

AIMS:

- to practise using modal verbs for speculation
- to learn slang expression
- to raise an awareness of differences between American and British English
- to practise listening and speaking

LEVEL: B1+

**British slang vs American slang
with Hugh Laurie on the Ellen DeGeneres show**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wYmrg3owTRE>

I. What do you think these words mean? Discuss the meaning of the words with your partner.

Use modal verbs, for instance:

It might be.... It could mean... It can't be....

1. flossing –
2. chin wag –
3. ba-donka-donk –
4. chuffed to bits –
5. shawty -

II. Watch the video and check if you were right. Then, fill in the gaps with the correct answers.

	Hugh's/Ellen's guess	Slang meaning
1. flossing	something close-fitting	showing off
2. chin wag	a blundering idiot	to chat (literally: to wag your chin)
3. ba-donka-donk	to pass someone on a motorcycle and then see a police car and brake suddenly	an extremely curvaceous female behind
4. chuffed to bits	exhausted	really pleased, thrilled, delighted
5. shawty	-----	a young kid or a woman

III. Are you surprised by any of the answers? Did you manage to guess any words?

IV. Work in pairs. Student A fills in the table for American slang, student B fills in the table for British slang. (You may want to check the meaning of the slang expressions in the dictionary/the Internet). Don't show the answers to your partner.

STUDENT A (AMERICAN SLANG)

	Meaning
1. for the birds	Something trivial, worthless, stupid, not important
2. to take a rain check	Used when you refuse an invitation, but you want to suggest that you would like to do the activity in the future
3. to be busted	Being caught in the act of doing something wrong
4. epic fail	A total failure, a disaster
5. to go Dutch	To share the expenses, to pay for yourself (esp. for a meal)

STUDENT B (BRITISH SLANG)

	Meaning
1. to know your onions	To be knowledgeable about a subject
2. blinding	Fantastic
3. laughing gear	The mouth
4. odds and sods	Miscellaneous things, not important; bits and pieces
5. tosh	Rubbish, nonsense

V. After you have filled in your table, play the game from 'The Ellen Show' – guess your partner's slang words.

Use modal verbs, for instance:

It might be.... It could mean... It can't be....

***FOLLOW-UP 1**

Use the Internet or a dictionary to prepare your own set of slang words for the next lesson!

***FOLLOW-UP 2**

Can you find the origin of some of the expressions from this handout?