

Simplified Speech #214 – Catching rays and climbing days (ad free)

Episode description

In this episode of Simplified Speech, Andrew and Kassy share stories about their latest travels. Kassy talks about her trip to Thailand with her four-month-old son. She explains what it was like to ride a speedboat and go through airport security with a baby. Andrew describes his plan to visit Taebaek, the small Korean city where he first lived. He looks forward to hiking the local mountain and seeing how much the city has changed. Listen to learn useful English words and expressions about travel, family, and exploring new places!

Fun fact

Every winter, Taebaek hosts a famous snow festival featuring giant ice sculptures, sledding hills, and snowy attractions, making it a popular spot for cold-weather fun!

Expressions included in the study guide

- To kill two birds with one stone
- Smooth sailing
- I kid you not
- Contraband
- Throwback
- To scout out



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: Simplified Speech, episode 214. "Catching Rays and climbing days." Featuring Andrew and Kassy. Joining me now to help me with this episode is my co-host, Kassy. Hello, Kassy. How's it going?

Kassy: Hello, Andrew. I am excellent. And you?

Andrew: I'm doing well, Kassy. It's Friday when we're recording today. So TGIF, everybody loves Friday, I think.

Kassy: Yes. However, every day is Friday for me these days.

Andrew: Yeah, I was gonna say, you're still on mat leave, right? So, kind of like every day is Friday. There's something special about Friday. Even I remember when I had a job where I had to work on the weekends. So, it wasn't like I had a rest day on Saturday or a day off on Saturday. I still thought I love Friday. I don't know what it is. I think in general, like people's attitudes change throughout the week and maybe people become a little more friendlier on Fridays. I'm not sure. But anyways, thank goodness it's Friday. And Kassy, today we're going to just have a catch-up chat. This is one of our classic Simplified Speech episode topics now. We're probably on the like 10th edition. I don't know. But in this episode, we're just going to chat about some of the new and fun things that we've been up to over the last little while. And Kassy, I messaged you maybe last week. And I said, "Hey, Kassy, are you available to record?" And I was trying to arrange a recording session for us so that we could record this episode. And I didn't get a response. And then I waited for the next day, and I didn't get a response. And I thought this is very unusual. Kassy never ignores me. She's always very prompt at responding to my texts. So, I got a little worried. I'm like, "Oh, my God, did something happen to Kassy? Like, why isn't she

responding to me?" And then just as I was going to... actually, I was thinking because we always text each other. We use this app that's popular in Korea called Kakao Talk. I was like, "Do I have Kassy's phone number? I should give her a call and just make sure that she's OK." Because it's very unusual. In all the years I've known you, you've never taken a long time to get back to me. And then just as I was thinking that thought, you responded and you said, "Oh, Andrew, actually, I'm in Thailand right now. I can't record." I was like, "Oh, you're out of the country!" OK, you have a very good excuse for not texting me back because often we don't get messages when we're overseas. So, Kassy, I was surprised you were in Thailand.

Kassy: Yeah, I was surprised, too.

Andrew: Do you want to tell us about that? Why were you there? What were you doing?

Kassy: I was there for multiple reasons. One, my sister was visiting for three weeks, and she never really knows what her work schedule is. So, she's like, "Yeah, I'm coming in the winter." And I'm like, "OK, when?" She's like, "I'm not sure yet. I'll buy my ticket." And then maybe just like three weeks before she came, she bought her ticket. And I was like, "You know, this might sound crazy, but why don't we try to go to Thailand while you're here?"

Andrew: OK, so she was coming to Korea.

Kassy: Yes, to Korea.

Andrew: OK, to visit you in Korea, your home base here. Yeah.

Kassy: There were two reasons I wanted to go to Thailand. One, I have some friends there that I love spending time with. And one of them has a daughter who just turned two. And I really wanted to see all my friends, but I also wanted to... to see their daughter, how much she'd grown and then show them my son. And then I also felt like our life right now in Korea is it's not the most exciting. We have, you know, a five-month-old and it's cold and

wintry and we don't get out much and we can't get out much. It's cold for a little baby. So, I thought it might be a fun adventure, **killing two birds with one stone** to... to one, see my friends and also have a fun thing for my sister to participate in while she's here. So, I booked last minute tickets to Thailand, and I freaked out the entire few weeks until it came like, "Oh my God, can we do this?" Andrew, I don't know if you know about the four-month sleep regression because I did not know about it before having kids. But apparently at four months, baby's brains go from having like newborn sleep to adult-style sleep. And in that transition, they just don't sleep. So, the few weeks leading up to my sister coming were just crazy. He was waking up a million times a night. He was taking really short naps. None of... we were all zombies. And I was like, "Oh my God, we can't do this! We're going to have the worst time." But miraculously, he... he started getting better. And the trip to Thailand was so good. He didn't cry on the plane. Yeah, the weather was gorgeous. It was amazing.

Andrew: That's awesome, Kassy. I'm happy to hear that you had such a good time. And I was really curious about if you brought your son with you or if it was just your sister and you that went and maybe your husband was doing the daddy duties while you were away. But I guess you went as a family. So that's cool. And, yeah, I was curious, like, how your son would have acted in the airplane for the first time. Because I know many kids, especially younger kids, they have some ear issues, I've heard. Like when the airplane takes off and lands, the pressure that it creates can cause them to have a lot of pain in their ears. And often as a result, they cry. But your son didn't cry. He was a champ for the whole flight.

Kassy: Yeah, he was. It was also cool. Apparently, when you have a young baby, didn't know this either. You learn so many new things as a new parent. They have special seats in the front where you can get a bassinet that they connect into the part of the plane that connects to the wall. And then you can stick your baby in there to sleep. And I think you can request it. But I guess since we were the only people with a young baby on the plane, they just gave it to us. So, when we got on board, we were walking and walking and walking. And I was like, wait, we get these seats? These are the ones you usually have to

pay extra for. Wow. So, we had tons of leg room. And yeah, he slept almost the entire time. There were no issues. It was crazy, though. So, we live in the south, southern part of South Korea. And to get to the airport, it takes like four hours about. So, we actually, it was a crazy journey. We took a bus downtown. And then we took a subway to the train station. And then we took a speed train to Seoul. And then we took another subway into Incheon outside of Seoul. And we stayed the night there. And then we flew the next day for six hours. And then we got into a bus at the airport. Never took a bus in Thailand, by the way. That was crazy. And then another train. And finally, as soon as we arrived in our Airbnb, we had to quickly change our clothes and meet our friends right away for dinner. It was a whirlwind, Andrew.

Andrew: So how many hours in total did it take you to get from door to door?

Kassy: Not counting the sleep that we did in Incheon, I think it took over, ten, maybe 15 hours.

Andrew: Yikes.

Kassy: It was an adventure. My son was like such a champ. I couldn't believe it.

Andrew: So, Kassy, once you finally did arrive then, what was it like traveling with your son? I know one of my other buddies, he's got a baby that's just a little bit older than your little guy. And he recently traveled to Portugal. And he told me it was a nightmare because the whole time he was there, he said it rained. And they just had like this kind of cheap travel stroller that they brought with them. And then they weren't expecting it. But so many of the streets are cobblestone. And so, you're trying to push the stroller on the cobblestones and it's way too bumpy for the baby. So, they had to lug the baby everywhere. And yeah, he said, in retrospect, not such a great trip. So, I'm curious about like, we've talked about the infrastructure of Thailand before, the traffic. And I could imagine maybe trying to push a baby stroller in that situation might be not so easy. Did you have any issues like that? Or maybe you just rode in taxis?

Kassy: Yeah, we were only in Bangkok for like a day and a half. And then we went to the nearby beach for four days. And that was it. We were... It was a brief trip to Thailand. But it was like, **I kid you not**, such **smooth sailing**. I couldn't believe it. We did not bring his stroller. We had a carrier, and we took turns carrying him around like a little kangaroo. And he loves that. So, there were not a lot of tears. We hired a private car from Bangkok to the pier where we then got a boat to the island that we stayed at for a few days. That was a little scary. Our driver was, I don't think he knew how to use the turn signal. I only saw him use it once or twice. So, I was white knuckling my seat a few times. I was like, "We're going to survive! It's going to be OK!" And then when we got there, I wanted to take the slow ferry. But the Thais were all like, "No, take the speedboat. Go, go, go! Come here! Go there!" And we ended up taking a very fast, bumpy speedboat, which again, my son was a total champ. He actually fell asleep in the bumpy, crazy speedboat.

Andrew: He was rocked to sleep by the waves.

Kassy: Exactly, yeah. And then once we got to the island, we just chilled by the beach, ate delicious food, lots of smoothies. It was a great time.

Andrew: Nice. That's so fun. I'm so happy that you got to have that experience. And I imagine your sister enjoyed it as well.

Kassy: Yes. I do think she loved spending time with us, but she's very much a go, go, go activity kind of person. And there were a few times that I think she felt a little bit bored by our slower lifestyle. But she oftentimes went on her own adventure for a few hours and then came back. And we had a blast spending time together, playing games. My son has grown so much in the last month. He smiles all the time. He's getting interested in food. So, it was really fun to experience a new country, my sister, and my son's development all in that one three-week period.

Andrew: When your son gets older and he wants to travel and he'll say, "Mom and Dad, I've never been overseas. I want to go on a trip overseas." And I heard in Korea, that's like

a thing that you sort of have to do with your kids these days is take them on an overseas trip. Or else maybe they'll feel left behind because it's like really a trendy thing to do these days with your kids is take them overseas. So, if this trend continues, when your son grows up a little bit more, he'll be like, "Mom and Dad, I want to go overseas. I haven't been overseas before. You got to take me to Japan or Vietnam or someplace nearby." You'll be like, "No, you don't remember? We went to Thailand when you were four months old! You've been overseas!"

Kassy: The reason we went actually was because this is practice for the summer. We are planning to go to the U.S. this summer. So, he'll be going abroad in a few months again.

Andrew: I'm curious. Did you have to buy a plane ticket for him?

Kassy: Yeah. Also, things I didn't know. I knew that he could be a lap baby. So, he was just on our laps. But you do have to pay a little bit. I don't think it was much. Maybe \$90 or something. So, a fraction of the actual ticket. And when we go to the States this summer, maybe it'll be the same. But he doesn't have to have his own seat until he's... he's two. And if you fly with a baby, you get a free stroller and a free car seat, I think, that you can check for no extra payment, yeah.

Andrew: What about going through airport security and immigration? You have... he has to have a passport, I assume, right? You have to show the passport. And do they do a little security check with a little wand or something?

Kassy: I carried him and then they did the wand for both of us. But I had to take him out of the carrier. He was sleeping at that point. That was sad. He woke up. And then what else? You know, when you go through the customs and then they usually have you do fingerprints, or they take a photo sometimes. They needed to see his face. So, I had to, like, even though he was sleeping at that point, too, I had to, like, lift his head and direct it at the camera at a certain angle so that they could match it with his passport photo.

Andrew: OK. Well, I'm glad they're just not waving him through. It's probably good to do those kinds of checks just to make sure that no babies are going missing or anything, right?

Kassy: Oh, I thought you meant, like, there's no **contraband** inside of his carriers.

Andrew: Hey, that's, you know, that could happen, too, but.

Kassy: It could.

Andrew: But you don't want kids to be kidnapped and taken out of the country or something. So, it's good that they are actually doing those kinds of checks.

Kassy: Yeah, it was interesting, actually, because I... we flew with his Korean passport, not his U.S. one, because we were going to Thailand. And so, I carried him, and our names are completely different. My last name is White and then his is his father's last name. So, and we honestly don't look that similar. He he takes after his father. So, you're right. They... they did spend a lot of time checking our passports. And then I also brought my husband over to do it at the same time, too, so they could see that those two had the same last name.

Andrew: OK, very interesting. It's interesting to hear all these things that I haven't really thought of before. But there's a system in place for everything, right? An answer for everything. Yeah. So that's cool. Well, I'm glad you had a good time.

Kassy: That's great. Yeah, we did. And but I've been hogging this entire episode. Andrew, how about you? How's your winter been? I saw through Culips that you had a surprise trip to Canada.

Andrew: Kassy, we're recording this episode right around... right before the Lunar New Year holiday, the Seollal holiday that's happening here in Korea. And I'm not exactly sure

when this episode will be released, but usually it takes us three to four weeks to produce an episode to make the transcript and the study guide for it all takes some time. So, this episode will be released maybe toward the end of February or March. But yeah, for Christmas, I was back in Canada and that was cool. But I talked about that in one of the bonus episodes, so I won't repeat myself. But I do have something I want to share. And actually, it's great that you brought up the Canada trip, because when I was in Vancouver, I met up with my friend Luke, who's been one of my closest friends for over 30 years. I met him in elementary school, and we still are close to this day. And I met up with him, but we just had a very small window of time that we could hang out together. We're both not from Vancouver. We're both in that city at the same time. So, we hung out for a day, essentially, a day and a bit. And yeah, it was great. I hadn't seen him for a few years. So, it was great to hang out. But at the same time, I felt a little bit sad that we didn't have too much time to hang out and really catch up. Well, anyways, just the other day, and it sounds like my buddy Luke is sort of similar to your sister, like last minute plans and last-minute changes to the schedule. Luke is from Kelowna, my hometown. As I said, we grew up together. But he actually lives in China, in Shanghai now. So, he's not too far away. And from time to time, he does come to Korea. And so, he just sent me a message the other day. I guess in China, there's also Lunar New Year's or Chinese New Year's, as they would probably call it, celebration. And so, he's got some time off from work. And he sent me a message. And he's like, "You want to go hiking together over the Lunar New Year break?" I was like, "Yeah, let's do it!"

Kassy: That's so exciting.

Andrew: Yeah, he made some last-minute purchases and was able to get a plane ticket, although he said the prices were really expensive. And I know this is a huge time to travel, right? It's like a very busy travel time here in eastern Asia. But he was able to get some plane tickets. And he's going to show up a little bit later this afternoon or this evening, I suppose. And yeah, so we'll have some time to catch up and to hang out. And we're going to go to a place, a little city in Korea. In fact, it's Korea's smallest city. And it's called

Taebaek, which is in Gangwon Province. And that was the place that I spent my very first year in Korea so many years ago.

Kassy: Wow!

Andrew: So, there's a famous mountain in Taebaek called Taebaek Mountain. I don't know what came first, the name of the mountain or the name of the city, probably the mountain. But it's a beautiful mountain. When I lived there, I hiked it many, many times. One of the best times I hiked it was actually on New Year's Eve. And I arrived at the top of the mountain just in time to see the first sunrise of the new year. So that was a really memorable hike so many years ago. So yeah, Taebaek is an interesting town because like I said, it's really small. And the economy was really based on coal mining. It was like an old coal town. And so that side of things has really died off. So, I don't think it's like this really bustling place too much anymore. So, it'll be interesting to see what kind of changes have occurred or haven't occurred. I haven't been back for years and years and years and years. So, I'm really looking forward to this trip to hang out with Luke, to do a great hike, and also, to see that city and see some of the changes. And like, you know, check out my old apartment where I lived for the first year in Korea. Check out the old restaurants that I used to go to. I don't think I have any friends there anymore, unfortunately, or nobody that I stay in touch with. But you never know. Maybe like if I go to the same convenience store or same restaurant, maybe I'll see like the old *Sajangnim* is what we say in Korea, that word for "Boss." Maybe I'll see some familiar faces. I'm not sure, but I'm looking forward to it. And we're doing that trip tomorrow. So that'll be fun.

Kassy: Wow, that'll be a nice **throwback**. I can't wait to hear about it. I'll watch the bonus episode.

Andrew: Unfortunately, Luke gets in, I think at 10:30 tonight. So probably by the time he, you know, makes it from the airport to my house, it'll be closer to around midnight, I would assume. And then we've got to get up and get on the bus early tomorrow morning. I think our bus leaves here at 6 a.m. So probably we'll have to be up 6:00 or 6:30. I have to check

into that. Very important to check into that. But yeah, we're going to be up at the break of day, early in the morning. And we have to take the bus for several hours and then get to the mountain, hike the mountain. And that, yeah, I think is maybe three hours or four hours up and three or four hours down. So, it'll be an all-day activity, but I'm really looking forward to it. And hopefully I'll be able to sleep on the bus.

Kassy: Are you staying there or are you coming back at night?

Andrew: No, we're actually going to stay one night in Taebaek and then we're going to take the train back the next day. The train's a little bit more convenient because Taebaek's a city in the mountains. So, you have these like windy mountain roads. I remember when I used to live in Taebaek and I would come into Seoul sometimes on the weekends, I always felt a little bit carsick from the windy mountain roads and riding the bus. So, the train is the better option. But because it is the Lunar New Year, it was all sold out. So, I couldn't get a train ticket going there, but coming back was OK. I got a ticket. But Luke and I are in different locations. We can't sit together.

Kassy: Are you guys going to have Korean pancakes and rice wine when you get down the mountain?

Andrew: Yeah, I've already **scouted out** some restaurants. That's one of my favorite things about hiking here in Korea. It's almost mandatory that after you finish a hike, you can go to a restaurant and have a Korean-style pancake. And I guess one of the most popular kind of Korean-style pancakes is a seafood pancake. Kassy, would you agree?

Kassy: Yes, I love them.

Andrew: But Taebaek is in the mountains. It's not really close to the ocean at all. And so, I noticed that the potato pancake is more of a specialty on the menus around the hiking restaurants near the mountain. So, I'm looking forward to a potato pancake. And I know that in that province, potatoes are one of the crops that are grown. So, potato pancake, some rice wine after the hike.

Kassy: Sounds amazing.

Andrew: So pretty much that's what I've got going on, Kassy. But yeah, I think probably this is a good place to wrap things up. It was great talking with you again. And thank you for telling us about your Thai trip. I learned so much. I feel like I really learned a lot just about how things work when you have a young'un that you're carrying around with you.

Kassy: Me too, honestly. It was quite the experience.

Andrew: Well, everyone, thank you for listening. If you have any questions or comments about this episode, please leave them for us on our Discord community. And we'll try our best to respond to those as soon as possible. Kassy, it's time for the weekend to begin in earnest. So have a nice weekend. And we'll catch you in the next episode, OK?

Kassy: Sounds good.

Andrew: Bye-bye.

Kassy: Bye.

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

Detailed Explanations

To kill two birds with one stone

Idiom

“**To kill two birds with one stone**” is an idiomatic expression that means to accomplish two goals with a single action. In the episode, Kassy uses it to explain how her trip to Thailand served two purposes: she got to see her friends and introduce her son to them, and she also created a fun experience for her sister during her visit. This expression is commonly used when someone finds an efficient way to do multiple things at once.

The phrase comes from hunting. A long time ago, people hunted birds with stones. If someone could hit two birds with just one stone, it meant they were very skilled. Over time, people started using the phrase to talk about doing things in a smart and efficient way, not just hunting. For example, if you ride a bike to work, you save money on gas and get exercise at the same time – that’s **killing two birds with one stone**.

Another example could be cleaning your room while listening to a podcast. You are learning something and keeping your space tidy at the same time – in other words, **you’re killing two birds with one stone**.

It’s important to note that this phrase is used when the result is positive or helpful. It describes situations where there is a benefit, not a bad outcome. For example, it would NOT make sense to say, “I spilled coffee on my shirt and missed the bus, so I killed two birds with one stone.” ❌ This sentence describes two negative things happening at the same time – they don’t bring any benefit. **Killing two birds with one stone** is used when a person finds a way to get two things done in a good or efficient way.

Here are a few more examples with **to kill two birds with one stone**:

Mikaela: I need to exercise more, but I also have so much reading to do for my English Literature class.

Leo: Why not listen to your readings in audiobook format while you go for a jog? That way, **you kill two birds with one stone!**

Carlos: I saw you biking to work this morning. I didn’t know you biked to work!

Maya: Yeah! I started a few weeks ago. It saves me money on gas and keeps me active. It’s like **killing two birds with one stone**.

Carlos: That’s smart! I should try that.

Smooth sailing

Idiom

In the episode, Kassy uses the phrase **smooth sailing** to describe how easy and trouble-free her trip to Thailand was. Even though traveling with a baby could have been difficult, everything went well – there were no big problems. She was surprised that the trip was so smooth, without any major challenges.

Smooth sailing means that something happens easily, without trouble or difficulties. People use this expression when talking about trips, projects, or experiences that go better than expected. For example, if you take a test and all the questions are easy, you might say, “That test was **smooth sailing**!” It means there were no hard parts or surprises. You might also say, “I thought moving to a new apartment would be stressful, but it was **smooth sailing** – everything was packed on time, and the movers were super fast.”

This phrase comes from sailing. When the water is calm, and the wind is just right, a boat moves forward without any problems. It’s **smooth sailing**! But if the water is rough or the wind is too strong, sailing becomes difficult. Over time, people started using **smooth sailing** to talk about anything that goes well and without trouble.

To remember the idiom **smooth sailing**, think of a small boat on the ocean. If the water is calm and there are no storms, the boat moves forward easily – just like when things in life happen without any problems. If a project or event goes well, you can imagine it like a boat gliding over smooth water.

Other similar expressions include “a walk in the park” (which means something is very easy) and “easy as pie” (which also means something is simple or not difficult). However, **smooth sailing** is often used for events, experiences, or trips rather than just tasks.

Here are a couple more examples with **smooth sailing**:

Sophie: I was so worried about hosting my first big dinner party.

Ethan: And? How did it go?

Sophie: It was **smooth sailing**! Everyone had fun, the food turned out great, and even the clean-up was easy.

David: How was your flight? Any delays?

Ilana: Nope! It was **smooth sailing** – the plane was on time, there was no turbulence, and my luggage showed up right away.

I kid you not

Expression

When Kassy tells Andrew how well her trip went, she says, "But it was like, **I kid you not**, such **smooth sailing**. I couldn't believe it." She uses "**I kid you not**" to emphasize that she is telling the truth about something surprising or unexpected happened. Even though traveling with a baby is usually quite difficult, everything went really well for Kassy and her baby, and she says "**I kid you not**" to make sure Andrew knows she's not exaggerating.

The phrase "**I kid you not**" means "I'm being completely honest" or "I'm not joking." People say this when they want to make sure others believe what they are saying, especially when something sounds surprising, funny, or unbelievable. For example, if you saw a dog riding a skateboard, you might say, "**I kid you not**, I just saw a dog skateboarding down the street!" This expression shows that you're not making it up.

The phrase comes from the word "kid," which can mean "to joke or tease someone." When you say, "**I kid you not**," it means "I am not joking with you." While standard English grammar would be "I'm not kidding," the sentence structure of "**I kid you not**" sounds old-fashioned, dramatic, and humorous. Although we normally don't put the word "not" at the end of a sentence to negate it, the set expression "**I kid you not**" has been used in English for many years as a way to emphasize that you're telling the truth.

Other similar expressions include "I'm not kidding," "Seriously," and "No joke." These all mean the same thing and are used to make sure people know you're telling the truth.

Here are a few more examples with **I kid you not**:

Frank: I just found \$20 on the sidewalk!

Beth: No way!

Frank: **I kid you not!** It was just lying there, waiting for me.

Thomas: You'll never guess who I just saw in line at Starbucks.

Paula: Who?

Thomas: I was standing around deciding if I wanted a latte or a regular coffee, and, **I kid you not**, I spotted Emma Watson at the front of the line.

Paula: Oh my gosh! Did you get her autograph?

Thomas: No, I was too shy...

Contraband

Noun

In the episode, Andrew and Kassy joke about airport security checking her baby carrier for **contraband**. This means that security officers are making sure no illegal or forbidden items are hidden inside. The word **contraband** is used to describe things that people are not allowed to bring into a country, store, or other controlled area.

Contraband means illegal or banned goods – things that are not allowed by law. These can include drugs, weapons, stolen items, or even something small like certain foods or plants that a country doesn't allow. For example, if someone tries to bring illegal fireworks across a border, those fireworks could be called **contraband**. Another example is certain types of meat or fruit, which some countries don't allow travelers to bring in because they might spread diseases. If customs officers find these items in your luggage, they might say, "This is **contraband**. You cannot bring it into the country."

The word **contraband** comes from Latin and Old French. *Contra* means "against," and *bando* means "a law or rule." So, **contraband** literally means "against the rules." It has been used for hundreds of years to talk about illegal goods, especially smuggling – bringing things into a place secretly.

Other words with similar meanings include "illegal goods," "banned items," and "smuggled goods." However, **contraband** is a common word used by police, customs officers, and security officials.

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

Rebecca: The principal just caught Mark with his phone in class.

Jack: Uh-oh. Phones are banned during school hours. They're basically **contraband** now!

Rebecca: Yeah, she confiscated it. He might not get it back until next week.

Ben: I just watched a documentary about the Prohibition era.

Anna: That's the time period when alcohol was illegal in the U.S., right?

Ben: Yup. It's crazy to think about something as commonplace as alcohol being **contraband**.

Anna: Totally. Can you imagine sneaking around just to buy a beer?

Throwback

Noun

Kassy says, "Wow, that'll be a nice **throwback**," when Andrew talks about returning to Taebaek, a place he lived many years ago. She uses **throwback** to describe something that brings back memories from the past. Andrew is excited to revisit his old apartment, favorite restaurants, and the mountain he used to hike. Because this trip reminds him of his past, Kassy calls it a **throwback**.

A **throwback** is something that reminds you of an earlier time. It can be an event, a place, a song, a picture, or even a style of clothing that makes you think of the past. People use this word when talking about memories or when something feels old-fashioned in a nostalgic way. For example, if you hear a song from your childhood, you might say, "Wow, this is such a **throwback**!" because it brings back memories from that time. Similarly, if someone wears an outfit that looks like it's from the 1980s, like neon jackets and big shoulder pads, you might say, "That outfit is such an 80s **throwback**!" because it reminds you of the fashion trends from that era.

The word **throwback** comes from the idea of "throwing" something back to the past. It has been used in English for a long time but became especially popular with *Throwback Thursday* (often shortened to #TBT on social media), where people post old photos or share memories from years ago.

Other similar expressions include "blast from the past," and "trip down memory lane." These all describe something that makes you remember old times in a meaningful or fun way.

Here are a few more examples with **throwback**:

Olivia: I just found my old Tamagotchi in a drawer.

Kyle: No way! What a **throwback**. I remember when everyone had one in elementary school.

Olivia: Yeah! I used to take mine everywhere. I even got in trouble once for feeding it in the middle of class.

Emma: Hey, there's 1970s **throwback** themed dance party at the club on Saturday night.

Tyler: That sounds awesome. Are we talking disco balls, bell-bottoms, and funky music?

Emma: Exactly! They're playing all the classic hits – Bee Gees, ABBA, Earth, Wind & Fire. Nothing but disco vibes.

To scout out

Phrasal verb

Kassy asks Andrew if he and his friend are going to have Korean pancakes and rice wine after their hike (this is a common pairing of foods Koreans enjoy after going on a hike). Andrew says yes and mentions that he has already **scouted out** some restaurants, meaning he has already looked for places that serve pancakes and rice wine before the trip.

To scout out means to investigate or search for something carefully before you need it. People use this phrase when they are looking for a good place, an important item, or useful information. For example, if you are going on vacation, you might **scout out** the best hotels online before booking one. If you are moving to a new city, you might **scout out** apartments before deciding where to live. It is often used when searching for something specific, like a restaurant, a location, or a person.

Scout out comes from the word *scout*, which originally referred to people who explored new areas or gathered information. Historically, scouts were sent ahead of a group to find safe paths, water sources, or enemy locations. Today, the phrasal verb **scout out** is used in everyday situations to mean looking for something in advance.

It's important to note that scout out is usually used when preparing for *something in advance*. It wouldn't be used for quick or casual searches. For example, saying "I **scouted out** my keys this morning" is NOT correct because looking for lost keys is not a planned search. Instead, you could say, "I looked for my keys this morning."

Here are a couple more examples with **to scout out**:

Rudy: Where should we sit for the concert?

Angela: I want a seat close to the stage! Here, let me **scout out** a good spot near the front before everyone else gets here. You can go grab us some beers in the meantime.

Rudy: Got it! Good plan.

Robert: I'm so excited for our trip next month! Have you thought about where we're staying?

Janine: Yeah, I've already **scouted out** some hotels near the beach. There are a few with ocean views that look really nice.

Robert: Great! We should book soon before prices go up.

Expressions Quiz

1. Which of these situations is an example of "killing two birds with one stone"?

- a) Watching TV while your friend is reading.
- b) Doing the dishes while listening to an educational podcast.
- c) Taking a long nap.
- d) Forgetting to do your homework.

2. Which of these sentences correctly uses "smooth sailing"?

- a) The project had no issues – it was smooth sailing!
- b) My car broke down twice, so the road trip was smooth sailing.
- c) The weather is smooth sailing today.
- d) I like to go smooth sailing when I go to the beach.

3. What would be considered contraband?

- a) A children's book.
- b) An illegal drug.
- c) A grocery store receipt.
- d) A cell phone charger.

4. If someone says "This song is such a throwback!", what do they mean?

- a) It's a new hit.
- b) It's an unusual song.
- c) They don't like the song.
- d) It reminds them of the past.

5. What does "I kid you not" mean in this sentence? – "I kid you not, I just met a celebrity at the grocery store!"

- a) I am joking.
- b) I am unsure.
- c) I am making a guess.
- d) I am telling the truth.

Listening Comprehension Quiz

6. Why did Andrew get worried when Kassy didn't reply to his message?
7. Why did Kassy decide to go to Thailand?
8. How did Kassy's baby behave on the airplane?
9. What is the traditional food that people eat after hiking in Korea?
10. What does Andrew say about the winding mountain roads in Taebaek?

Writing and Discussion Questions

1. Kassy mentioned that traveling with a baby was easier than she expected – in fact, it was **smooth sailing**. Have you ever traveled with young children before? What was it like?
2. Kassy and Andrew discussed how overseas travel is becoming more common for kids in Korea. Do you think it's important for children to travel to other countries? Why or why not?
3. Andrew and Kassy joked about her baby carrier being checked for **contraband** at airport security. Have you ever had an interesting, frustrating, or funny experience at airport security or customs? What happened?
4. Andrew talked about seeing old places from his past and how it would be a **throwback** experience. Have you ever revisited a place from your childhood or past? How did it feel? Did anything change, or did it feel the same?
5. Andrew says that pancakes and rice wine are traditionally eaten after going on a hike in Korea. What's your favorite type of food to eat after a long hike or another kind of strenuous exercise?

Quiz Answers

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

6. She usually replies quickly and it was unusual for her to be silent.
7. Her sister was visiting, and she wanted to see her friends while giving her sister an adventure.
8. He was completely calm and slept most of the time.
9. Korean-style pancakes and rice wine.
10. He used to get carsick traveling on them.

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