

Movie Vocabulary/Idioms

Galaxy Quest

(1999. Info at <http://us.imdb.com/Title?0177789>)

First, you need to understand that *Galaxy Quest* is a “spoof” (playful lampooning or satire) of the old American television show “Star Trek.” You may or may not be aware, but the “fan” culture depicted in the movie—where faithful *Galaxy Quest* fans flock to conventions to *swap* (exchange) *Quest* lore and culture—is an American reality with respect to *Star Trek*. There are Star Trek conventions being held even today!

Star Trek episodes (shows) involved the crew of the *Starship Enterprise* (a space ship) traveling around the universe, meeting alien cultures and sometimes intervening to help them solve their problems, or having to avoid them when they were *hostile* (mean).

On the right: *Enterprise* Captain James T. Kirk and Dr. Spock having a friendly game of 3D chess



core meltdown

A “core” is a contained collection of reactive nuclear material. A *meltdown* occurs when a failure to quickly capture and remove the heat from a reaction causes the core to overheat. If the core gets too hot, there will be no chance of getting close enough to regain control of the situation, and the heat could build up to a “meltdown” stage, where the core literally melts down.

Omega-13
device

Omega (“Ω”); the last letter in the Greek alphabet. Because of its position in the Greek alphabet, it is sometimes used to *ominously* (in a scary way) symbolize the end of something.

two-parter

Something with two parts. This is “fan-speak”: You won’t hear expressions like this anywhere except in popular culture discussions. In this case, a “two-parter” is a long *Galaxy Quest* story that required two episodes (two separate shows) to tell it.

intrepid crew

Main Entry: **in-trep-id**
Pronunciation: in-'tre-p&d
Function: *adjective*
: characterized by resolute fearlessness, fortitude, and endurance
Source: <http://m-w.com/> (Merriam-Webster Online)

Fearless. Often used in conjunction with “crew” to indicate collective bravery. A somewhat *archaic* term (see “don”, below).

...**booked**
another
appearance
without us.

To book: To schedule an appearance, typically for entertainment purposes. “To book a gig”; to arrange to perform (music, acting, clowning, etc.) for a client, at a specific time and place, and for a specific fee.

Richard III

Richard III

Richard III is the last of the four plays in Shakespeare's minor tetralogy of English history: it concludes a dramatic chronicle started by Henry VI: Part I and then moving through Henry VI: Part II and Henry VI: Part III. Culminating with the defeat of the evil King Richard III at the battle of Bosworth field in the play's final act, Richard III is a dramatization of actual historical events that concluded in the year 1485, when the rule of the Plantagenet family over England was replaced by the Tudor monarchy.
Source: <http://www.allshakespeare.com/>

...**five curtain calls**

A “curtain call” is when actors, responding to continued applause after a performance, get back on stage to take a collective “bow”.



If you get FIVE curtain calls, the audience really liked your performance! You will see a very nice curtain call near the end of *Galaxy Quest*.

panic attack

A sudden onset of panic, fear, and/or dread.

...you should get that looked at!

This means “you should get that looked at by a doctor.” Often used humorously to indicate you think something about someone looks unhealthy. Another similar joke is to say to someone, “They have drugs for that, now!”

...the show must go on

An old theatre (stage) saying. Actors say this to each other for encouragement under difficult circumstances.

relevant
conundrum

Main Entry: **co·nun·dram**
Function: *noun*
Date: 1645
1 : a riddle whose answer is or involves a pun
2 a : a question or problem having only a conjectural answer **b** : an intricate and difficult problem
Source: <http://m-w.com/> (Merriam-Webster Online)

The sense being used by Brandon is probably **2b**.

Limo



Limousine.

Mum’s the word!

To be mum: To be quiet. “Hush-hush! This is a secret just between you and me! Mum’s the word!”

laughing stock

To “be a laughing stock” is to be the subject of ridicule.

full speed ahead

Nautical (naval, sea-going) expression meaning, “go forward as fast as the ship can go.”



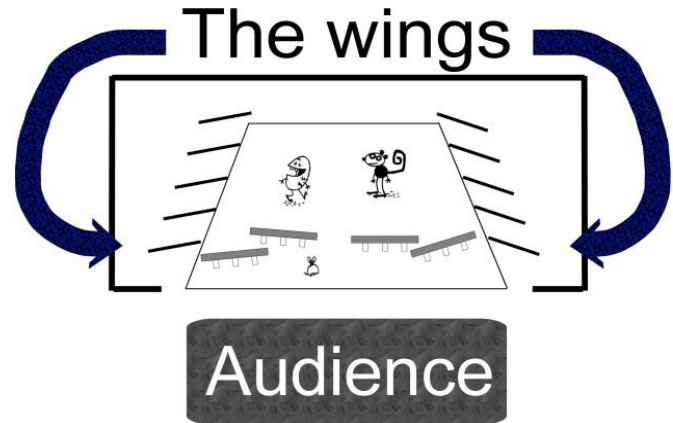
I’ve never seen him **lose it** like this...

To “lose it”: To lose your *composure* (self-control), to let extreme, uncontrollable emotion show to others around you.

Do you have pages, or do you want me to **wing** it?

Pages: A script; lines (words) to be read by the actor.

“Wing it”: Slang expression, originating in the theatre term “wings” (n.). The **wings** are the places on either side of the stage, out of sight of the audience. An actor might prepare his or her lines in the wings; right before “going on” (walking out on stage, in front of the audience).



Don your uniform...

To “don”: To put on a piece of clothing or a costume. This is an *archaic* (very old) word, which no one uses anymore; a reflection, no doubt, of the imperfect nature of the Thermians’ computerized language translation devices.

Consider the many archaic words in this old Christmas song:

Deck The Halls (A Traditional Christmas Song)

Deck the halls with boughs of holly
 Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la
 'Tis the season to be jolly
 Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la
Don we now our gay apparel
 Fa-la-la, la-la-la, la-la-la.
 Troll the ancient Yule-tide carol
 Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la....

Source: <http://www.nevada.edu/~blake/Christmas.songs.html>

Archaic Word	Modern Definition
“deck”	Decorate
“boughs”	Branch (of a shrub or tree)
“tis”	Archaic, poetic contraction of “it is”
“don”	Put on (clothing)
“gay”	Happy; made archaic by the Gay (homosexual) Rights movement!
“troll”	To move [the tongue] cleverly (OED)
“ancient”	Somewhat archaic word for “old”
“Yuletide”	Yule: adj.: Christmas. -tide: Suffix for “season”

**Long live
Thermia!**



“Long live...”: A “toast”; A wish that the country or person or persons will be successful in their undertakings.

**Take it from
us...**

“Believe us; we wouldn’t lie to you.”

I didn’t know you
could get that
loaded

“To get loaded” means to get drunk (on alcohol).

Who wants the
grand tour?

“Who wants to be shown around?”

That was **one
hell of a** thing

“One hell of a [something]”; it’s a really great or impressive instance or example of something. Ex.: That was one hell of a **surprise!** He’s in for one hell of a **shock!** He’s one hell of a **nice guy!**

Bear in mind this is a *little* vulgar.

**Beryllium
sphere**

Beryllium is an element of matter.

Atomic Symbol: Be

Atomic Number: 4

Atomic Mass: 9.012182 amu

Number of Neutrons: 5

Classification: Alkaline Earth

Crystal Structure: Hexagonal

Density @ 293 K: 1.8477 g/cm³

Color: gray



Source: <http://www.chemicalelements.com/>

esoteric dishes

Main Entry: **es•o•ter•ic**

Function: *adjective*

Date: circa 1660

1 a : designed for or understood by the specially initiated alone
<a body of *esoteric* legal doctrine -- B. N. Cardozo> **b :** of or
relating to knowledge that is restricted to a small group

2 a : limited to a small circle <*esoteric* pursuits> **b :** PRIVATE,
CONFIDENTIAL <an *esoteric* purpose>

Source: <http://m-w.com/> (Merriam-Webster Online)

...the main
barracks

Barracks: Large living/sleeping space for many people. Typically referring to collective living quarters for low-ranking military personnel.

I'm just **jazzed**
about being on
the show.

Jazzed: Slang for excited, hopped up, thrilled.

...red **thingie**
moving toward
the green
thingie

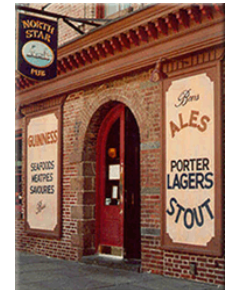
Thingie: Diminutive (small, cute) form of "thing."

Just **FYI**

"For Your Information." The joke here is that this *acronym* is commonly used in soft, polite written office communication.

...to see if
there's a **pub!**

Pub: British expression for a "public house"; a bar.



Gilligan's Island

A very popular, very "low-brow" (non-intellectual) television situation comedy that originally aired 1964-1967. Typical stupid sit-com of the time with character actors in ludicrously improbable situations.



breaching
protocol

To breach means *to break through*. Breaching protocol is to not follow the formal procedures in some activity.

minors/miners

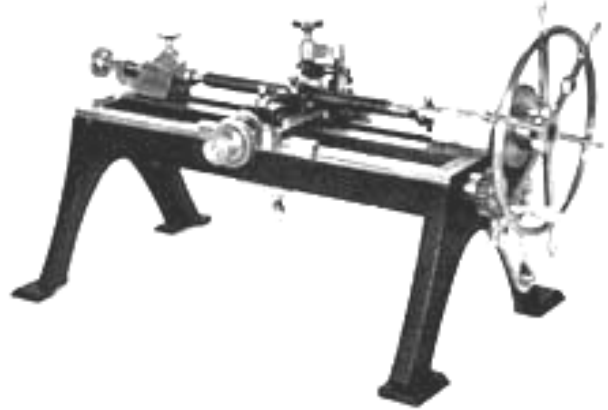
Minor: Someone under 18 years of age.

Miner: Someone who works in a mine, digging minerals from the ground.

This is a good example of "cheap" wordplay in comedy. You have to admit it makes sense in the context; the aliens do *look like* minors, and they *are* miners.

rudimentary
lathe

This reference is a ridiculous joke. A **lathe** is a device for spinning a block of wood, metal, etc. on an axis. You can then apply a blade to the block to form the piece into something with axial symmetry (e.g., candlesticks, chess pieces, etc.)



A **rudimentary** lathe would be a “crude but serviceable” lathe; something made of local materials found at hand that would nonetheless do the job.

What is its
motivation?

Classic question an actor or actress asks to figure out how to *get in character* (pretend to be a character); “what is my motivation? What would motivate my character to say these things and act this way?”

Bravo!

Shout of triumph and encouragement.

Explain as you
would a child

Short (and somewhat poetic) form of “explain as you would to a child.” Means: Use simple words and concepts.

scene-stealing
hack

Scene-stealing: Also called “upstaging”. This is when an actor breaks with the director’s plans and acts in a manner so as to call the audience’s attention away from another character, and toward their character.

Hack: A bad artist. An artist who ignores their sense of artistry and taste to obtain popular recognition and acceptance.

...can of **WD-40**

Very popular spray
light lubricant (oil).



learning annex
course

“continuing education”; night classes at a community college.

I'm a **glorified extra**



Extra: In theatre, someone with no lines (non-speaking role). People in crowd scenes are extras. Note the many extras surrounding Nicolas Cage in this scene from "Adaptation."

Glorified: In this context (as an adjective), it means "hardly better than." In this line, Guy is saying he's really not any better than an extra.

plucky comic relief

Plucky: Happy-go-lucky, high-spirited, smiling, and fun.

Comic relief: A bit of humor that gives the audience a break from non-stop drama or "heavy" action.

Are you **stoned**?

Stoned: Under the influence of the drug marijuana. [R. Crumb's classic "Stoned again" image on right]



Get back **on their tail**

To be "on" someone's "tail": To be following someone very closely, as part of a plan to capture, attack, or to "track" or spy on them.

Fire at will

Shoot at the target as soon as you are ready.