

Chatterbox #211 – YouTube

AD-FREE

Episode description

Are you a YouTube addict? What's your favourite channel to watch these days? In this interesting episode, Andrew and Morag talk about YouTube, what they love about it, and some unique content one can't find anywhere else.

Fun fact

The first YouTube video was uploaded on April 23rd, 2005. Now, in 2018, every minute of the day and around the globe, more than 100 hours of video content are uploaded to YouTube.

Expressions included in the study guide

- Right off the top
- Trending
- Not [one's] cup of tea
- The beauty of [something]
- To let it go to pasture
- Subculture



Transcript

Note: The words and expressions that appear in **bold text** within the transcript are discussed in more detail in the Detailed Explanations section that follows the transcript.

- Andrew: Chatterbox #211. Hi, Morag. How are you?
- Morag: Pretty good. How are you doing, Andrew?
- Andrew: I'm doing good, as well. Morag, quick question for you, **right off the top**. Today, how much YouTube have you watched?
- Morag: Oh, man. Well, because I just woke up, like, only 20 minutes.
- Andrew: Just woke up, but you've already watched 20 minutes of YouTube.
- Morag: Yeah, I probably watch minimum an hour and a half a day.
- Andrew: Sounds familiar, because I'm quite addicted to YouTube, too. I don't usually sit and watch YouTube for a long stretch, like an hour and a half at a time, but I'm just watching random videos throughout the day. I'd say it probably adds up to, yeah, over an hour, easily, by the end of the day. Man.
- Morag: Yeah.
- Andrew: And so, Morag, if you haven't guessed, the topic for this Chatterbox episode is going to be YouTube. 'Cause, actually, it's one of my favourite websites and it's so hot right now, so we might as well chat about it.
- Everyone, if you want to study along with this episode, you should use our study guide. We made it specifically for you, it's awesome. It's got lots of great exercises and materials that will help you improve your English listening fluency and your overall English ability. So if you'd like to get the study guide, all you have to do is visit our website, Culips.com, to access it.
- Andrew: All right, Morag, let's get into it. I'm excited for this episode all about YouTube.
- Morag: Me too.
- Andrew: Now, just a moment ago, Morag, you asked me if I had heard about Poppy, is it? Was that correct? Poppy?
- Morag: Yeah, yeah, Poppy. She.
- Andrew: She, OK. She is Poppy. Who is she? Who is Poppy?

- Morag: Poppy is a pop culture music YouTube sensation.
- Andrew: OK.
- Morag: And she makes very surreal, slightly uncomfortable videos. She's a tiny little blonde girl, and by girl, I mean she's probably 20-something. But a very slight blonde girl who usually looks into the camera with somewhat dead eyes and a very high voice and talks about nonsense for 30 seconds and then—with two kinds of strangely droning sounds behind her—and then it cuts out.
- Andrew: OK.
- Morag: Yeah, it'll be like, "I love this plant, Mr. Plant, have you met my plant?" And then none of it makes sense. There's a mannequin named Charlotte who's trying to kill her or something. And this woman now is going on, like, world tours.
- Andrew: What?
- Morag: Yeah.
- Andrew: So, she's popular? She's a popular YouTuber?
- Morag: Very popular. Millions and millions of views.
- Andrew: Really? Wow.
- Morag: Yes. It is the weirdest thing.
- Andrew: So why do you think she's so popular? Is it funny? Is she really pretty? What's the draw?
- Morag: She's pretty. It's kind of a humorous thing. It's also, I think there is a real market on YouTube for things that confuse people. The sort of "what is that, what the hell is that kind of thing?" kind of phenomenon where you're like, what's going on there? Why? I also think she's popular with the kids.
- Andrew: Yeah, it sounds like it might be something that teenagers and tweens are into, because I don't know if you ever check out the **trending** page, but you can check out the **trending** videos on YouTube. And I like to do this, and a lot of the stuff that's, like, the videos that are at the very top are things that I think are really lame or stupid. And I think why they're **trending** is because, you know, 13-year-old kids love it and they just watch the crap out of it and it's gone to the top of the **trending** list. But when I check it out, I'm like, mmhmm, don't get it, too old, sorry.

- Morag: Yeah. I feel like that about most react videos.
- Andrew: Oh, yeah, reaction videos.
- Morag: Yeah, not really into it.
- Andrew: Yeah, since I live in Korea, I try to stay at least a little bit up-to-date with K-pop news, and so I can, you know, relate to my students a little bit about pop culture. And so there is a huge K-pop **subculture** on YouTube of people reacting to K-pop videos and covering the dances of K-pop videos. And it is quite something, it's **not my cup of tea**, but it could be quite funny, actually, to see some kids, you know teenagers, dancing to K-pop as a cover.
- Morag: Interesting.
- Andrew: It just blows my mind. This is something that never existed when I was in high school. But it's a thing now.
- Morag: Wow. That's really cool.
- Andrew: If you have some time, some time, Morag, search for K-pop dance covers, you'll see what I'm talking about.
- Morag: K-pop dance covers? OK, that sounds great.
- Andrew: What are your favourite kind of channels to watch on YouTube?
- Morag: I have a moderate addiction to makeup review videos. But that's not interesting, really. Although what is interesting is how gigantic the beauty community is on YouTube, it's huge.
- Andrew: Really?
- Morag: Oh, yeah, making lots of people's careers, and there are these influencers. Do you know that term?
- Andrew: As far as I know, an influencer is somebody who is sponsored by a company or paid to promote a product. They're trying to influence the viewers' mind so that they'll wanna buy the product that the YouTuber's talking about. And usually they're quite popular, right?
- Morag: Yeah, sort of. I think the relationship's a little bit backwards there. The idea of an influencer is that people will want to use whatever they're using. So companies want to pay them to use their stuff.
- Andrew: It starts the opposite way, right? The YouTuber becomes popular and then, as a result, companies sponsor them.

Morag: Exactly, companies will sponsor them, and some people are influencers and don't take sponsorships. But most of them do. But, yeah, so absolutely gigantic, and they're starting to, you know, partner up with big, well-known makeup brands now, as opposed to celebrities doing it. That's all quite interesting. But the content of it, not so much, except for me.

But my favourite stuff to watch is usually stuff about video games and computers and old video games and old computers.

Andrew: Wow, that's so cool.

Morag: Yeah, there's one guy, my favourite guy, he's LGR—Lazy Game Reviews.

Andrew: OK.

Morag: And he has this gigantic collection of big box PC games from the, like, late 80s and early 90s. It's just, like, huge, huge, like, two garages full of all of these games and he goes and reviews and shows game footage from these very strange old games.

Andrew: What do you mean by big box videos game?

Morag: Big box PC games?

Andrew: Yeah.

Morag: So you know the size of a DVD case or a TV case?

Andrew: Yeah.

Morag: DVD, like the movie cases and that sort of thing.

Andrew: Yeah.

Morag: 'Cause it's sort of what physical games will come in now, not that anybody buys physical games anymore. But before they came in that, they came in these boxes that are almost the size of a sheet of paper, like 8½ by 11 sheet of paper sort of thing.

Andrew: Oh yeah, I remember.

Morag: You remember that?

Andrew: Yeah, yeah.

Morag: Yeah, they were big, big boxes.

Andrew: Big boxes for a little diskette or a CD.

- Morag: Yeah, well, the interesting thing is, and the fun thing about watching some of these reviews is, that in the 80s and early 90s, those boxes were full of stuff.
- Andrew: A big manual.
- Morag: Giant manuals, some, like, extra information, some, like, world-building, interesting stuff. Also things were coming on floppy disks, so those take up a lot more room. You know, there used to be a lot of stuff in there. And it's really cool to see that sometimes. So, yeah, oh man, it's great.
- Andrew: Yeah. One of the niche channels that—actually I don't watch it regularly, but I've come across it in the past—that kind of reminds me of this is there's a guy who collects old Army rations. He buys them on eBay from different countries around the world, and then what he actually does is opens them and eats them on camera. So it could be a really, really old Army ration from, like, 1970s' USSR and it's, like, I don't know, beans and pork. And he'll open it up and he gets really stoked, you can tell he's into collecting this because of how excited he gets. He's like, oh, my gosh, there's a little fork that comes with it! Wow, check out this little fork, you know?
- Morag: Yeah.
- Andrew: But then he'll actually eat the ration, too, and then give it a review. And this is what I love about YouTube, is it gives a voice and an outlet to these really, really, really niche **subcultures** that, without the internet, we just wouldn't know about. I'm sure this guy still would collect old Army rations and Army memorabilia, but we wouldn't get to see it. And so this is one of my favourite things about YouTube, this glance into weird **subcultures**.
- Morag: Right? And sometimes that **subculture** can just be, sort of, like, one guy, or would have been just one guy, if it weren't for the fact that people could talk to each other about this stuff, you know? One of my most viewed YouTube things is this user called, I think a Japanese user, called RR Cherry Pie.
- Andrew: OK.
- Morag: And he does miniature food things.
- Andrew: Oh, I've seen this guy.
- Morag: Yeah, the one who does, like, the do-it-yourself candy things. It's so hard to explain.
- Andrew: Is he the guy that did the miniature McDonald's Happy Meal set?
- Morag: Yeah.

- Andrew: He made, like, a very, very tiny hamburger and some little fries.
- Morag: I made that.
- Andrew: You made that?
- Morag: I made that. I ordered that from Japan and it just showed up at my house and I made it because I loved that so much, that guy making it so much, I needed to do it myself.
- Andrew: How was it? Did you eat it after?
- Morag: Oh god, it was so bizarre, it was so strange. I actually have a video of me and my roommate trying them, the, specifically the hamburger ones. I thought it was going to taste like a candy, 'cause in that guy's video he calls it a candy.
- Andrew: OK.
- Morag: And it's just a bad translation, I guess, because it is not, and actually the whole hamburger, all of the pieces of the hamburger, are somewhat flavoured to be accurate.
- Andrew: Wow.
- Morag: So, the meat tastes like a meat biscuit and the ketchup tastes like horribly sweet ketchup and the cheese tastes kinda like cheese. It's so wrong. And so cool at the same time. It was disgusting. I love it.
- Andrew: Oh, that's hilarious.
- Morag: This is **the beauty of YouTube** and **the beauty of the internet**, you can find things that you love and that make you happy and that excite you that you never could have been introduced to before.
- Andrew: Totally, totally. And as a music geek, YouTube is heaven. I've found more interesting music that I would never, ever, ever have been exposed to through YouTube, just because, you know, there's other music geeks that have weird records that they upload and then I can listen to them. So, I'm a big YouTube fan and, like I said, I spend a lot of time, probably more time than I should, on the website.
- Morag: It's not that bad. I mean, think about how much time, maybe, like, you or your parents or whatever used to spend watching TV, like cable television. You know?

Andrew: Yeah, it's true. I mean, YouTube has replaced TV. I don't have a TV, I don't have cable TV, I don't even really watch TV shows anymore. I don't need to, why should I watch a TV show when I can just watch something that's really interesting to me, whether it be about music or chess or language learning. It's, like, these are what I'm into and I can watch videos about them? Awesome, that's great.

Morag: I completely agree with you. I wonder how many of our viewers out there have done a similar thing, because I, too, don't really watch TV anymore, or even really movies as much. I just watch things that are really interesting to me, like my favourite—in quotes—TV show is just one of my favourite streamers gets two of his friends on his stream and they play an old adventure game from the 90s, a video game. They all make video games and one of them is a professor at USC, University of Southern California, and they talk about, like, why it works and what's happening, that sort of thing. They do it, like, for 2 hours every week. That is the best thing in the entire world to me. You know? Why would I watch anything else? That's the best TV show that's ever been made. It's called Mostly Walking, by the way, if anybody wants to watch it.

Andrew: Mostly Walking?

Morag: Mostly Walking. Yeah. Best thing ever.

Andrew: I'll have to check that out.

Well, Morag, we'll leave it here for now, and perhaps we'll have to do a YouTube part 2 episode some time in the future, because I think there is a lot to talk about when it comes to YouTube.

Morag: Absolutely.

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

Detailed Explanations

Right off the top Phrase

Right off the top means that something happens right away or in the beginning. Off the top means first, immediately, or at the beginning. A similar expression, which is mentioned in a previous Culips episode, is off the top of one's head, which means the first thought that comes to one's mind.

At the beginning of this episode, Andrew says, "Morag, quick question for you, **right off the top**. Today, how much YouTube have you watched?" In this sentence, Andrew is saying that, to begin this episode, the first question he has for Morag is, "Today, how much YouTube have you watched?" Therefore, one can use the phrase **right off the top** whenever he or she wants to mention something right at the beginning of a meeting or conversation.

Here's one more example with **right off the top**:

| | |
|-----------|--|
| Ms Brown: | OK, everyone. It's 9:00; please be seated. Right off the top , I want to know: Who didn't complete their homework over the weekend? |
| Ralph: | Sorry, Ms Brown. Um, my dog ate my homework? |
| Ms Brown: | Hmm, haven't heard that one before. Hand it in tomorrow, but I'm deducting 10% from your grade. |
| Ralph: | Yes, Ms Brown. |

Trending Verb

Trending refers to something that is currently popular in society. **Trending** comes from the phrase to trend, or to become popular. **Trending** is used mainly to reference pop culture and funny or interesting things found on social media.

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

Mike: Dude, the video you uploaded last night is **trending** on YouTube. Check it out!

Josh: No way! It's already got over 200,000 views!

Mike: Yeah, you're, like, famous!

Marcia: Did you see the news **trending** on Twitter this morning?

Fatima: No, what's the new, juicy gossip going around?

Marcia: Taylor Swift was seen kissing that up-and-coming movie star. You know the cute guy who played the werewolf in that movie we saw last week?

Fatima: No way! That girl always gets the hottest boyfriends.

Not [one's] cup of tea Idiom

If something is **not your cup of tea**, it is something that you don't like. Andrew says watching K-pop dance covers is **not his cup of tea**. In other words, he prefers not to watch K-pop covers.

The phrase my cup of tea was created by the British in the 1800s to describe things they liked. In the 1920s the not was added to this phrase to describe things they didn't like. This is quite a cute idiom, isn't it?

Here are a couple more examples with **not [one's] cup of tea**:

Akari: Shall we go to the art history museum tomorrow?

Haru: Yuck. Looking at old paintings **isn't my cup of tea**. How about a science museum? They're much more interesting.

Akari: Yeah, that's not a bad idea, either. Maybe they'll have a space exhibit.

Reggie: Charli, where's Katrina? The movie starts in 5 minutes.

Charli: Oh, right, she said she's not coming anymore. Horror movies **aren't really her cup of tea**.

Reggie: Oh well, more popcorn for us, then. Let's go, I don't want to miss the previews!

The beauty of [something] Phrase

The beauty of [something] means that something has a quality that makes it good or appealing. In this episode, Morag says “**the beauty of YouTube** and the **beauty of the internet**, [is that] you can find things that you love and that make you happy and that excite you that you never could have been introduced to before.” Therefore, in this example, YouTube and the internet are great because you can find things that make you happy.

Here’s an example anyone can relate to: **the beauty of Saturday** is that we can sleep in late. Isn’t it true? Turning off the alarm clock on a Saturday is one of the best things in the world.

Here’s one more example with **the beauty of [something]**:

León: How has it been since you started working from home?

Marcella: You know what? It’s been really great. **The beauty of working from home** is that I don’t have to spend time and gas money travelling to and from work.

León: Yeah, that is a pretty great perk.

To let it go to pasture Idiom

To let it go to pasture means to neglect something for a long time. A pasture is a large area of land where farmers let animals go for long periods of time to walk around and eat grass. However, when using pasture in the idiom **to let it go to pasture**, it means to let something sit alone and untended for long periods of time.

In this episode, Andrew says the Culips team neglected their YouTube channel and **let it go to pasture**. They did not upload videos for a long time, so the Culips YouTube channel was dormant.

Here's one more example with **to let it go to pasture**:

| | |
|-----------|--|
| Ji-Yun: | Have you seen Mom's garden? She's really let it go to pasture . There are weeds everywhere and all of the flowers are dead. |
| Ji-Seung: | Yeah, she's been really busy with work and taking care of Dad after his knee surgery. She doesn't have time to work on it. |
| Ji-Yun: | That's such a shame. She loves her garden. How about we spend this weekend clearing the weeds and fixing it up for her? |
| Ji-Seung: | That's a great idea! |

Subculture

Noun

A **subculture** is a kind of group that has values and characteristics unique and different from the culture it originated from. Let's use Canada as an example. Canadians all understand the customs and mannerisms ordinary to Canadian culture. However, there are many **subcultures** within Canada that have their own distinct characteristics, like Chinese-Canadian **subculture**, LGBTQ **subculture**, or French-Canadian **subculture**, to name a few.

Other great examples of **subcultures** can be found in music. Many great styles of music began because musicians wanted to break the norms of modern music. Indie, punk, rock, and rap music are all music-based **subcultures**.

Here's one more example with **subculture**:

| | |
|--------|---|
| RJ: | Hey, have you ever heard of Kawaii metal? |
| Megan: | No, what's that? |
| RJ: | It's this crazy, unique music subculture from Japan. It's like a mix of pop, rock, heavy metal, and electronic dance music, and the girls jump around the stage wearing skirts and pigtails. |
| Megan: | It doesn't really sound like my cup of tea. |
| RJ: | Oh, come on. Just try listening to it one time, OK? The most famous group is called Babymetal. Look them up on YouTube and tell me what you think. |

Quiz

1. What is the meaning of right off the top?

- a) To remove something from the top of a pile
- b) Firstly; to start; in the beginning
- c) To take off one's top
- d) To play with a spinning top

2. What is a synonym for the word trending?

- a) Breaking [something]
- b) Tearing [something]
- c) Becoming popular
- d) Getting old and worn out

3. What does it's not [one's] cup of tea mean?

- a) To not like [something]
- b) To not belong to [someone]
- c) To have bad luck
- d) To be bad at [something]

4. What did Andrew say he let go to pasture in this episode?

- a) His car
- b) The Culips YouTube channel
- c) His exercise plan
- d) His friendships

5. Which sentence is not grammatically correct?

- a) The beauty of Saturday is being able to sleep in.
- b) The beauty of Korean internet is its fast internet speed.
- c) The beauty of youth is that there are few responsibilities.
- d) The beauty of swim is that one doesn't have to overly strain their joints when exercising.

Writing or Discussion Questions

1. **What is a subculture that you are interested in? What characteristics of that subculture do you think make it special?**
2. **What is something in your life that you have let go to pasture?**
3. **Which YouTube channel do you like best, and why?**
4. **If you could start a YouTube channel, what theme would you choose?**
5. **What is the craziest or funniest YouTube video you have ever seen? Please describe it.**

Quiz Answers

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

Episode credits

Hosts: Andrew Bates and Morag St. Clair

Music: *Something Elated* by Broke For Free, *Step On* by Jahzzar

Episode preparation/research: Andrew Bates

Audio editor: Andrew Bates

Transcriptionist: Heather Bates

Study guide writer: Kassy White

English editor: Stephanie MacLean

Business manager: Tsuyoshi Kaneshima

Project manager: Jessica Cox

Image: Rachit Tank (Unsplash.com)