutely both fell in love with Pinky. He's been an awesome addition to our little family. And I think we knew like after a day or two of having him, we're like, yeah, we're not going to give him up after three months. Like, we're just gonna keep him if we can.

Kassy: There's actually a term for that in the animal fostering world. So foster is a person who keeps a dog for a short time, like Andrew and his fiancé originally planned. But people who, you know, take a dog in to "foster them", quote, unquote, but then decide to keep them. It's called a **foster fail**.

Andrew: A **foster fail**.

Kassy: Yes. You guys were **foster failures**.

Andrew: Yeah, I guess it's a good thing, though. It's a good test to fail, the **foster failure**, so that you end up adopting the dog. So we failed at being foster parents. And now we are just adoptive parents. But yeah, it's been great. We've realized that it takes up a lot of your time. Like, we have to take him outside three, four or five times a day. He loves going outside. And so yeah, my girlfriend's doing most of the work, obviously, because I'm only there on weekends. But yeah, it's been really fun. And that's the story of Pinky pretty much.

Kassy: Wow. So Pinky, because he's so old, is his fur mostly gray?

Andrew: Yeah, he's all white. He's all white, he's all white. He's got kind of curly hair, but we've cut it pretty short. And he's really cute, but he's very emotionless, like his face is always very much the same. You know, like some dogs look like they're smiling, or they look like they're upset or look like they show emotion on their face. Pinky doesn't show any emotion on his face. So it's a little bit hard to tell if he's happy or angry or sad or hungry. He really can, like, endure anything. When he has to go to the vet, he had to get some shots when we first got him. He didn't flinch, didn't bark, didn't like look around, didn't look scared, just like very stoic. He's a very stoic dog. But now he's starting to come out of his shell. I think he just had some trauma or something from the past. But now, when I see him every time that I go over there, he gets all excited and jumps up and down and wags his tail. And he never did that before. So I think he's getting attached to us now. And we read that dogs take three to four months to adjust to a new environment. So yeah, it's about that time. But yeah, it's been great. I haven't had a dog since I was a child. So it's been a long time. But I'm happy that it finally came true. It's not my running dog that I always wanted, but maybe in the future. For right now, I'm pretty happy with Pinky.

Kassy: That's great. And you know, it's a great way to start your new family. You know, you guys are getting married. You have your own little **pet baby** now. Pretty cool.

Andrew: Yeah, we're getting some wedding photos taken pretty soon. And I think we're gonna bring Pinky so that he can get into a couple of the shots with us. Maybe not all of the wedding photos, but a couple of them, it'd be cute to have him in there, I think.

Kassy: You should include one of those photos in a future Culips episode. I'm sure the listeners would love to see it as well.

Andrew: Yeah, that's a good idea. So I'll try and upload some to our Instagram once we get them developed. OK, Kassy, so that is the story of Pinky and I hope our listeners enjoyed hearing about it. But I have to ask you one question here before we wrap up, and that is, have you ever owned a dog?

Kassy: Yes. When I was young back in America, we had a little bit of a **zoo** going on at my house. We had three dogs, a cat and seven birds at one point.

Andrew: Oh, my gosh, three dogs, a cat and seven birds.

Kassy: Yes, that's right. And one dog was mine. His name was Mickey. And he was the love of my life. So adorable. I miss him every day.

Andrew: So you're a dog person, then?

Kassy: Yeah, I'm much more of a dog person than a cat person. You too, Andrew?

Andrew: Yeah, I think so. Although I like cats, too, don't get me wrong, but dogs are called a man's best friend for a reason, I think, just good friends.

Kassy: Yes.

Andrew: All right, so on that note, we are going to wrap things up. So thanks so much for listening everyone. We hope that you enjoyed this episode and found it helpful for improving your English. If you enjoy studying with Culips, and if you learn a lot with us and notice that we are helping you grow as an English learner, then we really would appreciate your support. And there are several ways that you can do that. The best way is to become a Culips member on our website Culips.com because when you're a member, you'll get full unlimited access to our study guide library, and so much more such as an invite to our monthly members only live streams and access to the Fluency Files, which is our members only series. But that's not the only way you could support us. You could also tell your friends who are learning English about Culips you could follow us on social media. Or you could leave us a kind review and a five-star rating on Apple podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts. So take care everyone. We'll be back soon with another brand new episode and we'll talk to you then. Goodbye.

Kassy: Bye.

Detailed Explanations

To come up in conversation

Idiom

To come up in conversation means to be mentioned, discussed, talked about or considered while talking. Usually, the topic comes up during the natural flow of conversation. People don't have to make it a point to broach the topic on purpose.

In this episode, Andrew says the topic of his dog Pinky just didn't **come up in conversation**. He never talked about his new dog because there was never a moment when the topic was brought up.

Any topic can **come up in conversation**. It can be an event, an issue, a person, or anything that might be discussed. A conversation isn't the only situation in which a topic can come up. You can also use come up in a meeting or in a chat. It applies to any situation in which people are talking.

Here are a couple more examples with **to come up in conversation**:

Keira: Hey, sorry I'm late.

Tabitha: Not a problem. You didn't miss much, just the morning meeting.

Keira: Did anything **come up during the meeting** that I should know about?

Tabitha: Nope. Just the usual. Updates on our team's progress. Confirmation on whose turn it is to clean the kitchen after lunch. That kind of stuff.

Kiyoshi: Have you talked to Ami today?

Ren: I did. Why do you ask?

Kiyoshi: I was wondering if last weekend's party happen **to come up in that conversation**.

Ren: No. Should it have?

Kiyoshi: Well. I may or may not have accidentally cracked one of her vases, and I was hoping she didn't notice. Since she didn't say anything, she probably hasn't noticed!

To get the wheels spinning in [one's] head

Idiom

To get the wheels spinning in [one's] head means to think about something deeply. This idiom describes someone who is trying to understand a difficult topic or something new they've never heard of before. For example, learning calculus for the first time might get the **wheels spinning in a student's head**.

It can also be used to describe someone who is thinking about something specific a lot. For example, in this episode, Andrew's fiancée's **wheels were spinning** because she was thinking about getting a dog a lot.

The imagery of this expression is as if you have an actual machine inside your brain. You can also say **the wheels are turning**, **the gears are turning**, or **the gears are spinning**.

Here are a couple more examples with **to get the wheels spinning in [one's] head**:

Yasin: Why didn't you apply for that job?

Ahmed: I didn't meet all the job requirements. I'm not very experienced in customer service.

Yasin: You know, my mom said something to me yesterday that really **got the wheels turning in my head**. She said most employers put more requirements than they want, because a lot of skills can be taught. So apply even if you don't check all the boxes, you know?

Ahmed: Huh, that's smart. OK, if the job posting is still up, I'll apply tonight.

Usagi: Have you been watching anything good lately?

Makoto: I have, actually. I watched a documentary on climate change the other day and it really **got the wheels spinning** in my head. I'm even making a list of all the things I can change at home.

Usagi: Wow, that must be a good documentary to get even you to change your habits!

Makoto: Well, I haven't actually changed anything yet.

The beginning of the end Phrase

The beginning of the end is the moment when the situation changes to bring about the end of something. It is the start of a series of events that leads to the end. Originally, it meant that the situation was gradually getting worse until it fails or ends completely. Now, it's used more often for any ending, good or bad.

For example, in this episode, Andrew's fiancée started following some animal shelters on social media. Once she started following different dog owners and different pet accounts on Instagram, that was the **beginning of the end**. Her following different dog owners and pet accounts on Instagram started a series of events that led to the end of their days without a dog.

Here are a couple more examples with **the beginning of the end**:

Simona: Have you seen Joe lately?

David: Joe R or Joe H?

Simona: Joe Rogers from our Intro to Geology class.

David: He dropped out.

Simona: What?

David: Yeah, he failed his midterms. All of them.

Simona: Oh, yeah. I guess I could see that happening. When I saw him heading out to party every study night we had, I knew it was **the beginning of the end**.

Kosta: Guess what.

Fu: What?

Kosta: Anna said yes! I'm getting married.

Fu: That's great! Congratulations, buddy.

Kosta: It's great. This is **the beginning of the end** of your bachelor life!

Foster failure

Noun, informal

A **foster failure** is a humorous term for someone who agrees to foster an animal until it can be adopted, but ends up adopting it instead. While fail and failure are usually negative or insulting, in this case it's used affectionately. That's because, while the person has failed to give the pet a true foster home, they've succeeded in giving a pet loving, safe home.

A foster failure refers to the person, and a foster fail refers to the situation in general. They are relatively new terms. They're used in pet fostering and adoption circles, so not all native English speakers will know them. If you meet a **foster failure**, you can teach them a new expression!

Here are a couple more examples with **foster failure**:

Lou: Sara and Michael adopted that cat they were fostering.

Harris: I told you they would. You owe me ten bucks.

Lou: You're right. I wish I'd never taken that bet. Here.

Harris: Well, to be fair, they haven't been **foster failures** with any of their previous foster pets, so you had a good chance of winning this bet.

Lou: Yeah, well, Michael's been ranting about this cat and how cute it is, so that should have been a big clue for me right there.

Priya: I'm so excited!

Katelyn: What's going on?

Priya: I'm finally adopting Biscuit.

Katelyn: Oh, that's so great! She's such a good dog.

Priya: Today I will officially be a **foster failure**. I have never been so happy to fail at something.

Pet baby

Noun, informal

A **pet baby**, **pet child** or more commonly, **fur baby**, is a person's dog, cat or other furry pet animal. It's a term of affection that shows how much pet owners value their pets. It's as if the pet is a member of their family. Likewise, it is common for owners to refer to themselves as the father or mother of their pet. They might even refer to their human children as brothers and sisters to their pets.

Here are a few more examples with **pet baby**:

Emilia: Is the restaurant we're going to pet friendly?

Marco: What? No. You're not bringing the cat to dinner.

Emilia: Yes, I am. I can't leave our **pet baby** at home by herself!

Marco: Emilia. She's a cat. She wants to be by herself. Let her have her alone time so we can have our date night.

Emilia: Fine. I'll leave our precious princess at home.

Soma: I need to leave early today. Is that OK?

Hotaru: Of course. What's up? Is everything alright?

Soma: Yeah. I just need to walk Chiyo. My wife normally does it but she's working late tonight.

Hotaru: It's not a problem then. I also have a **fur baby** that my life revolves around.

Joon: What's wrong?

Yazhu: The pet daycare we normally use is full next week. Now I have nowhere to put Xiao while we're on vacation.

Joon: You can't take it with you?

Yazhu: No. Our **fur baby** gets carsick, so we can't take him far unless we have medication, which we need to get from the vet. But it's closed this weekend.

Zoo

Noun, informal

A **zoo**, when it's not used to describe an actual, physical zoo, is a place or situation with lots of people or animals. For example, in this episode, Kassy mentions that her home growing up was a little bit of a **zoo** because they had a lot of pets.

Zoos are busy, crowded and chaotic places. They're noisy and uncontrolled. Some places aren't always **zoos**, but they can become one. Malls during the holiday gift-giving season and tourist areas during tourist season are some common places that can become **zoos**.

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

Lee: You look tired.

Kenneth: I am. Mary invited all these guests with children and pets. Our house is a **zoo**.

Lee: Oh boy, that's rough. How long are they staying?

Kenneth: A week! I have to hide in the bedroom when I want an ounce of quiet time. Even then, the sound echoes throughout the house.

Lee: If you want, you can come over to my place. You can sit on the couch in our living room for a couple hours. We'll leave you alone so you can have some quiet.

Kenneth: I just might take you up on that offer.

Yeong: I'm doing some shopping this weekend. Do you want to come?

Su-Bin: Yeah! Want to go Saturday afternoon?

Yeong: Saturday afternoon? No way. I'm not going to the mall then. That's when it's always a **zoo**. I'd rather go Sunday morning.

Su-Bin: Oh, OK. Yeah, I can do Sunday morning. I didn't realize you had such strong opinions about shopping times.

Quiz

1. If someone got the wheels spinning, they are _____.
 - a) thinking hard
 - b) driving a car
 - c) riding a bike
 - d) not thinking at all

2. Which of the following could be used to describe a crowded, noisy shop?
 - a) a park
 - b) a menagerie
 - c) a garden
 - d) a zoo

3. What does it mean when something is the beginning of the end?
 - a) It's the start of a new adventure that will never end.
 - b) It's the start of a series of events that leads to the end.
 - c) It's the end of something that just started recently.
 - d) It's the end of something that people thought would never end.

4. When something comes up in conversation, that means _____.
 - a) it was a secret that was revealed
 - b) someone was sick during the conversation
 - c) the conversation was held while walking up a hill or mountain
 - d) it was talked about

5. Which of the following is NOT a term for someone referring to their pet?
 - a) fur bubble
 - b) fur baby
 - c) pet baby
 - d) pet child

Writing and Discussion Questions

1. Think about the last conversation you've had. What are a few topics that came up?
2. Describe a time when something really got your wheels spinning.
3. Think about the past year. Was there anything that happened that you might consider the beginning of the end? Explain why.
4. Would you ever foster an animal? If so, do you think you might be a foster failure? Why or why not?
5. Where was the last place you visited that was so crowded and busy that you could call it a zoo? Is it always like that?

Quiz Answers

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

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