

Playing With Whales.

"Mum, can you put in your password?" is a question that I hear almost on a daily basis. My kids are into apps in a big way(1). We are slowly getting sucked(2) into the app market. I allow my daughter to play on my iPhone every now and then(3). That's fine. There are lots of fun, creative apps that you can download for free, so we do(4). After a few days, however, the credits, or ammunition, or points, or whatever currency it is that you need to play the game, run out. Then my children look around to find their savior, me. They suddenly remember how much they love me. They become very polite and very sweet, as they ask me to solve their problem of a lack of (5)credits. They do this with one eye on me, and one eye on my purse. Ha, ha! I have their full attention, the power of an emperor. Will it be thumbs up or thumbs down(6)? Exactly how nice(7) can they be to me if they *really* need those credits? May be they can vacuum the lounge, or clean out the cat's litter box(8). Or maybe I'll just have them kiss the ring on my right hand. Oh the power has gone to my head(9). I do realise that the older I get, the less power I will have. So, for now, I'll make the most of it(10). A few dollars here and there for app credits is fine; I let them buy them most of the time. It would only be a problem if I had an iron will. However, it is satisfying to know that my hand holds the purse strings(11).

1. 'To be into something in a big way' is an American expression for really liking something, or really practicing something.

a. My brother is into photography in a big way; he does it as often as he can, and he's very good at it.

b. They're into Minecraft in a big way; they play it everyday.

2. 'To get sucked into something' is an expression that means that you are slowly being forced to do something. You can get a mental image perhaps of stepping into mud and getting sucked into it. It is used figuratively, and implies that you are not happy about it.

a. I have been asked to be the president of the committee; I don't really want to, but I'm getting sucked into it.

b. He got sucked right into buying that car, but it was a bad one and broke down in two days.

3. 'Every now and then' is similar to saying 'sometimes' or 'occasionally'.

4. The verb 'to do' has many uses; one is emphasis.

a. They told us not to, so we didn't.

b. He won't let us eat in the lounge, so we don't.

5. 'A lack of' is not having enough of something.

a. The project cannot continue due to lack of money.

b. This talent show has a real lack of talent.

c. She has so many shoes that you won't believe it; she really does.

6. 'Thumbs up' is a phrase that is used sometimes to give approval of something. However, the 'thumbs up or thumbs down' is a reference to Roman Emperors and their 'life or death' use of this signal.

7. 'Exactly how + adjective / noun' is used a lot in both questions and statements to show doubt about someone's attributes, actions, abilities, or about something that has or will happen? It can show attitude, impatience, or sarcasm.

a. Exactly how clever is he supposed to be?

b. Exactly how late are they going to be?

- c. Exactly where are we supposed to be?
 - d. Exactly how tall is he?
8. 'A litter box' is the box filled with a sandy substance that cats use as a toilet. I'm not sure why it's called a 'litter box'.
9. 'To have something go to your head' means that you become proud or fixated on an accomplishment? desire, and because of that, your behavior is affected.
- a. He won the race, but his win went to his head and he spent the whole week bragging.
 - b. Don't let your new wealth go to your head; you might do something stupid.
 - c. She let his words go to her head; she was easily influenced.
10. 'To make the most of' means to either thoroughly enjoy something, or to take advantage of an opportunity.
- a. I have nothing to do tonight; I'm going to make the most of it and relax.
 - b. We made the most of our free cruise; we tried all the food, and went to every activity.
11. 'My (someone else's) hands hold the purse strings' is a saying which means the person has control of the money. Purses used to have string tops instead of zips or buttons, so if your hand is holding the strings, you control when the purse is opened.