

## Simplified Speech #188 – Class clown or teacher's pet?

### Episode description

Were you a good student in school, or a badly behaved one? In this episode, Andrew and Kassy discuss ways to discipline and punish school students. They share stories from their own school days and their time as teachers. They also discuss how punishment in schools has changed over time. Listen to learn more and improve your English fluency.

### Fun fact

Interestingly, in the past, one form of punishment involved students memorizing and repeating lengthy texts and lists containing irrelevant and impractical data. Most people would agree that studying random information without context and practical examples indeed sounds like a punishment!

### Expressions included in the study guide

- To goof off
- To rough up
- To burst into
- To be frowned upon
- To mock
- Eye-opening



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## Transcript

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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. The transcript has been edited for clarity.

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**Andrew:** Simplified Speech episode 188. Class clown or teacher's pet? School discipline stories. Featuring Andrew and Kassy. Kassy, today we have a pretty important and a little bit serious topic. It's one that's often debated in North America and it's a topic that I was talking with some of my students about recently and it kind of brought up some interesting conversations. So, I thought, yeah, let's talk about it in a Simplified Speech episode as well. The topic is methods of disciplining or punishing children for their bad behavior. And I kind of wanted to talk about just our perspectives, you know, as students and kids growing up in homes in North America. And I think it really varies from family to family to family. So, I think Kassy, maybe we will have different experiences, but probably have a fascinating conversation at the same time.

**Kassy:** Yeah, I think it will be interesting to talk about as teachers as well. However, you teach almost adults, so it's a little different where I'm in the school setting. These guys are still kids.

**Andrew:** Yeah, and I said disciplining children, but I think in the context of this episode, we can think of children as being, you know, from like K to 12, for example, or maybe even younger, until they finish high school, for example. And with that said, Kassy, why don't we get started with our main topic for today. And I guess, it's going to be interesting because I think, like we were talking about just a second ago, it really varies, maybe from generation to generation, and family to family, and maybe even school to school, about the ways that kids are disciplined and punished. So maybe we could start with a school setting. What about when you were growing up and when you were a student, what are some of the ways that you were disciplined in school? And Kassy, I have a feeling that you are a pretty

good student, so maybe you don't even have any personal stories to share, but I'm sure you had some bad boys and some bad girls in your classroom. Maybe you could tell us about how they were disciplined in school.

**Kassy:** Yeah, sure. It really depends on what grade level you were in. So, for example, in elementary school, when I was a kid, and even now these days, I think the biggest punishment is reduced recess time. So, if kids don't behave in class, then they have to stay inside the classroom with their teacher and they can't go outside and play with their friends, which is awful. Just terrible, Andrew. But as you get older, maybe middle school or high school, you don't really have those break times as often. So, the way that students are punished might be after school type things, such as detention, where students would have to stay an hour or two after school and sit in a room. I always imagine the basement with no windows and stare at a wall. I've never had detention, but that's what I imagine. An issue in my current school, some students have been getting in school suspension and that's when they have to sit in the principal's office all day talking to no one for various punishments.

**Andrew:** OK, so wow. What you just said brought back a flood of memories. And I think when I was a high school student, I may have been detained once. I think I had detention only once. I was a pretty good student, but sometimes I hung out with other students who, they weren't bad kids or anything. But sometimes just hanging out with other kids who do bad things gets you in trouble. The teacher's just like, "Hey, you guys in the back there that are talking, you're all in detention." I wasn't even talking.

**Kassy:** But your friends were. You should have told them to be quiet.

**Andrew:** Yeah, exactly. So OK, that brought up to my mind three different kinds of punishment at my high school. There was detention, which actually that word when I hear it now seems really harsh, but it's not that harsh. It's not like you're locked up. Usually what it entails is spending like an hour or two hours after school has finished in a classroom with

a teacher. And the idea is that you have to do the time, right? You did some kind of crime. You broke the rules somehow. And so, you have to make up with that by giving away some of your free time. And you have to spend it in the classroom. There's a teacher that supervises to make sure all of the students who are in detention are, you know, not **goofing off** in the classroom. And essentially you use it as a time to do your homework, right? It's like, OK, I can get my homework done while I have to sit in this class for an extra hour. And yeah, I guess it sucks because all your friends are free and they're playing, and you can't do that. So, there's detention. And then the next step up from detention is suspension. And suspension is where you're not allowed to come to school or, Kassy, like you said, in-school suspension.

**Kassy:** Yeah, in-school suspension.

**Andrew:** In-school suspension. So that is like where you're just not allowed to go to your classes, right? Well, in your case, in the example case that you gave, go to the principal's office, and just sit in the principal's office all day, which sounds pretty boring. At my high school, it was that you weren't even allowed to come to the school. You were suspended from coming to the school. So, you had to spend a couple of days at home, which seems like a good punishment to me. I always thought like, oh, it'd be awesome to be suspended because you don't have to come to school.

**Kassy:** I guess it depends if your mom is at home glaring at you all day.

**Andrew:** Yeah. But I think it's just like that FOMO, that fear of missing out, right? When all your friends are together and you can't be with your friends, that actually can have a pretty big impact on someone. So, there's that step. There's suspension. But then if you're really bad and you do something quite serious, then the next level is expulsion. And you can get expelled from the school. And that means you're kicked out and you're not allowed to come back. And in that situation, then I think you would have to transfer to another school.

Maybe if that school wouldn't have you, then that's just like it. You're done. You can't graduate from school. So those are the three levels that I remember.

**Kassy:** Exactly. Most people don't get suspended. It's if they do something really bad. For example, bomb threats were a common thing in my school district. I don't know why. They don't have a bomb. They just call and say, "I have a bomb." And then they go to jail for it and get expelled from school. So dumb. But it happens a lot more than you'd think.

**Andrew:** Yeah, something serious like that, or maybe getting into a fight and really injuring somebody else or threatening a teacher. It's always so cute. When I was talking with my Korean students and we're talking about this topic and I asked them, "Were you a bad student?" Or like, "What was the worst thing that students at your high school did?" They'll be like, "Yeah, I was a pretty bad student. I left the school at lunchtime to go eat in a different restaurant that wasn't my school cafeteria. And then I came back."

**Kassy:** They wouldn't last two days in the North American schools.

**Andrew:** Yeah, I was like, "Well, at my school, I don't know, around the back there's students drinking and doing drugs and just all sorts of chaos."

**Kassy:** Fighting. Yeah.

**Andrew:** Fighting. So, it's a different experience, I guess, depending on your country. But yeah, those were the punishments that came to mind in a school setting. But also, Kassy, you know, "The Simpsons." The series, "The Simpsons", of course. One of the classic scenes from the opening sequence of "The Simpsons" is Bart Simpson writing lines on the blackboard. This is like kind of an old-school discipline method, I would say. And writing lines, it's like essentially detention, right? You would do it after school, but the teacher would write a line, just a sentence, and you would have to copy that sentence down maybe 100 or 200 or 500 times, who knows, depending on how much trouble you were in. So, I remember having to write some lines in elementary school, but I don't ever think I did

that in high school. But I remember it really, really being terrible because my hand would just like cramp up. You're writing the same thing over and over again. Did you ever have to write lines, Kassy?

**Kassy:** I did, not for any bad thing I did. I was notorious for not putting my name on my papers. And our teacher had a rule, if you didn't put your name on a paper the first time, you had to write your name 25 times. And if you didn't do it the second time, you had to write your name 50 times, and then 100, and then 200. And I once got to a hundred times that I had to write my name, and it was torturous.

**Andrew:** Did it work in the end? Did you learn your lesson?

**Kassy:** Oh my gosh, no. The next year I get to middle school and my nickname was literally "no name," because I kept forgetting to write my name on my paper.

**Andrew:** That's hilarious. Kassy, did we miss anything else? Were there any other kinds of punishment that you can remember getting at school or your classmates getting at school?

**Kassy:** I did not, but I think we should talk about the days of Christmas past, the bygone eras. And I had a teacher in my senior year of high school who was ancient. She'd been teaching for decades, and she would always complain to us about how she could no longer give corporal punishment at school. And corporal punishment is where teachers are allowed to physically punish you for your bad deeds. They can't, you know, **rough you up too much**, but maybe they could snap a ruler across your knuckles or make you stand with your arms above your head for a really, really, really long time or hit you across the knees with their rulers. I think these were common things in our parents' generation.

**Andrew:** Yeah, definitely I remember hearing stories from my folks about getting hit in class and maybe not like really, really hard, but I think my dad said that one of his teachers carried around this like little beat stick, like a dowel that was a quarter of an inch in dimension or something.

**Kassy:** As a teacher now, I couldn't even imagine what was going on in the teacher's psyche. Like I could never hit a student. I would cry. **I'd burst into tears.**

**Andrew:** Well, I had a really shocking cultural experience when I spent my first year in Korea. I was working at an elementary school. One of the first classes that I taught in my whole teaching career, I was just a co-teacher and there was a Korean teacher in the classroom with me. And he was also a young guy like in his first year of teaching. He was like, I don't know, mid-20s or something and we were teaching a class like grade three or four elementary school, very young students. And one of the students did something. I can't even remember what that student did, but it would have been pretty innocent for, you know, being that young. And he called the student up to the front of the class and then hit him with a stick.

**Kassy:** I didn't know they were allowed to do that still.

**Andrew:** Yeah, at that time I guess it was acceptable and now it's very much not acceptable. The culture has really changed quickly, but I think around 2009 this must have been. It was maybe not something that, you know, was encouraged, but at the same time wasn't **frowned upon** too much. I think sometimes even the parents requested that. I'm not sure. But anyways, I do remember seeing that and being very shocked because if you were to do that in a Canadian school, then you would be off to jail for child abuse, like physically abusing a child. So, it was really shocking to me and actually really unpleasant to see. I asked him not to do that in front of me. Well, not to do that in general, but if that's the culture and that's the way things are, I would have accepted that. But I didn't want to have to see it because I didn't like it very much. But thankfully the culture has really changed here and that's not part of the way kids are disciplined anymore, at least in schools. Kassy, if we go way, way back, maybe to our grandparents or even further, their generation, I don't know if you've ever heard of a dunce cap before.

**Kassy:** Ah, yeah, I have.

**Andrew:** Could you explain what a dunce cap is?

**Kassy:** Yeah, a dunce is like an idiot, a stupid person. So, you would wear that if, you know, you did something really dumb and it's kind of just a form of humiliation. You wear this hat and then everybody laughs at you and it's like, "Hahaha look at you, idiot."

**Andrew:** Yeah, it would be like this tall hat and like you said, Kassy, if you did something that was stupid or maybe you were like the kid in the school who got the lowest score or you were in trouble, then you'd have to wear this big hat. And often when I've seen this in movies, because like I said, this is way before our generation, when I saw this in movies, usually the student would have to sit in the corner facing the wall wearing the dunce hat and yeah, everybody would laugh and **mock** that student. I guess it's a kind of psychological punishment, right? It's not like a physical punishment, but it would probably be really embarrassing to have to be the dunce and to have to sit in the corner like that and to have everybody laugh at you. So, I'm also glad that we've gotten rid of that kind of punishment because I personally don't think that I would like that one very much.

**Kassy:** Yeah, I know back in my grandparents' day, left-handedness was considered a punishment. So, my grandfather was born left-handed, and his teachers would hit him across the knuckles anytime he tried to write with his left hand and I'm left-handed so I'm so thankful I live in this era where left-handedness is, you know, a merit rather than a detriment to your health.

**Andrew:** Yeah, no doubt about that. It's amazing how things have changed, really, really have changed quite a bit. Kassy, what about these days? Like, we talked about when we were students, but you know, it's been 20 years since I've attended high school and probably about 10 years for you. So, things do change as we've mentioned. And I'm wondering, you know, you're still working in a school with young kids, and you know, I'm working at a university but usually at the university level, we don't really discipline students too much. It's kind of like, you're an adult now, you can figure it out. But yeah, what about



these days, Kassy, at the school that you're working at currently? How are students disciplined there?

**Kassy:** Honestly, I'm really lucky. I work at a school where we don't have a lot of discipline issues, but I've heard it is a big deal in a lot of countries these days where the parents and the children have more power than the teachers and the administration. So, a lot of times kids are getting away with bad behavior and there's not really a lot of punishment that we can do. For example, you might want to give detention, but a parent might call and say, "My kid cannot stay after school. No one can pick him up. You have to send him home." The admin, they can't keep the kid if their parents refuse so they get sent home. Or you know, a student might continuously fail a class or they're not paying attention every day, they're disrupting the classroom and you might say like, "Leave the classroom." You go to the principal's office. But if the kid refuses to move, you're not allowed to touch them so you can't physically remove them from the class. Yeah, I feel very lucky that I don't have to deal with that, but I do think it's a big issue in schools that have a lot of behavioral problems these days.

**Andrew:** Yeah, I'm also very glad that I don't have to work in that kind of environment. I think the teachers that work in those kind of schools, they're heroes. Must be a very, very difficult job.

**Kassy:** Yes.

**Andrew:** OK, so Kassy and I are going to keep our conversation going just a little bit longer here for all of our members. Guys, this is some of your exclusive bonus content for being a member. So, Kassy, our conversation here has so far been focused on discipline at school. So maybe we'll keep it in that kind of area. And I'm wondering, we talked a lot about punishment, but when it comes to disciplining students, there are two different kind of ways. We can give incentives to encourage good behavior and we can also give punishment or discipline to discourage bad behavior. I'm wondering, was there any

incentives that you got when you were a student, like a reward for good behavior or something like that?

**Kassy:** Yeah, it's been so long since I was a young kid, but I taught elementary school for a bit. And I know one thing that worked well for me was that I had a sticker chart. So, the kids were able to get stickers if they helped out with a job around the classroom like cleaning or if they helped a classmate with a tricky math problem. Or, you know, completed all of their homework for that night, they would get stickers. And if they filled up their entire sticker sheet, they could get a prize from the treasure chest.

**Andrew:** So simple, but so effective. I had kind of a similar thing. I don't know if this program was North America wide or if it would have even been still running when you were a student, Kassy, but did you ever hear of the BOOK IT! program?

**Kassy:** No, I haven't. What is it?

**Andrew:** OK, so you would have loved this program because it was a program that encouraged students to read books and every time you finished reading a book and you showed your teacher, you'd get a sticker similar to like what you were saying earlier. And if you collected enough of these stickers, then you would be able to get a coupon for a personal-pan pizza from Pizza Hut for free. It was like a collaboration with Pizza Hut.

**Kassy:** Maybe we did have something like that, but I don't think it was called BOOK IT! That's the Canadian version.

**Andrew:** OK. Anyways, I cleaned up. I read so many books and ate so many personal pizzas from Pizza Hut — shout out to Pizza Hut for sponsoring this amazing program — because of the BOOK IT! program. So yeah, it was really good at encouraging me to read and I got lots of free pizza because of it. So, that was awesome.

**Kassy:** That's really cool.

**Andrew:** Kassy, I'm wondering also about like, we talked about discipline and lessons that you would get at school. But what about when you watched TV and like Saturday morning cartoons in Canada, we had lots of PSAs public service announcements that were geared at children to try and teach them lessons or to make sure that they stay out of danger, something like that. Did you have any of those? Or do you remember any of those kinds of shows or ads that you would see on TV?

**Kassy:** Yeah, honestly, one of the core memories I have when I was in late elementary school, early middle school, that was when social media was first taking off. So, there was AOL and then Facebook and Myspace were directly right after that. And there was a lot of cyberbullying going on right from the start. As soon as the internet popped up, bullies everywhere. So, one of my core memories is watching a Disney channel show or movie that was based around cyberbullying and it was really **eye-opening** because I wasn't allowed to use those social media platforms much. I was kind of sheltered from it, but I realized how dangerous it could be. And I really paid attention to how my siblings used it later because they were, you know, the start of the Gen Z social media culture where your entire life is online.

**Andrew:** Interesting. OK. Well, that's cool. What do you mean by "core memory"? I think some of our listeners will be curious about that.

**Kassy:** A core memory is a memory that really shaped a significant moment in your life and maybe affected how you might look at the world since then.

**Andrew:** In my case in Canada, we had a lot of like little, short TV commercials that would go on to try and teach kids to behave in a good way, teach a lesson. And man, these must be like 30 years old, but I still remember the songs. There was one that was like an anti-drug song and just, you know, encouraging kids that if you see something

sketchy on the street, like don't play with it. Like if you see a needle or something, like leave it alone.

**Kassy:** Don't take candy from the strange man in the white van.

**Andrew:** Yeah. So, this song, this jingle goes, "Don't you put it in your mouth. Don't you put it in your mouth till you ask someone you love." And I still remember that, like this little cartoon teaching kids not to like go around touching and consuming weird things that they see on the street. And another one was about wearing your seatbelt. So, this one went, "Buckle up for safety, buckle up." And I still remember those.

**Kassy:** They don't sound very jingly, Andrew.

**Andrew:** No, they're super jingly. Maybe I can find them on YouTube and I'll.... If I can find them, I'll share them in our Discord, but yeah, really catchy. And I must have watched them a lot because I can still remember them like, yeah, over 30 years later.

**Kassy:** Wow.

**Andrew:** All right. Well, Kassy, that will bring us to an end of this extended bonus conversation. So Culips members out there, thank you so much for listening. Take care and we'll talk to you next time. Bye bye.

**Kassy:** See ya.

**Andrew:** That brings us to the end of this lesson. Talk to you next time, bye!

## Detailed Explanations

### To goof off

Phrasal verb, informal

In this episode, Andrew talks about different kinds of punishment for school students. He explains that detention involves spending an hour or two after school has finished in a classroom with a teacher, who supervises to make sure the students in detention are not goofing off in the classroom.

**To goof off** is an informal expression that means to avoid work and have fun instead. The noun “goof” is an informal word for a foolish or silly person. If someone is goofing off, it means they’re playing around and wasting time instead of doing something more productive, such as working or studying. Typically, it involves something like joking, laughing, or simply doing nothing.

For instance, if two colleagues are chatting about something unrelated to work at the office, or maybe playing computer games instead of being focused on the important project they’re supposed to work on, you might say they’re goofing off.

Some good synonyms for to goof off are: “to goof around”, “to slack off”, or “to procrastinate.” All these expressions share a similar meaning of acting irresponsibly and not taking things seriously. We talk more about these expressions in [Catch Word episode #161 – Stop goofing off](#). Check it out to learn more about how to use them.

Here are a couple more examples with **to goof off**:

**Mom:** Are you studying for the exam? It’s tomorrow, isn’t it?

**Son:** Yeah. I’m going to in a second. Just let me finish this level and save the game first.

**Mom:** Pete, you’ve been **goofing off** all week, playing video games and going out with your friends! This exam is important, so it’s time to get serious!

**Joel:** Hey, have you seen this video? It’s so funny, this cat is like...

**Paula:** Joel, look, we have a project to finish. Could you please stop **goofing off** and focus on work? I’d appreciate some help.

## To rough up

Phrasal verb, informal

In this episode, Kassy explains that corporal punishment means that teachers are allowed to physically punish students. She adds that they can't rough them up too much, but they could maybe hit them with a ruler, or make them stand with their arms above their head for a long time.

The phrasal verb **to rough up** is used when talking about both things and people. When you rough something up, it means that you make it rough, or not smooth, either on purpose or by accident. For instance, the lenses of your sunglasses can get roughed up and scratched if you don't treat them with care and don't always keep them in a case.

When used in relation to people, to rough up means to hurt by hitting or treating violently. It essentially means to beat someone up and to harm them physically. In this episode, Kassy says that teachers can't rough children up. This means that teachers can't hurt students seriously, only mildly.

If someone gets roughed up, it means they get physically attacked. This expression is quite powerful and is typically used to describe intense situations that involve force or aggression. For example, during a protest, police can rough people up, using physical force to calm them down.

Here are a couple more examples with **to rough up**:

**Dan:** Did you watch the game last night?

**Lily:** Oh, yeah! That moment at the end when the players **were roughing each other up** was pretty crazy!

**Dan:** Yeah, hockey can get intense like that sometimes!

**Iris:** We're going to check out that night club downtown, I think it's called "Flash" or something like that. Are you coming with us?

**Sam:** I heard there was a fight there last night. Some guys tried to **rough up** the bouncer.

**Iris:** Really? That's insane! Maybe we should pick a different spot, I'm not sure I want to go there anymore.

## To burst into

### Phrasal verb

When Andrew and Kassy discuss corporal punishment, Kassy admits that she could never hit a student. She says, “I would cry, I’d burst into tears.”

The phrasal verb **to burst into** can have different meanings depending on the context. Literally, when something bursts, it explodes. For example, if you poke a balloon with something sharp, it’ll burst and break into small pieces. Idiomatically, “to burst into” generally describes a sudden and energetic appearance of someone or something, almost like an explosion of activity.

For example, if a person bursts into a room, it means that they enter the room quickly, suddenly, and perhaps with some noise. In this case, if someone else is in that room, they might be startled by such an appearance.

If a person bursts into tears, it means they start crying suddenly and uncontrollably. This expression can be used with other emotions and actions as well: someone might burst into laughter, or an audience might burst into applause.

To burst into is suitable for both formal and informal situations. It describes a sudden and energetic action, which can be both positive and negative depending on the context.

Here are a couple more examples with **to burst into**:

**Jack:** How did the presentation go?

**Gina:** It was a disaster! I was so nervous, and at one point I said “unicorn” instead of “uniform”, and everyone just **burst into laughter**. I felt so embarrassed.

**Jack:** Don’t worry too much about it. We’ve all been there. It happens to the best of us! I’m sure everyone will forget about it in a couple of days.

**Nancy:** Hey Alan! How was work today?

**Alan:** Oh, don’t ask. Another crazy day. A customer **burst into the kitchen** and started screaming about her soup being too spicy. Can you believe it?

**Nancy:** That’s wild. Well, I hope you managed to sort it out in the end.

## To be frowned upon

Idiom

In this episode, Andrew shares a story from 2009 about his coworker hitting a child with a stick. He assumes that back in 2009 corporal punishment might have still been acceptable and wasn't frowned upon in South Korea.

**To be frowned upon** is an idiomatic expression used to refer to things people disapprove of. When something is frowned upon, it means it's not supported or encouraged by society. This can apply to social norms, manners, or rules, but not necessarily to something that is illegal.

"A frown" is the facial expression we make when we squeeze our eyebrows together and turn down the corners of our mouth, often because we are annoyed, angry, or worried. This is where the expression "to be frowned upon" originated. If a behavior is frowned upon, it doesn't necessarily mean that people literally frown at it, but rather that they disapprove of it.

For instance, talking loudly in a library is frowned upon, because people need a quiet environment to read or study. If someone answered their phone and started having a conversation in a quiet library, others would very likely give this person disapproving looks. This kind of behaviour isn't recommended and is generally not well-received by society.

It's important to note that what is acceptable in one culture might not be in another. For instance, being fashionably late is sometimes acceptable in some countries, like Italy, while in others, such as Germany, where punctuality is highly valued, being late is frowned upon.

This expression is mostly used in the passive voice, as it was used in this episode. However, you might hear it used in the active voice, though it's less common. Additionally, this expression is sometimes used with the preposition "on", as in "to be frowned on".

Here are a couple more examples with **to be frowned upon**:

**Max:** How's your new job going?

**Tina:** It's great, the only thing that I can't get used to is the dress code. I spent years wearing jeans at work, but **it's frowned upon** in my new office. It's a bummer!

**Mary:** Why did the waiter give me such a strange look? Did I do something wrong?

**Jake:** Well, you left the tip on the counter, which **is kind of frowned upon**. Just leave it with your bill next time, OK?



## To mock Verb

In this episode, Andrew mentions a psychological type of punishment that used to be a thing, where a student had to sit in the corner facing the wall while wearing the dunce hat, and everybody laughed and mocked that student.

**To mock** means to tease or make fun of someone, often by copying or imitating them. When a person mocks someone, they imitate that person's actions or words. Mocking can be very hurtful and insulting. In this episode, Andrew uses this verb to describe students who are unkind to their peers who are receiving punishment. Here, "mocking" refers to teasing and being mean.

However, in some situations people mock each other as a joke, in a playful and light-hearted way, without trying to hurt anyone. It's more like a friendly imitation just to laugh together. Usually, people do it among friends or family, where everyone is aware that there're no bad intentions.

For example, comedians often do impressions of famous people and parody them. They mock them for the purpose of making the audience laugh, not necessarily because they're being mean or offensive.

Here are a couple more examples with **to mock**:

**Mom:** The school secretary called me today. Were you called to the principal's office? What did you do?

**Son:** Well, I was **mocking Mr. Stevenson** in class. But I was just joking, I didn't mean to offend anyone. He's just so funny, you know, the way he speaks.

**Mom:** Ben, this is so mean! I can't believe you.

**Son:** I know, Mom. I realize now that it was wrong. I thought it was just a harmless joke, but I understand it can hurt people's feelings. I'll apologize to Mr. Stevenson tomorrow.

**Colette:** I'm so nervous about my first day at work. What if they start **mocking me** because of my French accent like that guy from my previous job?

**Mark:** Don't worry about it! Your accent is beautiful! It's not a flaw, it's something you should be proud of!

**Colette:** Thanks, Mark. I appreciate your kind words.

## Eye-opening

### Adjective

In this episode, Andrew and Kassy discuss TV shows and ads that were directed at children and aimed to teach them to stay out of danger. Kassy shares one of her core memories about a Disney Channel movie that was based around cyber bullying. She says that for her it was really eye-opening because she wasn't allowed to use social media platforms back then.

**Eye-opening** is an expression we use when we learn something new that surprises or impresses us. It's often about something we didn't know before. We call something eye-opening when it helps us understand something better or gives us a new way of looking at things. It's like we couldn't see something before, and then we open our eyes, and everything becomes clear.

For example, if someone travels to a developing country and is shocked to see the living conditions there, you might say this trip is eye-opening. In this episode, Kassy uses this word to describe her experience learning about cyber-bullying, something she had no prior knowledge of. So, watching this film was eye-opening for her.

The expression "eye-opening" is used to talk about things that surprise us and teach us something new. Some common ways English speakers use it include talking about "an eye-opening moment," "an eye-opening experience," or "an eye-opening story." Other expressions that have a similar meaning include "enlightening," "revealing," and "informative."

Here are a couple more examples with **eye-opening**:

**Lisa:** Hey Ethan! How was your workshop?

**Ethan:** It was pretty good! A really **eye-opening experience**. I learned so much about how to stay focused and be more productive.

**Lisa:** Sounds great! I'm happy to hear that.

**Will:** Thank you so much for giving me this book, it's been truly **eye-opening**. I learned so much about how to navigate negotiations! So many useful tips and techniques.

**Alice:** Anytime! I'm so glad it helped!

## Quiz

**1. If someone is goofing off, it means that they're \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a) being very quiet
- b) being rude
- c) working hard
- d) avoiding work

**2. Which of the following is a good synonym for “to rough up”?**

- a) To mock someone
- b) To hurt someone physically
- c) To give someone a disapproving look
- d) To scare someone

**3. True or false? If someone walked into the room slowly and quietly, you might say they burst into the room.**

- a) True
- b) False

**4. What does “frowned upon” mean?**

- a) Not supported
- b) Illegal
- c) Recommended
- d) Noticed

**5. Which of the following examples best shows the usage of the expression "eye-opening"?**

- a) She woke up early because of some noise.
- b) Someone turned on the lights.
- c) The exhibition was educational and enlightening.
- d) He had an eye surgery.

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## Writing and Discussion Questions

1. How did your teachers punish students who behaved badly? Have you ever been punished? Please share the details.
2. Do you always take your work responsibilities seriously or do you find yourself goofing off from time to time?
3. What kinds of things are frowned upon in your culture?
4. Have you ever mocked someone? Have you ever been mocked? How would you feel if you saw somebody mocking you?
5. Can you think of a book, movie, or experience that you found truly eye-opening? Please explain why.

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## Quiz Answers

1.d    2.b    3.b    4.a    5.c

### Episode credits

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Image: Monstera Production (Pexels.com)