

## Simplified Speech #201 – Audiobooks (ad free)

### Episode description

In this episode, Andrew and Kassy talk about audiobooks. They discuss how audiobooks have become more popular in recent years. Andrew shares his experience of listening to audiobooks while running, and Kassy talks about why she has limited experience with them. They also talk about the good and bad points of audiobooks compared to reading regular books.

### Fun fact

Did you know that audiobooks first appeared in 1932? The American Foundation for the Blind set up a recording studio to create vinyl records of books. The idea was that listening to these recordings would be more convenient than having someone read the book out loud.

### Expressions included in the study guide

- Compatible
- Attitude/mindset shift
- Cringeworthy
- To power through
- Make it or break it
- The more ..., the more ...



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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 201: "Audiobooks." Featuring Andrew and Kassy. OK, so joining me now is my cohost, Kassy. Hey there, Kassy. How are you doing today?

**Kassy:** Hey, Andrew. I'm doing well, as always.

**Andrew:** As always. Good. Glad to hear it. And our main topic of conversation for today is audiobooks, which, in my opinion, have absolutely exploded in the last five to ten years or so, probably due to, well, the internet. You know, like back in the day, I remember listening to audiobooks back in the day when I was a kid, Kassy. It was something that I really enjoyed doing. Actually, when I would take road trips with my family. You know, in Canada, to go from one city to the next city often takes like five or six hours of driving. If we went to go see some of my cousins or my family members that lived in other cities, we'd have to drive for like five or six hours. My folks always had audiobooks and radio dramas in the car that we could listen to during those long road trips. But I remember that they would be on cassette tape, and they would be in like this huge album that had like ten different cassette tapes. So, if you wanted to listen to the whole book, it was really difficult because you had to carry this massive album with all of these cassette tapes in it, and that was just not very convenient. But now with the internet and digital media and fast internet, it's just natural that audiobooks have exploded in the last decade or so. And so, yeah, I thought it could be a fun topic to talk about today, Kassy, audiobooks.

**Kassy:** Yeah, I'm excited to hear your opinion on audiobooks. I have some of my own opinions, and we can discuss those too, but I want to hear your new venture into the land of audiobooks. I guess, like you said, it's not new, but your most recent excursion into the land of audiobooks.

**Andrew:** Yeah, so I guess I've always had this bias, Kassy, like thinking that reading a book is the best way to consume the book. I always thought that you have to read the book to fully appreciate it, and that by listening to it, you're not really getting as much as possible out of the experience. And I also had this opinion, probably wrongly, like this is probably a wrong opinion to have, a bad opinion to have, but I always got a little bit annoyed with people when they say, "I read that book," but they didn't read the book. Actually, they just listened to the book.

**Kassy:** Yeah, I've also had that opinion, which I agree with you. It's probably totally biased.

**Andrew:** Right, but like when somebody says, "Oh yeah, I read that book," and then later you found out that they just listened to the book, I don't know. Maybe we need to actually change the word that we use, because it feels like we're missing a verb in English. We need a new verb to say that you consumed a book, but you didn't read it, because many people will say, "Oh, I read that book," but in reality, they listened to it. So, I guess I always had these predefined notions and opinions about what it means to read a book and to listen to a book.

And so, because of that, I always thought a little bit negatively about audiobooks. I mean, to tell you the truth, I've enjoyed listening to audiobooks in the Korean language, and I thought it's been really helpful for me with some of the novels that I've read in Korean. Now, there aren't a lot of Korean audiobooks, and sometimes it's really difficult to find the book that you want to listen to. I've had to go through a lot of trial and error and jump through a lot of hoops to try and get audiobooks in Korean. I've had to become members of different apps and services, and sometimes the book that you want will be on one app, and then another book that you want isn't on that app, so you have to join two different apps, and it can be expensive that way. I've had to join different libraries to try and download audio content, which is really difficult. I've had to buy audiobooks. Actually, the

Google Play Store is the best place for Korean audiobooks that I've found. Just a tip for you, Kassy.

**Kassy:** Google Play Store, got it.

**Andrew:** Yeah, but I've done this a lot in Korean in the past, and I found it to be really useful, but these days, as our listeners will know, I'm really obsessed with running and obsessed with marathoning, and I've been doing a lot more running these days. I've been running maybe about somewhere between 8 to 10 hours a week, so I do a little bit over an hour a day, and that means I have a lot of time just to listen to audio content. Sometimes I like to listen to music, but I've found that when I'm running, I'm not very good at listening to Korean. In an ideal world, it would be very easy for me to focus on the language and to run at the same time, but for whatever reason, it's just not too **compatible**. They're like **incompatible** practices, I think.

**Kassy:** Probably 'cause you're focusing on your breathing, but then you also need to focus on the language, right?

**Andrew:** Yeah, I'm just not one of those geniuses that has a lot of attention. I just have a little bit of attention, so I can't focus on exercising and listening in a second language at the same time. I mean, I can, but I'm missing a lot of content as well, so I thought, "Hey, you know what? For those times when I'm just out there doing some long kilometers on the trail, let's just listen to some English audiobooks instead."

And so, I found this really great app on my phone, which is nice for listening to audiobooks. I can load up my own content easily, the books that I want to listen to, and there are some great features for making notes if I need to make a note. If I need to add a bookmark, I can add a bookmark, which is really good, because the app that I was using previously, I'd be listening to an audiobook, and audiobooks are kind of case by case. Each one is different. Sometimes each audio file for the audiobook will be a chapter, and

then sometimes you'll just have this huge audio file that's like 20 hours long, and it's just the whole book in one file. And in that kind of situation, you really need to be able to add a bookmark, because if you close your app, and then you open the app again, it's going to start the file from the beginning, like my music player would do that. And so that's pretty much impossible, right, to find, in this 20hour file, where did I stop listening last time?

**Kassy:** I think that's great, too. One of the reasons why I didn't want to read audiobooks was because I love highlighting things in my books. I don't use paper books, but I'll highlight using my Kindle software. Yeah, but I was curious. I haven't listened to enough audiobooks to know, but this bookmark feature is nice. That means you could always go back and play a certain section, just like I could go back and read the highlighted versions of my book.

**Andrew:** Yeah, so it's nice. You can add the bookmarks. You can make a note if you want to. There are some other features. You can adjust the speed if you want to listen faster or slower, right? You can do that as well. So, I think I had a bit of **an attitude shift**. I changed the way that I view audiobooks now because I don't think of them as replacing reading. I think of them as just being a supplement to reading. And this has been huge for me going forward. Like, just because I listen to audiobooks when I'm running or I've also been listening to them while I do chores around the house, it's like something that I can do to learn more or to enjoy stories while I'm doing things that I can't read in those situations. Like, I can't read a book while I'm running. I can't read a book while I'm doing the dishes, but I can listen to an audiobook. And it's just a way to, yeah, kill the time in those moments where, you know, I can't entertain myself with other things. So, it's been **a shift in my mindset**, and I've really been enjoying listening to audiobooks these days. It's been really cool.

**Kassy:** Do you listen to a specific genre, or do you try to spread out the wealth and listen to a bunch of different genres? Or do you have a favorite genre to listen to in audiobook form?

**Andrew:** Well, I want to get into nonfiction in the future. That's what I'm thinking, is that maybe nonfiction would be a nice way to listen to audiobooks. But to tell you the truth, my whole life, I've mostly read fiction. Like I'm a big consumer of fiction and I haven't tried listening to any nonfiction audiobooks yet, but that's the plan for the future. Right now, I'm listening to an audiobook called "The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle It's by the Japanese writer Haruki Murakami. And it's a very long book. I think in the physical form, it's like 600 or 700 pages. I read this book a long time ago when I was a first-year university student, but I thought I would try it again. Because sometimes when you think about those books that you've read a long, long time ago, you're like, "OK, I vaguely remember enjoying that book, but if you ask me the details about it, I don't think I would be able to explain the story." Now, it's a very complicated story, many characters, a lot of backstory. Obviously, it's a book of hundreds of pages.

So, it's hard to sum up in just a sentence, but yeah, I've been listening to that book while I've been running, and it's been really nice. And I think maybe having read it in the past, you know, when I am hearing it, it's coming back to me. So that also might be why I enjoy listening to it. Like, I thought that could be a cool thing to do with audiobooks as well, is to revisit some of the books that I've read a long time ago, just in audio format. And I don't need to focus so much, you know, on the plot details because I vaguely know it. It's all in my brain somewhere. It just needs to come back to the surface.

**Kassy:** I'm curious, Andrew, since you're listening to a fictional story with several different characters, is the narrator fixed? Do you only have the one narrator who's changing their voice patterns to represent each character's dialogue? Or have they hired several voice actors to complete this book?

**Andrew:** Yeah, that's a great question. And I think this is the difference between what we would call an audio drama or a radio drama and an audiobook. I think with a drama, like an audio or radio drama, then you're gonna have multiple voice actors voicing each character, right? So, you're gonna have different speakers for each character. Whereas

with an audiobook, you're only going to have one narrator who's going to do all of the characters. And actually, this is a point of contention that I have, something that is a little bit uncomfortable for me listening to this Murakami audiobook right now is that the narrator is good for, like, the main character. But for some of the female characters, 'cause it's a male narrator, some of the women characters, he actually does a pretty terrible job, in my opinion. So, it's always a little bit **cringeworthy**. And there are several women characters.

I could imagine that's a real challenge for the narrator is like, OK, how am I going to voice all of these different women? But some of them are just so bad. And yeah, I almost gave up on the book right at the start because there was an extended conversation with one of the characters where he doesn't do that good of a job voicing the character. That almost made me turn it off. But I was in the middle of a run. I just **powered through**. And once I got through that and I started hearing some of the other characters, I fell into the story and it's OK. But yeah, that can really **make it or break it**. I think, Kassy, depending on how good the narrator is, even if the book is a classic, it's an absolute amazing book, the narration is bad, it could turn some people off, I think.

**Kassy:** Yeah, I've only ever listened to two audiobooks in my entire life, I believe. But they actually had multiple characters. I'm wondering if it's because, one, certain books, especially more famous ones, they have a higher budget so they can hire several voice actors. They don't necessarily have to be audio dramas. They can be just audiobooks. But I've also noticed too that, like you said, audiobooks have really boomed in the last five to 10 years with all of these new sites and apps that are available. Where more amateur narrators could join the scene and start narrating books that might not have had the budget for it in the past. And those kind of books, I believe, probably only have one narrator. But if you go for books that are classics, that have been around for a long time and have reached millions of people around the world, they usually have higher quality audiobooks. But on the flip side, they're more expensive.

**Andrew:** Right. **The bigger the budget, the more expensive** it is to produce. Then often, the more expensive it is to buy that book as well. That's a good point, Kassy, that you make. Actually, our cohost here at Culips, Suzanne, she does a lot of reading for audiobooks and a lot of voice acting for audiobooks. Yeah, so that's one of the things that she's into. And I've heard some of her work in the past and it's really good. She is very good at changing her voice from character to character to character. So, I think she should read the next Murakami book, maybe. I think she could do a better job.

**Kassy:** Of the male characters than this male narrator doing the female characters.

**Andrew:** Definitely. I mean, I don't speak Japanese. I don't know Japanese, but this is a Japanese book. So, the characters have Japanese names. And from time to time, there are some Japanese words that come up, place names, food names, things like this. And I think the narrator also doesn't really say these words in a convincing way. You know? So, it's like when it's supposedly a Japanese character talking about these Japanese places, I feel like he could have practiced his Japanese pronunciation too. Even though I don't know Japanese, I just, it feels unnatural. So, there are some things with audiobooks that can sometimes take you out of the story a little bit. So, you do have to be careful. Kassy, I have a question for you. I'm wondering, have you ever tried, or would you ever try listening to an audiobook when you read the book at the same time? So, it's almost like somebody's reading the book to you. You're following along with the words. You have the physical book, or you have it on your Kindle and you're listening to the audiobook at the same time. Have you ever tried that?

**Kassy:** I have not. I think it would be a pretty cool way to practice Korean or whatever language I was interested in because then I would be getting two sources of input, both visual and auditory. I can say that one of the two audiobooks that I have listened to, it was the second in a series. So, I'd actually read the first book and then I listened to the second book and then I read the third book. And the reason I did that was because the paper version was gonna be months of a wait in the library, but the audiobook version was



available immediately. So, I was like, "Ah, I can't wait." It was interesting, Andrew, because I wasn't reading like you asked, but in the first book, I didn't have any influence on how the characters might sound. But after reading the second book, they all had unique voices and a lot of them had voices that had accents, like kind of an Irish accent or a Scottish accent. And it influenced how I perceived them in the third book when I read it because I'd heard them in the second book.

**Andrew:** Interesting, yeah. So, it can really take away a little bit of that creativity that we give as readers to the characters in the book, right? To an extent, we have to decide how do we wanna voice these characters in our own minds and how do we wanna visualize these characters in our own minds? Of course, the writer is going to give us some description and some information about the characters, but it's still quite creative on our side of things. We have to visualize and think about what the characters look and sound like and interact like in our own heads. But when you're listening to the audio book, then the narrator does that for you. And so that kind of creativity is taken away. Kassy, I asked you that question because I tried doing that earlier this year. I read a book called "The Three-Body Problem" and I had the audio book and the physical copy of the book at the same time. I think it was similar to you, Kassy. I didn't have the physical book.

So, I ordered the book, but it was gonna take a little while to get to me, but I didn't wanna wait. I had just watched the Netflix series of "The Three-Body Problem" and I was all into it. So, I just wanted to get into the book version right away. So, I got the audio book first. And then when the physical book came, I tried reading the book and listening at the same time. And I thought, I don't know about you, Kassy, how good of a reader you are, but I'm somebody, I think I've got maybe ADHD to an extent. I don't wanna use that expression lightly because I know it's a real condition, but I sometimes have difficulty focusing and sometimes I'll read a page and then I'll be like, "Whoa, I was thinking about editing Culips. I wasn't thinking about what I'm reading at all." And I have to go back and read it. So, I thought, "Hmm, let's just try as an experiment. Let me listen to the audio book and read

the book at the same time. And maybe that will help me to keep my focus and to stay focused."

But what I found was the audio book was so slow. Like I can read in my head, I wanna say three or four times faster than listening to the audio book. So, it was really annoying because I'd be following the words and I'm like, "Why is this narrator reading so slowly?" So, I had to bump the speed on the audio book up to like two times speed and then it was a little bit better. But I think it's interesting. Maybe when we're using our eyes, we can absorb and process information that we read faster than we can understand it with our ears. I don't know. At least I found that because when I was just listening to the audio book on its own at two times speed, then I found I was missing some things. But when I had the audio combined with the visual at two times speed, then it was OK. So yeah, I thought it was a little bit difficult for me.

**Kassy:** Did you end up finishing it by reading and listening at the same time? Or did you switch back and forth? Sometimes you just listen, sometimes you read, sometimes you did both.

**Andrew:** Yeah, that's another good question. I actually ended up quitting on that and I just stuck with the paper version. I found that sometimes it would be hard to sync up the two different mediums. So, if, you know, I was listening to the audio book and then I don't know, I'm on the subway or the bus and then I have to stop, then it would be really hard for me to find that place in the physical book, right? Maybe if you were to use an e-book, I'm sure Amazon has some kind of system where the two sync up and that would be really nice. That would be really cool.

**Kassy:** Oh yeah, I think there are, like it highlights the sentence as it reads it. I think there are some apps like that.

**Andrew:** Yeah, but, or even like, you know, if you're listening to the audio book and then you stop mid chapter, with a physical book, it's hard to find your place in, where was I, right? You have to go through page by page to try and find where you are. It's really inconvenient. But with an e-book, if it was synced up to the audio book, then I think, yeah, there could be some app that could show you. So, you could go from written book to audio book back and forth easily. But yeah, I found that that was too difficult for me to do with the physical paper book. And I found the audio book just to be too slow overall, like I said. So, I ended up just reading the book and that was more enjoyable for me to consume the book that way. But yeah, that was, I guess, a kind of failed experiment, but I think Kassy, you're right. In Korean, that's a really nice technique. So, it does vary depending on your goal, right? Are you learning a language? If you're learning a language, maybe you have to do something different. You want to try and get all of the sensory input that you can. Whereas when you're dealing with your native language, we don't need as much and we can just, yeah, use our eyes and it's fine.

**Kassy:** Well, Andrew, after this riveting conversation, I really want to try more audio books. My problem is, is that I don't have as many opportunities to listen to books without getting bored. Like for you, you have running and maybe lots of dishes to wash, I'm not sure, or a commute to work. But for me, if I don't have something to do with my hands, I lose focus when I listen to audio books. And right now, in my life, whether that's a good thing or a bad thing, I don't have a commute or, and I don't run and I don't wash that many dishes. So, I don't have a lot of opportunities for listening to audio books, but yeah, maybe I'll try it out and see how it goes.

**Andrew:** Yeah, well, Kassy, if you ever do that, let us know how it does go. I'm sure our listeners would love to hear an update about that. And I would also love to throw this question out to our community as well and our listeners. Guys, what do you think about audio books? Have you ever tried listening to them in English? Have you ever tried listening to them in your native language? Do you like them? Do you prefer them? And what do you think about this topic that Kassy and I talked about at the start of the episode

about when people listen to a book, but then they say they read a book. Are Kassy and I alone here and being a little bit upset about this? Are we being unreasonable? Let us know what you think.

The best place to get in touch and share your comments or your opinions or your questions about this episode is our Discord community. Guys, it is 100% free to join. Everybody can join. We have thousands of people over there who are discussing everything under the sun about English each and every day. It's a great place just to practice your English in a fun and supportive way with our awesome community. We'll put the link to join our Discord in the description for this episode. So come on over and join us. We'd love to meet you there. Well, Kassy, I think that will wrap it up for us for now. So, thank you for this amazing conversation. That was a fun one. I enjoyed it. Thank you, guys, for listening. Please take care and we'll talk to you in the next Culips episode. Bye bye.

**Kassy:** See ya.

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

## Detailed Explanations

### Compatible Adjective

In this episode, Andrew talks about how running and listening to Korean audio content don't mix well for him. He says they are not **compatible**. This means that, in his experience, these two activities don't work well together. Essentially, he finds it challenging to focus on the Korean language while running because the two activities clash or interfere with each other.

The word "**compatible**" refers to things that can work well together or suit each other without causing problems. For instance, if two gadgets are **compatible**, they can connect and function together easily. Similarly, if two people are **compatible**, they get along well and have a good relationship. In Andrew's case, running and listening to Korean are not **compatible** because he can't effectively do both at the same time.

You can use "**compatible**" to describe things or people that fit well together. Here are some examples:

- "My new headphones are **compatible** with my phone, so I can listen to music without any issues."
- "David and I are very **compatible**; we share the same interests and values."

Common synonyms for "**compatible**" include "suitable," "well-matched," and "harmonious."

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

**Nina:** I bought a new phone case, but it doesn't fit. What's wrong?

**Ethan:** Let me see. The case might not be **compatible** with your phone. It's important to choose the right size.

**Olivia:** I'm planning a trip with a friend, but I'm a little nervous. What if it doesn't go well?

**Edward:** Make sure your travel preferences are **compatible**. If you both enjoy the same activities and have similar schedules, it will be a great trip.

## Attitude/mindset shift

Noun

In this episode, Andrew talks about his **attitude shift** regarding audiobooks. Initially, he thought audiobooks were just a replacement for traditional reading. However, his mindset changed, and now he sees audiobooks as a helpful addition to reading. This shift in how he views audiobooks has allowed him to enjoy them more during activities like running or doing chores.

An “**attitude shift**” or “**mindset shift**” means changing how you think or feel about something. The word “shift” refers to a change from one position to another. People typically experience a **mindset** or **attitude shift** in response to personal growth, significant life events, new information, feedback, challenges, or changes in their environment and relationships.

For example, if you didn’t use to like exercising but then began to enjoy it, you might say you’ve had an **attitude shift**. Similarly, if you used to believe that mistakes are negative but now see them as opportunities to learn, that’s a **mindset shift**. In both examples, there has been a change in how you view a situation.

Don’t confuse an **attitude shift** or a **mindset shift** with a temporary change of opinion. An **attitude shift** is a deeper, more lasting change in your perspective.

Here are a couple more examples with **attitude/mindset shift**:

**Sarah:** I used to think working from home would be boring and a waste of time. But I’ve had a real **attitude shift** about it.

**Mike:** Oh, really? What happened?

**Sarah:** I found out that I can be just as effective at home and actually enjoy the flexibility. Now, I see it as a great opportunity rather than a problem.

**Emma:** It’s nice to see you here! I thought you said you weren’t interested in yoga.

**Tim:** You know, after trying a few classes and actually feeling the benefits, I had a **mindset shift**. I can now see how helpful yoga is, and I would like to practice it more regularly.

**Emma:** Good for you!

## Cringeworthy

Adjective, informal

When talking about listening to a male narrator voice female characters in an audiobook, Andrew says he does a terrible job and describes it as "**cringeworthy**." This means that he finds it very uncomfortable to listen to.

The term "**cringeworthy**" refers to something that is so embarrassing or awkward that it makes you cringe or feel uneasy. The word "**cringeworthy**" comes from "cringe," which means to react with discomfort or awkwardness. Adding "-worthy" means it's something that is awkward enough to cause that uncomfortable reaction – it's "worth" cringing about and experiencing that uncomfortable feeling.

This adjective is often used to describe situations or behaviours that are hard to watch because they make you feel uncomfortable. For example, if someone gives a speech with lots of mistakes, it might be considered **cringeworthy** because it feels awkward to watch. Another example could be someone making a scene in a public place, which is **cringeworthy** because it's uncomfortable to be around that person.

Be careful when using this expression as it might seem insensitive in certain situations. Avoid using it in professional settings and academic writing.

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

**Richard:** What were you watching there?

**Isabel:** Some of my old YouTube videos from when I first started.

**Richard:** I remember those! They were pretty good!

**Isabel:** Are you serious? They are so **cringeworthy**! My editing was awful, and I kept saying 'um' every few seconds.

**Johnny:** So, how was your double date last night?

**Mia:** Gosh. Don't ask. It was totally **cringeworthy**.

**Johnny:** Oh. What happened?

**Mia:** Well, the other couple was really nice, but they kept talking about their weird hobbies. One of them even showed us some bizarre dance moves they learned from a TV show, and it was just so awkward.

## To power through

Phrasal verb

In this episode, Andrew mentions he almost stopped listening to the audiobook because of the narrator's poor performance but then **powered through** the difficult parts.

To **power through** means to continue doing something even when it's difficult or uncomfortable. When someone says they will **power through** something, it means they will continue despite the challenges. This phrasal verb is useful in situations that involve difficulties or obstacles.

For example, if you have a lot of homework and it's very tiring, but you keep working until it's done, you are **powering through** it. Similarly, if you're working on a tough project at work, you might **power through** to meet the deadline.

Another common way to use this phrase is when you are struggling with something but keep going. For instance, you might say, "Even though the workout was tough, I **powered through** and completed it."

To remember the expression "**to power through**", think of "power" as using strength to get through a tough situation. A similar way to express the same idea is by saying, "push through," which also means to continue despite difficulties.

Be careful when using "**power through**" because it always means dealing with something hard. If you are not sure if it will be a challenge, you might want to say, "I'll try my best to finish it," instead of "I'll **power through**."

Here are a couple more examples with **to power through**:

**Lisa:** This meeting is going on for ages! I don't think I can do this anymore.

**Jake:** Just **power through** it, we'll be done soon.

**Sophie:** How was your flight? How's Paris? Have you adjusted to the new time zone yet?

**Kyle:** I didn't get any sleep on the plane. I was so tired and sleepy when we arrived, but I **powered through** the day, went to bed at around 9PM and woke up just in time for breakfast!



## Make it or break it Idiom

Andrew is explaining that the quality of the narration is important because the audiobook can be more or less enjoyable depending on it. He says that the narration could "**make it or break it**." If the narrator is good, the audiobook will be great, but if the narrator is bad, it could ruin the experience.

To "**make it or break it**" means that something will either succeed or fail depending on a particular factor. This expression is often used to show that one important detail can decide the success or failure of a situation. For example, if you are planning a big event and the food is terrible, the food could **make it or break it** – it could make the event enjoyable or ruin it completely.

You use "**make it or break it**" to talk about something important that will decide if something succeeds or fails. For example, you can say, "The quality of the presentation will **make it or break it** for the job interview." This means the presentation is very important and will decide if the interview is successful or not. Another example is, "The weather could **make it or break it** for our picnic plans." This means if the weather is good, the picnic will be great, but if the weather is bad, the picnic might be ruined.

You can also use **make-it-or-break-it** as an adjective to describe something that is crucial or decisive. For example, if a meeting is described as a "**make-or-break situation**," it means that the outcome of the meeting will be very important in deciding whether something succeeds or fails.

Here are a couple more examples with **make it or break it**:

**Zach:** How's your presentation preparation going?

**Jessica:** I'm almost ready. But the way I deliver it will **make it or break it** for my grade.

**Zach:** You've got this! Do you want to practice together? I can be your audience.

**Jessica:** That sounds great. Thanks a lot!

**Coach:** Okay, team. This game is really important. How we play today will **make or break our chance** to get to the finals.

**Team player:** We get it, coach. We'll make sure we play our best.

## The more ..., the more ... Double comparatives

In the episode, Kassy mentions that some books have multiple narrators, and adds that these books are usually more expensive. In response to that, Andrew says, "**The bigger** the budget, **the more expensive** it is to produce."

The structure "**the more ... the more ...**" is used to show that as one thing changes, another thing changes in a similar way. It's used to show a direct relationship between two factors. You can think of it like a cause-and-effect relationship where one thing directly influences another.

In this structure, comparative forms (like "bigger" in the episode) are used to compare the changes in two related things. You can use "more" or "less" to compare adjectives, nouns, or verbs. Here are some examples:

- **The more organized** your workspace is, **the less chaotic** your thoughts are.
- **The less experience** you have, **the harder** it can be to find a job.
- **The more you practice** speaking English, **the more confident** you will become.

To use this structure in a sentence, follow this pattern:

1. First, mention the increasing or changing factor with the comparative form of the first adjective (or the more/the less followed by the first verb/noun).
2. Then, mention the related change with the comparative form of the second adjective (or the more/the less followed by the second verb/noun).

Here are a couple more examples with **the more ..., the more ...**:

**Nancy:** I can't wait to watch this new movie! The reviews are pretty good.

**Andy:** Same! **The more I read** about it, **the more excited** I am to see it.

**Phil:** I've been going to the gym for two months, but I'm not sure if I see any change, to be honest.

**Trainer:** Just keep going. **The more consistent** you are with your workouts, **the better** your results will be.

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## Expressions Quiz

**1. What does it mean if two people are “compatible”?**

- a) They always disagree.
- b) They are often compared.
- c) They rarely spend time together.
- d) They are well-suited or match well with each other.

**2. If someone is experiencing an “mindset shift,” what is happening?**

- a) They move to a new place.
- b) The way they view something changes.
- c) They quit their job.
- d) They refuse to change their mind.

**3. If a movie is described as “cringeworthy,” does it mean?**

- a) The movie is very entertaining.
- b) The movie is a great success.
- c) The movie is so embarrassing or awkward that it makes you uncomfortable.
- d) The movie is well-liked by everyone.

**4. What does it mean to “power through” a difficult task?**

- a) To finish it despite difficulties.
- b) To stop doing it.
- c) To avoid it completely.
- d) To complain about it.

**5. Which situation would you use “make it or break it” for?**

- a) A simple, everyday task.
- b) A minor decision with little impact.
- c) A crucial point where the result is either success or failure.
- d) A situation with guaranteed results.

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## Comprehension Quiz

6. What was Andrew's experience with audiobooks during his childhood?
7. What was Andrew's initial opinion about audiobooks compared to reading books?
8. What feature of the new audiobook app Andrew uses did he find particularly useful?
9. What problem did Andrew encounter when trying to use both an audiobook and a physical book simultaneously?
10. What did Kassy mention as a challenge she faces when trying to listen to audiobooks?

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## Writing and Discussion Questions

1. How do you feel about audiobooks? Have you ever tried listening to audiobooks in English? What are the primary benefits you see in listening to audiobooks compared to reading physical books?
2. How do you find that your level of attention impacts your ability to multitask, like listening to audiobooks while doing other activities? Do you find that certain parts of your daily routine are more or less **compatible** with audiobooks or other forms of media?
3. Andrew mentioned having a **mindset shift** regarding audiobooks. Have you ever experienced a significant change in your perspective on a particular topic or activity? Describe the shift and what prompted it.
4. Can you share a time when you had to **power through** a challenging situation or task? What motivated you to persevere?
5. Andrew discussed how the quality of narration can be a **make it or break it** factor for audiobooks. Would you agree with him? Can you think of other times when a small detail in a product or service greatly affected how satisfied you were?

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## Quiz Answers

1.d    2.b    3.c    4.a    5.c

6. During his childhood, Andrew listened to audiobooks and radio dramas on long road trips with his family. The audiobooks were on cassette tapes, which were stored in large albums, making them inconvenient to carry.

7. Andrew initially thought that reading a book was the best way to fully appreciate it and was somewhat annoyed when people said they "read" a book but had only listened to it.

8. Andrew found the ability to add bookmarks to be particularly useful, especially with long audio files, so he could easily pick up where he left off.

9. Andrew found it challenging to sync the audiobook with the physical book and noted that listening at the audiobook's speed was slower than his reading pace, which made the experience less enjoyable.

10. Kassy mentioned that she loses focus when listening to audiobooks if she doesn't have something to do with her hands, such as running or during a commute, which she currently doesn't have.

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## Episode credits

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Hosts: Andrew Bates and Kassy White  
Episode preparation/research: Andrew Bates  
Audio editor: Marshall Vaillancourt  
Transcriptionist: Heather Bates  
Study guide writer: Alina Morozova  
English editor: Indiana Brown  
Operations: Tsuyoshi Kaneshima  
Image: Sound On (Pexels.com)