



CULIPS ENGLISH PODCAST

FLUENCY FILES #47

BOUQUET TOSS

Introduction transcript

Andrew:

Hello there, everyone. My name is Andrew and you're listening to the Culips English Podcast. Hey, all! How is it going? How are you doing? I'm, of course, doing really well. Have you ever heard of the Culips Fluency Files series, it's our bonus series that we make exclusively for Culips members. However, today, we're going to share an episode of The Fluency Files with everyone. But before we do that, let's talk quickly about what the Fluency Files series is, and how you can learn English with it. Well, the Fluency Files series features short audio stories that are designed for intensive English learning and it's fantastic to help you develop your English listening, speaking pronunciation and comprehension skills in a fun, efficient, and effective way.

Each episode is short, usually only around three to six minutes, and features a story from my life. I might share my current thoughts and talk about what's on my mind. Or maybe I share an update on what's going on in my life right now. Or I might even tell a funny or crazy story from my past. The Fluency Files is kind of like my audio diary that you get to listen into. Now let's talk about how you can study with the Fluency Files. Of course, these are only suggestions and you can study with the series any way you want. Each learner is different. And one of the awesome things about the Fluency Files series is that you can study with it in the way that works best for you. But to get you started, I'm going to share six tips, six suggestions, six ways that you can study with the Fluency Files. So here we go.

Step number one is listen. The first step that you need to do is simply just listen to the Fluency Files episode. If you don't understand everything, that's fine. Try just to grab the general meaning and get the gist of the story and what I'm talking about. You might have to listen several times, but hey, that's totally fine. In fact, the more times you listen, the better. Step two. Okay, now it's time to grab the study guide. Each Fluency File episode comes with a study guide that includes a transcript, a glossary, definitions and example

sentences of two key expressions from the episode and also fill in the blanks listening exercise.

So after doing your initial listening to the episode, you are ready to **deconstruct the episode by studying with the guide**. So, what should you do? Well, you can listen while following along with the transcript. Read the transcript, break it down, and check out the glossary and key expression definitions to help you understand what the difficult vocabulary is. At this point, guys, you really want to use the transcript to your advantage to make sure you can understand as much as possible. And if you need to use a learner's dictionary or another resource to help you understand something, then that's cool, too. At this point, you just want to try and get your comprehension level as high as you can. Step three, sentence mining and vocabulary study.

So once you understand the episode and you feel like you have a very good level of comprehension, then it's time to **go through it and find the key sentences, vocabulary and expressions that you want to memorize and learn**. What you're looking for is sentences or expressions that make you think, "Wow, that sounds really cool. I'd like to speak English like that too!" You can then write these sentences down in your notebook, or make flashcards with them, make Anki cards with them, or do whatever kind of vocabulary study works best for you. Personally, in my own Korean studies I use Anki, which is a computer or smartphone application, at this stage of the process. So guys, if you don't know what Anki is, you can find many tutorials online just search for it on YouTube. The spelling is a-n-k-i and you can learn how to use that tool. But everyone, really, at this point of the study process at step three, you are mining the Fluency Files transcript for sentences, vocabulary, expressions, idioms, etc. that are new to you and that you want to make a part of your English life.

The next step, step four is **repetitive listening**. So now that you understand the content of the episode fully, it's time to develop fluency. The best way to do this is to listen to the episode repetitively. Now I think as language learners, we all know that to learn a new word or expression, you need to meet it, encounter it, read it or hear it many, many times.

You can accomplish this through repetitive listening. How many times should you listen to the episode? Well, that's hard to say. Ideally, until some of the sentences and expressions start getting stuck in your head and you can say them along with me while you listen.

When you get bored of the episode, though, and listening again becomes painful, then I think you should either take a break or move on to something new.

The fifth tip that I have for you today is **shadowing**. So this is another way that you can study with the Fluency Files. And shadowing is a technique that will help you improve your pronunciation. So here's how you do it. While you listen to the Fluency Files episode, you're going to want to repeat what you hear as soon as you hear it. Say what I say as soon as you hear it. Try to copy me exactly. Pause when I pause, laugh when I laugh, follow my emotion, my intonation, and my stress. Of course, the more times you do this, the better when it comes to building English fluency once is rarely enough. So at this stage, it's a great idea to record yourself while you are shadowing. Use your phone, use your computer, and make an audio recording. And afterward, listen to yourself and compare it with my voice. Do you notice anything that sounds different, weird or just not right? If so, then focus exclusively on that part. And try your best to imitate my voice as accurately as you can.

Finally step six is to **get some speaking practice in**. So, this is the final suggestion that I have for you here, and that is, to use the Fluency Files episode as a way to practice English speaking. So after you've studied with the episode, why not record your own audio follow up? Use the topic of the episode as a starting point for your own audio diary. Talk about the same topic that is featured in the episode but share your own thoughts and opinions. Becoming an awesome English speaker requires you to be active. So what are you waiting for? Brainstorm, make some notes, and then get speaking. I guarantee that it will be difficult and awkward at first, this is a given. But the more you do it, the easier it will become and it will go a long way toward making you become an excellent English speaker. So everyone, those are my six tips for how you can learn English with the Fluency Files. I hope you find them useful. And I hope you really enjoy the Fluency Files series. Remember that all Culips members get unlimited access to the Fluency Files series

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and the study guides that we make for each episode. Culips membership is an awesome and affordable way to get serious about learning English and it also goes a really long way towards supporting the Culips team, so that we can continue to bring you high quality English learning content. All right, so here it is now everyone Fluency Files episode number 47, *Bouquet Toss*.

Fill in the blanks listening practice

Andrew:



In North America, a popular wedding tradition is the bouquet toss. At the end of the wedding, the bride stands in front of all the single women at the wedding, and turns around and tosses the bouquet over her _____ for one of those women to catch. Now, the superstition goes that the woman who catches the bouquet will be the next to walk down the aisle and get married. The tradition has _____ existed for hundreds of years and has always been quite _____.

Some women say that it makes them feel uncomfortable to show off their relationship status to the rest of the wedding guests. Other women sometimes _____ for the bouquet because they believe in the superstition and really think that if they catch it, they'll get married soon. Some other people believe that it's an _____ tradition, and that we shouldn't do it anymore because modern society has moved on from the gendered practice. So for a _____ of reasons the bouquet toss is either loved or hated.

One of the awesome things about weddings these days is that they're not always strictly traditional. There's a lot of _____ and couples can pick and choose how they want their special day to go. And no one really _____ an eye. It's their celebration, after all, so they should do what they want, right? Well, that makes _____ to me.

Recently, I was invited to my friend's wedding and was asked to catch the bouquet. _____ weddings here in South Korea where I live, has always been interesting. Modern Korean weddings are very influenced by Western wedding culture but there are some differences. And the bouquet toss is a great example of this. Instead of the bride tossing the bouquet to a group of single _____, one person is selected by the bride in advance as the _____ bouquet catcher. I think this is a great idea because it

takes pressure off the single women at the wedding and the bouquet catcher can consent to being involved in the wedding beforehand.

So, my friend who got married knows that I am currently _____ and she said that I was the perfect person to catch the bouquet and asked me to do it. So, I happily agreed. And when the big day came, and the official part of the ceremony was completed, it was time for me to make my catch. And at the very last moment, I suddenly got a little nervous. "What if I don't catch the bouquet and it falls to the floor?" I was confident in my catching skills, but not so much in my friend's throwing skills. So, I _____ her to throw it high and in an arch, and luckily, she executed a perfect toss and I caught it. And then afterward, the photographer asked us to _____ the toss a couple of more times, so that he could capture the moment perfectly. And I caught the bouquet all those times too. It was a great success.

Now after catching the bouquet, I learned something new about Korean weddings that I didn't know before. And that is, that the person who catches the bouquet should _____ the flowers and return the bouquet to the new bride. In North America, we don't do this and the lucky person who catches the bouquet just keeps the flowers and uses them as a lovely floral _____ in their home. I will of course _____ this tradition. So, I'm currently drying out the bouquet and will return it to my friend as soon as it's ready.

So, catching the bouquet at a wedding was something that I never _____ that I would do in my life but it was actually a great experience. I'm glad I did it and it was a fantastic way to celebrate my friend's wedding.

Andrew:



In North America, a popular wedding tradition is the bouquet **toss**. At the end of the wedding, the bride stands in front of all the single women at the wedding, and turns around and tosses the bouquet over her shoulder for one of those women to catch. Now, the superstition goes that the woman who catches the bouquet will be the next to **walk down the aisle** and get married. The tradition has apparently existed for hundreds of years and has always been quite controversial.

Some women say that it makes them feel uncomfortable to show off their relationship status to the rest of the wedding guests. Other women sometimes fight for the bouquet because they believe in the superstition and really think that if they catch it, they'll get married soon. Some other people believe that it's an outdated tradition, and that we shouldn't do it anymore because modern society has moved on from the **gendered** practice. So for **a myriad of reasons** the bouquet toss is either loved or hated.

One of the awesome things about weddings these days is that they're not always strictly traditional. There's a lot of flexibility and couples can pick and choose how they want their special day to go. And no one really **blinks an eye**. It's their celebration, after all, so they should do what they want, right? Well, that makes sense to me.

Recently, I was invited to my friend's wedding and was asked to catch the bouquet. Attending weddings here in South Korea where I live, has always been interesting. Modern Korean weddings are very influenced by Western wedding culture but there are some differences. And the bouquet toss is a great example of this. Instead of the bride tossing the bouquet to a group of single ladies, one person is selected by the bride in advance as the **designated** bouquet catcher. I think this is a great idea because it takes pressure off the single women at the wedding and the bouquet catcher can **consent** to being involved in the wedding beforehand.

So, my friend who got married knows that I am currently engaged and she said that I was the perfect person to catch the bouquet and asked me to do it. So, I happily agreed. And when the big day came, and the official part of the ceremony was completed, it was time for me to make my catch. And at the very last moment, I suddenly got a little nervous. "What if I don't catch the bouquet and it falls to the floor?" I was confident in my catching skills, but not so much in my friend's throwing skills. So, I instructed her to throw it high and in an arch, and luckily, she executed a perfect toss and I caught it. And then afterward, the photographer asked us to recreate the toss a couple of more times, so that he could capture the moment perfectly. And I caught the bouquet all those times too. It was a great success.

Now after catching the bouquet, I learned something new about Korean weddings that I didn't know before. And that is, that the person who catches the bouquet should dry out the flowers and return the bouquet to the new bride. In North America, we don't do this and the lucky person who catches the bouquet just keeps the flowers and uses them as a lovely floral **centerpiece** in their home. I will of course observe this tradition. So, I'm currently drying out the bouquet and will return it to my friend as soon as it's ready.

So, catching the bouquet at a wedding was something that I never imagined that I would do in my life but it was actually a great experience. I'm glad I did it and it was a fantastic way to celebrate my friend's wedding.

Glossary

1. **Toss** - A gentle throw
2. **To walk down the aisle** - Idiom that means to get married
3. **Gendered** - Exclusive to only men or only women, not everyone
4. **Designated** - Officially selected to do a job or task
5. **To consent** - Agree to do something
6. **Centerpiece** - An eye-catching decoration, usually placed on the middle of the dining room table

Key Expressions

1. A myriad of reasons

So, for **a myriad of reasons** the bouquet toss is either loved or hated.

Meaning:

Myriad means a very large number. So, a myriad of reasons means for many reasons.

Similar examples:

- a. There are **a myriad of reasons** why I don't like shopping.
- b. He said that I should watch the TV series *Ozark* for **a myriad of reasons**.
- c. Working in a nursing home is a tough job for **a myriad of reasons**.

2. Blinks an eye

...no one really blinks an eye.

Meaning:

When no one **blinks an eye** it means that no one cares about something. For example, Andrew says that no one **blinks an eye** if a couple chooses to have a non-traditional wedding. This means that no one cares or protests if the couple chooses to have a non-traditional ceremony.

So when someone doesn't care about something, especially something that is new, shocking, or controversial then we can say that they don't **blink an eye**.

Some variations of this expression, that all have the same meaning include:

- Without blinking an eye / eyelash
- Without batting an eye / eyelash
- No one bats an eye / eyelash

Similar examples:

- a. Tina didn't even **blink an eye** when I told her I was getting a divorce.
- b. I heard the movie was scary but **I didn't even bat an eye** when I watched it.
- c. We hardly **blink an eye** when we hear news about climate change.