

Transcription:

Curtis: Hi, everybody. It's Curtis and Amy here from RealEnglishConversations.com, and today we have a very interesting and entertaining podcast about the things that our parents used to say to us when we were growing up.

Amy: Exactly. And actually, what I did was I created a post on Facebook and I asked all of my friends that are currently parents right now, what expressions they're using or things that they are always saying to their kids or things that they heard when they were growing up. So we have a pretty cool list for you. We're not going to be able to get through everything but Curtis and I have both picked five that we heard all the time, and we're going to teach you what they mean and when they're used so that all of the parents that are listening right now are able to use this with their kids as well.

Curtis: So the first one that I heard as a kid growing up all the time was money doesn't grow on trees, and when you're a kid, you always kind of want to go to the candy store or buy toys, you want money for something.

Amy: Whenever you're at the store, there's always something that you're asking your mom and dad to buy for you, "Can I have this? Can I have that?"

Curtis: Kids don't have that – that idea about money.

Amy: Yeah, they don't realize your mom has to work, your dad has to work. Money isn't endless.

Curtis: So when you go up to your mom and dad and you say, "Hey, can I have \$20?" for a video game, for instance. I used to buy Nintendo video games all the time and I'd want the newest one and the latest one. "Can I please, please buy it? I need \$20." And my mom used to say, "You don't need \$20. Do you know money doesn't grow on trees?"

Amy: Exactly. It's like, "You know, money doesn't grow on trees." They always say it like that, like it's something we should all know.

Yeah, for me, one that I remember – this one was really funny – so, if I was hungry, I would say, "Mom, I'm hungry." And my mom would look at me and she would say, "Hi, Hungry, nice to meet you!" This is funny because you can use it with anything. If your kid says, "I'm bored," you can say, "Hi, Bored, nice to meet you!" And it's basically a way of making fun of the greeting, obviously. "Hi, I'm Amy," and then the person says, "Hi, Amy, nice to meet you." But because they're introducing themselves with whatever adjective is happening at the time, "Mom, I'm tired," "Mom, I'm bored," so yeah, this is something that you can use with your kids as well as a joke. It's kind of a play on words but it's adaptable to many different situations.

Curtis: My next one that I heard all the time: “When I was your age...” My parents obviously are older and they have history on things that they had or didn’t have back in the day. So once again, going back to those video games I used to play, my dad would say, “Stop playing all those video games. When I was your age, we didn’t have video games. We had real toys or we rode our bikes for fun.”

Amy: Yeah. They’d say, “We went outside once in a while, you know.” For example, nowadays, we might say this to our kids. We would say, “When I was your age, we didn’t have cell phones,” and it would be a comparison, something that is talking about how things were so different when we were younger and how things are now at this point in time. So that’s another really, really great one that you can use with your kids.

Curtis: My next one was when it came to playing music in my basement, playing records and stuff in my basement, and my mom was trying to concentrate on something that she was working on. She would say, “Curtis, turn down the volume! I can’t even hear myself think.”

Amy: I heard this one when me and my brother were arguing or maybe we were playing really loudly, like we were doing some sort of activity with a lot of banging or yelling or I don’t know, something going on. So my mom would come in to the room, “Guys, settle down! I can’t even hear myself think.” And this is just a way of saying like, “Holy man, you guys are making so much noise I can’t think,” like it’s very, very distracting. So yeah, that’s a really good one.

What about this one? Did you ever hear this, Curtis? “Where are you going?” And this is me saying this to my parents. So I can see they’re putting their coats on, my mom has her purse, she’s putting her shoes on, for example, and I’m – “Mom, where are you going?” and her answer was, “Crazy. Want to come?” And that’s it. Like, that was the answer.

Curtis: Yeah. I’ve heard that a few times, for sure.

Amy: And I started to say, “Where’s crazy?” “It depends.” You know? Yeah, this is a type of expression or something that they used to say to us when they didn’t want to tell us where they were going.

Curtis: Yeah. Or they didn’t want us to come along with them.

Amy: Basically.

Curtis: Yeah.

Amy: It was like, “I’m leaving the house. Stay here with your brother. See you later.” That’s it.

Curtis: Exactly. I think the next one is something that my brothers got more into trouble for than I did. “It feels like I’m talking to a brick wall”. My brothers weren’t the best listeners when it came to listening to my parents when they were telling them to cut the lawn or do a chore in the house, especially Kevin. My older brother Kevin, he’d always be reading something or something like that. And still to this day, it’s like talking to a brick wall.

Amy: Yeah. He’s not the best conversationalist like them. Actually, my brother – I say this about him all the time that it’s like talking to a brick wall. You ask a question, for example, “Oh hey, what’s new?” “Nothing.” “Oh, okay.” Then you have to think of another question. So it sounds like in the case with your mom, whenever she was trying to lecture Kevin or ask a question to him or something like that, he was only half paying attention because he was busy doing something else.

Curtis: Or he just wouldn’t respond. Yeah, he was us reading something like a newspaper or a hot rod car magazine or something.

Amy: Okay. So this type of expression can be used not just with kids but if you’re ever having a conversation, a difficult conversation with someone and you want to tell them that they need to participate, you could say, “Hey, it feels like I’m talking to a brick wall.” But usually that’s pretty direct. So you might want to say only to family members that can handle that type of direct response, but you might use it to talk about what a difficult conversation was like that you had.

What about this one? So here’s the situation. You have to ask your parents something and you walk in to the living room and you ask them the question. But the location that you decide to stop is right in front of the TV that they’re watching. What do they say to you, Curtis?

Curtis: “You make a better door than a window.”

Amy: “Amy, you make a better door than a window.” That’s what I heard. This is basically saying because doors are usually made of wood or solid material that you can’t see through, but you would be a better door than a window because windows are transparent and you can look through them and see what’s happening on the other side. The next time that your kids are trying to talk to you and they’re standing in front of the TV or something that you’re trying to look at, you can use this expression. “You make a better door than a window.”

Curtis: So the next one is you’ll hear, “Don’t make me get up off of this chair,” or “Don’t make me turn the car around.”

Amy: This is when your mom or your dad is really mad and they’ve asked you to stop, and you’re being really annoying doing whatever, and they’re threatening you with, “Don’t make me get up from this chair.” And it’s a threat. It’s like, oh, if they get up from the chair or they turn around that car, you’re in big trouble.

Curtis: Oh yeah, big trouble, for sure. I can remember an example, an instance that I had with my brothers. We were going on a road trip, it was nine hours long. We were excited to go on this family vacation. But we started acting up in the back seat, fighting with each other and screaming and yelling and pushing each other. My dad was just like, “Don’t make me turn this car around.” So immediately we were like, “Uh-oh. The trip would be over and that did would get really mad.”

Amy: And that was probably preceded with, “Enough, boys! Settle down, boys!”

Curtis: Absolutely. Almost exact words.

Amy: Then finally, your dad would say, “Don’t make me turn this car around!” Probably really, really angry at that point but –

Curtis: Exactly.

Amy: Yeah. The “don’t make me” is always a threat. So whatever you have to stop doing to obviously discipline your kids, this is the threat. “Don’t make me – whatever.”

Curtis: It’s almost like that initial warning, right?

Amy: Yeah, exactly. Okay, what about this one? You know when your parents don’t really have a good reason why? For example, you’re asking if you can do something. “Mom, can I go over to Sarah’s house for dinner tomorrow night? Or can I have a sleepover at Sarah’s house?” And my mom says, “No.” Of course, my answer is, “Why?” because that’s not a good reason. “No.” Like, “What’s the reason? Why no?” So I say, “Why?” And my mom or dad says, “Because I said so, and that’s it.” Like, they’re the authority. They said so. That’s it.

Curtis: Yeah, no is no almost, right?

Amy: No is no, exactly. Did you ever hear this sort of situation?

Curtis: No, not really. Not that I can think of. No.

Amy: Oh, your parents must have had good reasoning. I don’t know. My parents were just like, “I don’t have to give you a reason. Because I said so, and that’s it.” So if you can’t think of a good reason why and your kids are asking for something and they’re asking you why, you can just respond, “Because I said so.”

This last one here that we have on the list is I think a little bit old-fashioned but I think that it’s still used by parents because our parents used it and our grandparents used it. So when we find ourselves in a situation where there’s a young kid and they’re not really listening to you and they respond with a sarcastic answer or a rude answer or something

that is just not appropriate as an answer to an adult that's asking you to do something, what do we say to them?

Curtis: "Don't use that tone with me, young lady or young man."

Amy: Exactly. Sometimes you're going to hear, "Don't use that tone with me, missy," or "Don't use that tone with me, mister." And it's like the person reclaiming their authority and that they deserve respect, basically. Yeah, really it's this type of disrespectful tone that a kid is giving you. So, for example, if my mom asked me to do something and I say, "No. I don't want to do the dishes," and it's rude. Like that type of tone is really rude.

Another thing that you might hear is "I wasn't asking. I was telling."

Curtis: Ooh.

Amy: And if you hear that, then you know, "Oh, okay. I need to go."

Curtis: I heard that a few times.

Amy: Exactly. Like they say, "Amy, could you please wash the dishes?" They're requesting in a nice way. But when you respond without the right answer then they're going to remind you that it wasn't really a request.

Curtis: For me, it was cleaning my room.

Amy: Oh yeah. "You need to clean your room today."

Curtis: "No. No, I don't want to clean my room." "Don't use that tone with me, young man/mister." Is what she used to say. So when I'd be snarky and have that kind of tone in my voice –

Amy: "Why aren't you eating your broccoli?" "I don't like broccoli." Exactly. Yeah, those are some of the things that we heard all the time when we were growing up in our household. We have a list of probably – I don't know – I think 25, maybe even 30 of these types of expressions and I'm sure that you have some similar versions of these expressions that you hear in your own native language. And it would be cool to hear what the version is. So go ahead and leave us a comment, for example.

But don't forget to go over to our website at RealEnglishConversations.com and get access to the lessons so that you can get these bonus expressions that we're going to be including in the conversation lesson, and also to go through this transcription with a lot of detail to pull out all of the cool things that we said to you today. We'll see you next time.

Curtis: See you.