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## **Generation Alpha Slang: Evolution, Characteristics, and Notable Terms**

### **Introduction**

Each generation tends to forge its own linguistic identity through the creation and use of slang. Generation Alpha is broadly defined as those born from approximately 2010 through the mid-2020s (Priccilia & Erin, 2025). As the first cohort of true digital natives, the vocabulary of Generation Alpha has been profoundly influenced by internet culture and social media (Rejeki, 2025). Their slang evolves at a rapid pace, spreading primarily through TikTok memes, gaming chats, and YouTube trends rather than via traditional media channels (Fatmasari *et al.*, 2025). To those outside this cohort, such slang often appears puzzling or “nonsensical,” leading many older individuals to feel “out of the loop” (Aleksic, 2025). Yet understanding these novel expressions offers valuable insight into contemporary youth culture and the ways today’s teens communicate. Similar to earlier generations (who popularized slang such as *groovy* or *YOLO*), Generation Alpha has developed its own set of terms to capture shared experiences and humor (Adhi & Masykuroh, 2025). Notably, Generation Z (born c.1995–2010) has heavily influenced Generation Alpha’s vernacular; many terms originated with these slightly older peers and were subsequently adopted or adapted by Gen Alpha. Linguists observe that the slang used by Generations Z and Alpha differs from that of older cohorts in that it constitutes “a language shaped by memes, irony and speed,” often explicitly “built for the algorithm” of social media virality (Duisenbekova, 2023). Indeed, the influence of recommendation algorithms has become “a new inflection point for language,” accelerating the adoption and dissemination of certain words (Aleksic, 2025, as cited in Newmark, 2025). This paper explores the key features of contemporary youth slang and decodes prominent examples, highlighting their meanings, origins, and cultural significance.

### **Evolution and Characteristics of Generation Alpha Slang**

#### **Digital-Native Origins**

Gen Alpha slang arises organically from the online environments this cohort inhabits. Being the first generation raised entirely in the digital age, their everyday communication is immersed in internet media. Platforms like TikTok, YouTube, and online games serve as incubators for new expressions. For example, the nonsense exclamation “skibidi” exploded in popularity thanks to *Skibidi Toilet*, a surreal YouTube series featuring dancing, human-headed toilets. In slang usage, *skibidi* itself does not have a fixed definition—it is essentially an absurd interjection or meme phrase. A teenager might randomly shout “Skibidi!” in a humorous context, or use it to label something that is ridiculously cool or bizarre. The dictionary entry simply characterizes *skibidi* as “a nonsense internet term,” noting it is often “used intentionally as gibberish” (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Accordingly, there is no deeper meaning to unearth; the term is employed purely for its comedic, absurd effect. *Skibidi* underscores

Generation Alpha’s affinity for absurdist humor—illustrating how a silly word from a viral video can become a widespread catchphrase purely for fun.

The rapidity of change in Gen Alpha’s vocabulary is also a product of their digital-native status. Slang terms can go from novel to mainstream within weeks. This is largely because young people’s social interactions (and content consumption) occur in highly connected online spaces, where trending words propagate quickly through shares, comments, and remixes. A term might emerge in a niche online community (for instance, a specific game’s chat or a small TikTok trend) and then get amplified to a broad audience if it resonates. In prior generations, slang often percolated via spoken interaction and slower media; by contrast, Gen Alpha’s linguistic trends are *crowdsourced and accelerated by algorithms*. Popular content recommendation systems on apps will surface a meme or phrase repeatedly, reinforcing its usage. In effect, Gen Alpha’s language evolution is intertwined with the feedback loops of social media technology. As one linguist described, their slang is “built for the algorithm,” meaning that catchy, memeable expressions thrive in a system designed to maximize engagement (Duisenbekova, 2023). This digital incubation leads to slang that is highly context-dependent—often tied to specific videos, images, or jokes circulating at a given moment.

### **Influence of Social Media and Memes**

Rapid social media virality can amplify niche slang into global youth parlance. Consider “aura farming,” a term that gained prominence following a single viral TikTok in 2023. In that video, an 11-year-old boy was filmed standing utterly still and looking cool on the bow of a speeding boat during a festival; the clip garnered millions of views. Online viewers described this confident pose as the boy “farming aura,” repurposing the gaming term *farming* (which means grinding for rewards) to a social context (Paoleti & Mujahidah, 2025). In Generation Alpha slang, aura refers to a person’s special vibe or charismatic presence, essentially a “cool factor” or personal star power (Paoleti & Mujahidah, 2025). To say someone “has aura” implies they naturally exude impressiveness. Building on this concept, teens jokingly quantify charisma with “aura points” and speak of “aura farming,” meaning actively trying to accumulate or enhance one’s aura (coolness) for oneself.

In practice, *aura farming* denotes curating one’s image to “cultivate the coolest version of oneself.” For example, a teenager might lean against a wall wearing sunglasses, striking a pose, and half-jokingly say they’re *aura farming*—doing it purely to look as cool as possible. On social media, calling someone an *aura farmer* can either be a compliment (indicating the person appears effortlessly cool) or a gentle ridicule (implying the person is trying too hard). The viral boat video epitomized *effortless cool*, prompting viewers to comment that the boy had essentially maxed out his aura (Paoleti & Mujahidah, 2025). In general, doing something “for the aura” means doing it to project an impressive image rather than for intrinsic reasons. This terminology reflects how Gen Alpha often discuss personal image with self-aware, game-like metaphors. They consciously frame social behaviors in terms of “strategy” or “grinding,” blurring sincerity and satire—teasing that life itself is a kind of role-playing game where one

can earn *aura points*. This meme-driven slang demonstrates the interplay between social media virality and youth language: a single viral moment can introduce a whole new expression into the lexicon, complete with its own humorous worldview.

### **Appropriation and Recontextualization**

Many Generation Alpha slang terms are repurposed words or phrases that have older origins, often drawn from prior generations or specific subcultures, and given new context. A prominent example is “sus,” an abbreviation for “suspicious” or “suspect.” While it might seem like a fresh creation, *sus* is not new—its usage can be traced back to the 1920s (Paoleti & Mujahidah, 2025). However, *sus* was catapulted into contemporary youth vernacular by the viral video game *Among Us* (2020), in which players frequently accuse each other by saying “you’re sus” during gameplay (Calvo-Ferrer & Belda-Medina, 2021). In modern teen speech, calling something or someone “sus” simply means it or they appear shady, untrustworthy, or questionable. For instance, a student might say, “He’s been acting pretty sus lately—I think he’s up to something” (Paoleti & Mujahidah, 2025). What was an obscure bit of jargon largely became a mainstream term through recontextualization in a pop culture phenomenon.

Another repurposed term is “simp.” Historically a derogatory label (originating as shorthand for *simpleton* and later meaning someone overly subservient or attentive, especially toward women), *simp* existed in colloquial use for decades, particularly in African American Vernacular English and hip-hop slang. It even appeared in a 1992 R&B song (“Sympin’ Ain’t Easy” by Boyz II Men) as a term for foolishly doting behavior. However, *simp* experienced a resurgence around 2019–2020 on social media (Nashrudina *et al.*, 2025). In its current slang usage, to simp (verb) means to show excessive, fawning devotion or attention toward someone—often with the connotation of a male foolishly trying to win the affection of a female by being overly accommodating (Yuldashaliyevna, 2025). Calling someone a *simp* (noun) playfully teases that they are behaving in a pathetically enamored or subservient manner. Despite its negative connotation, the ubiquity of the term led to its inclusion in the Merriam-Webster dictionary, which defines “to simp” as “to show excessive devotion to someone... often used with ‘for’” (e.g., “simping for your crush”; Merriam-Webster, n.d.). These cases demonstrate Generation Alpha’s pattern of adopting existing slang (sometimes originating in Black American slang or earlier internet culture) and propelling it into mainstream use via memes and online discourse. By borrowing words like *sus* and *simp* and giving them renewed life, Gen Alpha reinforces a linguistic continuity with Gen Z while still making the terms their own through heavy usage and slight shifts in meaning or tone.

### **Irony and Metalinguistic Humor**

A hallmark of Generation Alpha’s language is a playful, metalinguistic sense of humor about their own slang. Many terms circulate with an implicit understanding that the speakers are being tongue-in-cheek or deliberately absurd. For instance, phrases like “*delulu*” (a playful shortening of *delusional*), “*mid*” (meaning mediocre), “*based*” (meaning admirable or rooted

in truth), or “*ratio*” (calling out that a reply got more engagement than the original post) are all popular among Gen Alpha, yet they often use these with a layer of irony (Adhi & Masykuroh, 2025). Notably, these terms were largely borrowed from Gen Z, but the youngest cohort continues the trend of using them in exaggerated or humorous ways. The very act of using such slang can be self-referential—teens are often fully aware of how ridiculous or esoteric their jargon might sound to others, and they lean into that for comedic effect.

Even terms that originated in serious contexts are frequently repurposed as jokes. Consider “sigma,” derived from the concept of the *sigma male* (an Internet trope describing a lone-wolf, alpha-equivalent male who operates outside the social hierarchy). The term *sigma* emerged earnestly in fringe “manosphere” forums about masculinity (Nabilah & Adika, 2025), describing a supposedly enviable archetype of a coolly independent, successful man (Rachmijati & Cahyati, 2024). However, by the time Gen Alpha began using *sigma*, it was mostly as a memetic joke. Now, calling someone “sigma” might genuinely imply they are independently cool and do their own thing, but more often it is employed humorously to parody over-the-top masculinity or to label virtually any impressive action as *uber-cool* in an exaggerated way (Subhan, 2025). Through memetic usage, “*sigma*” has morphed into a generic superlative term roughly equivalent to “*epic*” or “*excellent*.” For example, a teen might exclaim “That move was sigma!” simply to mean that a stunt or achievement was very impressive (Nabilah & Adika, 2025). According to Merriam-Webster’s tracking of emergent slang, by 2023–2024 *sigma* was being used in an “increasingly ironic, meme-ish way... as part of Generation Alpha’s digital slang” (Merriam-Webster, 2025). It even spawned absurd catchphrases like “What the sigma?” (a tongue-in-cheek variant of “what the heck?”) which some middle-schoolers began saying precisely because it would confuse uninitiated teachers (Yuldashaliyevna, 2025).

The self-awareness of Gen Alpha slang is further illustrated by viral media. In 2023, a parody song went viral by stringing together a series of Gen Z/Alpha buzzwords—“*gyatt*,” “*rizz*,” “*skibidi*,” “*sigma*,” etc.—over a comedic beat (Adhi & Masykuroh, 2025). The song’s humor lay in the sheer nonsense of those words to an outside ear, essentially satirizing how saturated youth speech had become with such terms. Gen Alpha viewers found this amusingly relatable, as if laughing at an exaggerated reflection of their own slang-filled conversations. Likewise, TikTok has been replete with parody sketches in which teenagers deliberately overuse trendy slang in mundane scenarios as a form of in-joke. One popular format is a skit where a student replies to a teacher’s simple question with a barrage of slang terms, leaving the teacher baffled—highlighting the generation gap in language. This kind of metalinguistic humor (joking about the way they themselves speak) indicates that Gen Alpha often employs slang with a heavy dose of irony. They are keenly aware of the novelty and ephemerality of their lingo and often “weaponize” slang as an inside joke: by using it in hyperbolic ways, they both bond with peers and playfully exclude or perplex those not in the know. This layer of irony ensures that even as the words themselves may be silly or simplistic, their usage can convey wit and social savvy.

## Social Function of Slang

Beneath the novelty and playfulness, Generation Alpha's slang serves classical sociolinguistic functions—primarily identity formation and in-group bonding. Adolescents have long used slang to differentiate themselves from older generations and to solidify connections with peers (Labov, 1992). In Gen Alpha's case, creating and sharing unique terms gives them a sense of group identity in a world where much of their social interaction is public (online) and observed by outsiders. By speaking in a code that is constantly evolving, they maintain a linguistic space that feels authentically “theirs.”

One illustration is the use of intimate nicknames as slang. The term “pookie” has been adopted by teens as a playful term of endearment (Fatmasari *et al.*, 2025). Traditionally *pookie* is a cutesy pet name (akin to *honey* or *sweetie*), and its usage by Gen Alpha is usually lighthearted or tongue-in-cheek. A teenager might address a close friend or significant other as “pookie” (“Hey pookie, what’s up?”) to signal affection and closeness. In some cases, friends use it ironically—two buddies might call each other *pookie* in an exaggeratedly sweet tone for comedic effect. Whether used sincerely or jokingly, *pookie* serves to reinforce camaraderie; it’s a word that, if used mutually, confirms that both parties share a comfortable, affectionate rapport.

Another foundational slang term for Gen Z and Gen Alpha solidarity is “bro.” The word *bro* (short for *brother*) has long existed in casual speech, but youth have expanded it far beyond its original meaning (Weaver, 2025). In contemporary teen slang, *bro* is a multi-purpose pronoun/noun that can refer to virtually anyone, regardless of actual relation or even gender. Friends frequently address each other as *bro* (“Bro, you won’t believe what happened”), which fosters a sense of informal kinship. More strikingly, *bro* is used in the third person to narrate or comment on situations involving strangers or hypothetical people. On TikTok and other social platforms, one often sees comments such as “*Bro is fighting for his life in this video,*” or “*Bro got the answers wrong on purpose.*” In these cases, the commenter refers to the subject of the video as “*bro*” as if they were a familiar character, adding a humorous, colloquial tone to the narration (Fatmasari *et al.*, 2025). This creative usage has become so pervasive that some observers joke that “*bro*” functions almost like a neopronoun for Gen Z/Alpha – a generic way to refer to any person in a story (regardless of their identity) while conveying an in-group, empathetic perspective.

Interestingly, the versatility of *bro* extends to diminutive forms like “lil bro.” Older teens or those feeling more experienced might playfully call someone *lil bro* as a mild, patronizing tease (Mehta & Giunchiglia, 2025). Importantly, this is not restricted to actual younger siblings; it could be used among friends or even toward someone older if the intention is to humorously suggest naivety or inferiority. For example, if a classmate makes a naive mistake or boasts in a misguided way, one might chuckle and remark, “*Lil bro needs to chill,*” essentially meaning “this person (whom I’m jokingly treating as my little brother) should calm down.” In that context, *lil bro* conveys a mixture of endearment and condescension – “*you sweet summer*

*child*” vibes, to use another slang phrase. Overall, the ubiquitous use of *bro* in Gen Alpha speech—whether as a direct address or a narrative device—helps build a sense of peer camaraderie. It signals that the speaker and listener share a casual, *we’re all friends here* framework, and it often adds a layer of humor or relatability to stories. At the same time, this use of *bro* amusingly depersonalizes subjects in a way: everyone becomes “bro,” which can make descriptions more humorous and universally understandable within the group.

In-group slang also has important social implications in educational settings. Educators note that staying attuned to current student slang can be crucial, not just for cultural awareness but for student welfare (Madrideo, 2025). Slang often carries nuanced connotations that outsiders might misinterpret or miss entirely. For instance, the term “bop” in youth slang today has drastically different implications than it did a decade ago. To many adults (especially Millennials or Gen X), calling something a *bop* is positive—it means a catchy song or a hit (as in “that song’s a bop!”). Gen Z also commonly used *bop* in that benign sense. However, Gen Alpha has twisted “*bop*” into a pejorative label: in some teen circles, *bop* now denotes a promiscuous girl, effectively a misogynistic slur akin to “*slut*” (Juli *et al.*, 2024). The phrase “the school bop” would thus be an insult suggesting a girl is viewed as overly sexually available. An uninformed teacher hearing a student casually mention someone being “a bop” might not realize that this is derogatory name-calling. Such gaps in understanding can inadvertently allow bullying or harassment to go unnoticed. As a result, many educators stress the value of keeping up with slang’s evolving meanings: failing to recognize when a term is being used to insult or demean could prevent timely intervention in instances of social aggression. Generation Alpha’s propensity for quickly rebranding words (often with layers of irony or humor) means that the social undertones of a slang term can flip in meaning almost overnight—what was harmless yesterday could turn hurtful tomorrow. Awareness and context are key.

The examples above illustrate that, ultimately, the social function of Gen Alpha slang is much like that of youth slang in any era: it establishes *who’s in and who’s out* of a certain cultural conversation. Mastery of the latest slang grants teens a kind of cultural capital among their peers. It signals membership in the community and an understanding of the current “vibe.” Conversely, misuse or unfamiliarity can mark one as an outsider. In this way, slang operates as a code of solidarity. And while the specific terms may be novel (or even deliberately absurd), the underlying drive—to create a linguistic space separate from adult norms and to bond with peers through shared language—is a timeless aspect of adolescent life.

## **Notable Generation Alpha Slang Terms and Phrases**

### **Six Seven (6–7)**

Six-seven (often stylized 6–7) is an exclamatory slang phrase that essentially functions as a hype catchphrase with no specific literal meaning. It was popularized by rapper Skrilla’s 2024 song “*Doot Doot (6 7)*,” then quickly evolved into a viral rallying cry among youth (Adhi &

Masykuroh, 2025). The phrase gained further momentum through TikTok meme edits of NBA player LaMelo Ball (who stands six-foot-seven tall), linking the number sequence to energetic reactions in sports highlights. Adolescents will shout “6-7!” in a variety of contexts—often simply upon hearing someone say the numbers *six* and *seven*, or as a general exclamation to express excitement and solidarity. As journalist Avery Newmark (2025) describes, “*It’s pure vibe*,” essentially a way to say “*I get it*” or to cheer in agreement without needing to articulate a concrete idea. In other words, 6-7 is used analogously to a memeified “Amen!” or an enthusiastic “*Yeah!*”—a fun, quirky rallying cry whose appeal lies more in its energy than in any semantic content. Outsiders may find the phrase nonsensical, but within Gen Alpha circles it serves as a lighthearted signal of enthusiasm and shared understanding. The rise of 6-7 exemplifies how a seemingly random pop culture moment (in this case, a throwaway lyric and a sports meme) can spawn an inside joke that ultimately becomes a widespread slang term.

### **Skibidi**

Skibidi (pronounced “ski-BIH-dee”) is another trending nonsense interjection among Gen Alpha. The term originates from an absurdist YouTube series called “*Skibidi Toilet*,” which features surreal, music video-style battles between singing toilets and characters with surveillance cameras for heads (Rachmijati & Cahyati, 2024). Within youth slang, *skibidi* has no fixed definition; it is used as an intentionally silly exclamation or response, often to convey excitement, approval, or just randomness. A teenager might yell “Skibidi!” at a humorous moment, or comment “*That’s so skibidi*” to label something that is ridiculously cool or weird in a meme-centric way. The absurdity is the point—*skibidi* is emblematic of Gen Alpha’s love for humor that is goofy and context-driven. Notably, *skibidi* has been recognized in at least one lexicographical source as “*a nonsense internet term*” often “*used intentionally as gibberish*” (Merriam-Webster, n.d.), underscoring that there is no deeper meaning to decode. The popularity of *skibidi* demonstrates how a quirky piece of internet culture can bleed into everyday youth vocabulary purely for its entertainment value. By adopting a word that started as a nonsensical refrain in a viral video series, Gen Alpha once again shows that they often prize playfulness and memetic origin in their slang—even if the term appears baffling to outsiders.

### **“Aura,” “Aura Farming,” and “Aura Points”**

In Gen Alpha vernacular, *aura* refers to a person’s special vibe or charismatic presence—the unique “cool” factor they emit (Paoletti & Mujahidah, 2025). Traditionally, the word *aura* means the atmosphere or energy surrounding someone, but teens have given it a twist to signify a kind of stylish swagger or personal magnetism. Saying someone “*has aura*” implies they naturally exude impressiveness or star quality. Building on this concept, youth discuss “*aura points*,” a tongue-in-cheek way to quantify charisma, and “*aura farming*,” which means actively trying to increase one’s own aura. These terms apply gaming jargon to social life: in video games, *farming* means repeatedly performing tasks to gain resources or points; by analogy, *aura farming* is behaving in ways that might boost one’s perceived coolness.

For example, if a student is casually leaning against a wall with sunglasses on, striking a confident pose, they might jokingly claim they're *aura farming*—half-admitting that they're trying to look as cool as possible. It's about, as one description put it, "cultivating the coolest version of yourself" (The Guardian, as cited in Fatmasari *et al.*, 2025). On social media, commenters might note "*He's farming aura*" under a picture of someone who looks particularly composed and stylish, implying that the person is deliberately curating their image. Calling someone an "*aura farmer*" can be a light compliment (suggesting the person appears effortlessly cool and collected) or a gentle jab (implying the person is *trying* very hard to seem cool). The term shot into popular slang after the viral TikTok of a boy standing motionless and confident on a speeding boat, as mentioned earlier; viewers marveled at his calm swagger and quipped that he was accumulating *aura points* by the second (Paoletti & Mujahidah, 2025). In today's teen lexicon, doing something "*for the aura*" means doing it purely to enhance one's vibe or image, not for any practical outcome. The whole concept of *aura/aura farming* reflects Gen Alpha's self-aware commentary on social media culture: they speak about personal image almost like a game, mixing sincerity (everyone wants to be cool) with satire (openly admitting to performing coolness). It's a prime example of how digital-native teens borrow language from gaming and online culture to articulate and poke fun at the performative aspects of their lives.

### **Brainrot (Brain Rot)**

Brainrot (sometimes spelled as two words, *brain rot*) is a slang term that describes the mental fog or decline one feels after consuming too much mindless digital content (Subramaniam & Thangavelu, 2025). If a teenager says, "*That show gave me brainrot,*" they mean the show was so stupid or addictively trashy that it felt as though their brain has deteriorated from watching it. The term is typically used humorously or hyperbolically; it captures Gen Alpha's reflexive awareness of being "*extremely online.*" In fact, "*brain rot*" was chosen as Oxford's 2024 Word of the Year, highlighting how prevalent the concept had become in public discourse (Yousef *et al.*, 2025). As defined in one source, *brainrot* refers to "*consuming excessive, low-quality content on social media and the resulting mental fog*" that ensues (Subramaniam & Thangavelu, 2025).

In conversation, even an inside joke or meme can be labeled *brainrot* if it's seen as particularly nonsensical yet irresistibly pervasive. For example, a student who can't stop referencing a bizarre TikTok meme might chuckle and admit, "*Sorry, that video gave me brainrot—I can't get it out of my head.*" The implication is: "*I know this is meaningless content, but I've consumed so much of it that it's stuck in my brain.*" There's an element of self-deprecation when youths use this term; they are mocking their own propensity to get hooked on lowbrow content. Some have even expanded the idea of *brainrot* to a semi-serious critique: for instance, saying one has "*Discord brainrot*" or "*YouTube Shorts brainrot*" to explain an unusually short attention span or the inability to converse without referencing memes, as

though their mind has been saturated (and partially “rotted”) by endless feeds of internet material (Yousef *et al.*, 2025).

Despite its jokey tone, *brainrot* has struck a chord beyond youth circles. Older commentators and educators have picked up the term when discussing concerns about screen time and reduced attention spans in the digital generation (Yilmaz & Aktürk, 2025). In academic contexts, the rise of *brainrot* as slang is noted as a meta-commentary by Gen Alpha on their love-hate relationship with digital media. They acknowledge that much of what they consume online is trivial or “stupid,” yet they partake in it extensively. Calling something *brainrot* is a semi-ironic way for a young person to say, “*I know this content is rotting my brain, but I enjoy it regardless.*” It is both a criticism and an acceptance of the addictive nature of internet culture, condensed into a single vivid slang term.

### **Mewing**

Mewing in youth slang refers to a supposed jawline-enhancing exercise, but it is often invoked with humor and irony. The term originates from a real practice advocated in certain orthodontic and online circles—named after Dr. John Mew—wherein pressing one’s tongue against the roof of the mouth over time is claimed to improve jaw definition (Fatmasari *et al.*, 2025). This concept gained traction in online self-improvement and “looksmaxxing” communities (the latter being a subculture devoted to maximizing one’s physical attractiveness). By the early 2020s, *mewing* had trickled onto TikTok and Instagram as a minor trend, with tutorials and before-and-after claims of sharper jawlines.

Gen Alpha teenagers, however, turned *mewing* into a running joke by 2024. In a school context, a student might use “*mewing*” as a facetious excuse for not speaking or participating. For instance, if called upon in class, a teen might cover their jaw and mumble, “*I can’t answer right now, I’m mewing,*” pretending that the commitment to improving their jawline prevents them from talking. This absurd scenario became popular in comedic TikTok skits: students portrayed as prioritizing their *mewing regimen* over answering a teacher’s question, much to the teacher’s confusion or annoyance (Gan *et al.*, 2025). Needless to say, actual teachers didn’t find it particularly amusing when real students tried this stunt in classrooms. The humor from the student perspective lies in feigning an extreme vanity—suggesting that achieving the perfect jawline is more important than, say, contributing to a class discussion.

The slang usage of *mewing* thus operates on two levels. Literally, a teen might mention *mewing* if they are indeed aware of or attempting the practice (some do try it earnestly, given the influence of social media beauty trends). Figuratively, and more commonly, it serves as a tongue-in-cheek shorthand for “*I’m busy improving my looks (instead of doing something you want me to do).*” It pokes fun at the pressures of appearance and the sometimes absurd lengths people go to for beauty—especially in the hormone-charged environment of adolescence. The rise of *mewing* as a joke among kids illustrates how a somewhat bizarre internet fad can become mainstream enough that even middle schoolers are aware of it and

comfortable parodying it. It's another case of Gen Alpha's intergenerational mischief: they adopt a term from a serious (if scientifically dubious) self-improvement context and use it to playfully flout adult expectations (like paying attention in class). In doing so, they also implicitly comment on how ingrained beauty and self-image concerns are in their generation's daily life—even schoolchildren joke about jawline exercises, reflecting the pervasive influence of social media aesthetics.

## **Gyatt**

Gyatt (pronounced like “guy-ut”) is a high-intensity slang exclamation used to express awe or strong approval, typically in reaction to someone's physical attractiveness—especially features like a curvy body or striking appearance. The term is believed to originate as a slurred or shortened form of “God *damn!*” often sounding like “goddamm” or “gawdamn” when exclaimed quickly (Martinez, 2025). In Gen Alpha usage, shouting “Gyatt!” (often with a drawn-out vowel sound, like “Gyaaatt!”) has become a meme-worthy way to convey “*Oh wow!*” upon seeing an impressive or alluring sight. This expression is prevalent in TikTok comments, live streaming chats, and other video-centric platforms. For instance, a teenager might yell “gyatt” as a joking reaction when a friend posts a glamorous photo, or one might see spam comments like “GYATTT” under videos of celebrities or influencers in revealing outfits.

While *gyatt* is usually employed playfully, it does carry a gendered subtext. As Hassan (2024) notes, the term is primarily directed at women and their bodies, and it walks the line between spirited flattery and crude objectification. A boy in a gaming stream might exclaim “gyatt” if a female character or cosplayer appears on screen, echoing a kind of cartoonish wolf-whistle in textual form. Some girls have also adopted the term among friends, using it humorously to hype each other up (e.g., a TikTok of a friend dressed up for prom might get comments like “*okay gyatt queen!*”). Nevertheless, the origins of the term in a censored expletive meaning “*God damn!*” indicates that it's a fairly strong, if slangy, reaction.

The rise of *gyatt* mirrors broader trends in Generation Alpha's vernacular: it's a punchy, exaggerated interjection that gained rapid popularity through meme culture (Chen, 2025). It joins other over-the-top expressions like “*sheesh*” (drawn-out to show amazement) in the youth lexicon. Notably, *gyatt* encapsulates the highly visual nature of Gen Alpha's communication—much of their expression revolves around reacting to images and videos. The term itself has little content except as a marker of being impressed by what one sees. Its quick virality also underscores how Gen Alpha slang often spreads: a few influential TikTok or YouTube personalities might start using *gyatt*, their fans pick it up, and within months it becomes ubiquitous in certain circles. Whether used sincerely or with a layer of irony, *gyatt* exemplifies the hyperbolic style of contemporary youth discourse. It's loud, it's memetic, and it condenses a complex social interaction (gauging attractiveness and reacting to it) into a single, viral syllable.

## “Type shit” (or simply “type”)

The colloquial phrase “type shit” (and its even shorter form “type”) is a very recent addition to the youth lexicon and can be perplexing to those unfamiliar with it. It is used as a sort of conversational filler or tag that roughly means “or something like that” or serves to reinforce the vibe of a statement (Owens, 2025). Often, it is appended to the end of a sentence or phrase. For example, someone might say, “*We were just hanging out, type shit.*” In this context, “*type shit*” loosely translates to “*doing that kind of thing*” or “*you know, the usual stuff.*” It adds an informal, almost laissez-faire tone to the statement, implying that the exact details are not important beyond a general understanding.

Some young speakers have started using “type” (dropping the “shit”) in a similar way, as a shorthand confirmatory or emphasis particle, akin to saying “for sure” or “you get the idea.” For instance: Person A says, “*That party was crazy last night.*” Person B might simply nod and reply, “*Type,*” meaning “*Exactly, that’s the kind of thing I’m talking about.*” This usage is still evolving, but it shows how the phrase can contract even further while retaining its conversational function.

One linguistic analysis suggests that “type shit” may have evolved from a longer colloquial expression like “*that’s the type of shit I’m talking about,*” which is an affirming statement meaning “that’s exactly what I mean” or “that’s the kind of thing I like/endorse” (Yazgan, 2025). By trimming it down to just the last two words, speakers can tack it onto many different sentences to signal a general affirmation or to indicate that something fits a familiar pattern.

Another common scenario for “type shit” is to emphasize a vibe or feeling. Imagine a brief dialogue:

- Person A: “Let’s meet up later at the usual spot.”
- Person B: “Bet, type shit.”

Here, Person B’s response “*Bet, type shit*” combines a conventional slang “*Bet*” (meaning “*Alright/you bet/okay*”) with “*type shit*” to underscore that they’re cool with the plan in a laid-back, on-brand way. It’s as if saying: “*Sounds good, I’m down for that kind of thing we usually do.*” The phrase doesn’t add substantive content, but it adds pragmatic flavor – a laid-back emphasis that Person B is on the same page.

Importantly, “type shit” does not carry a literal meaning connected to the words “type” or “shit” in isolation; rather, it operates at the discourse level. It’s a filler that indicates “*something like that/just an example*” or sometimes just *affirmation/solidarity*. Linguists have observed that this usage emerged online, likely among late Gen Z (millennials and Gen Z on Twitter or TikTok), but it has been quickly adopted by Gen Alpha as well, given their exposure to slightly older creators and influencers (Yazgan, 2025). To someone who hasn’t heard it before, ending a sentence with “type shit” might sound jarring or nonsensical. However, within context, Gen Alpha speakers interpret it fluidly as a casual, emphatic full stop to a

thought. It contributes to the *rhythmic flow* of a conversation, smoothing it out with a kind of “*you get the idea*” vibe. In essence, “*type shit*” exemplifies how youth slang can innovate by carving out new pragmatic particles from existing language, enriching the texture of informal speech even if the exact origin of the phrase feels obscure.

### **Bro (as slang interjection/noun)**

Bro has long been a colloquial shorthand for “*brother*,” but in Gen Alpha slang it has transcended that origin to become a multipurpose form of address and reference. Teens use “*bro*” both in directly talking to someone and in narrating events or describing people (Weaver, 2025). In direct address, *bro* is similar to saying “*dude*” or “*man*,” conveying casual camaraderie: e.g., “*Bro, you have to see this video!*” It’s friendly, a bit masculine in flavor but often unisex in practice, and sets a relaxed, peer-to-peer tone. Virtually anyone can be called *bro* in this sense—close friends, acquaintances, sometimes even a person one just met—without implying actual kinship.

More interesting is how Gen Z and Gen Alpha use *bro* in the third person. In storytelling or commenting on social media, *bro* can stand in for the person being talked about, effectively turning them into a character in a shared narrative. For example, a viral tweet or TikTok comment might say about a video of someone skateboarding: “*Bro really did a whole flip and kept going.*” Here “*bro*” refers to the skateboarder, who is likely a stranger to the commenter. The use of *bro* creates a tone as if the commenter knows or empathizes with that person, adding humor and relatability. It’s as if the youth culture has collectively agreed that *everyone is bro* when telling stories; this shared fictional familiarity is amusing and unifying. Another typical comment might be: “*Bro is fighting for his life in this math class*” (captioning a video of a student falling asleep in class), where *bro* humorously serves as the protagonist of the mini-story (Fatmasari *et al.*, 2025). The effect is both comedic and slightly empathetic—the speaker addresses the subject as *bro* to signal “*we’ve all been there*” or “*look at what this fellow human is going through.*”

There is also a derivative form, “*lil bro*,” which older or more experienced teens use in a semi-sarcastic way to refer to someone else. Using *lil bro* suggests that the speaker considers the other person naive, adorably foolish, or in need of guidance (Mehta & Giunchiglia, 2025). For instance, if a freshman is bragging arrogantly and a senior finds it cute but misguided, the senior might later remark to friends, “*Lil bro really thinks he’s the coolest kid in school.*” The phrase *lil bro* here implies a sort of humorous condescension—casting the freshman as a little brother figure who has a lot to learn. It’s not usually meant as harsh insult; it’s more of a playful ribbing that places the speaker in a (self-assumed) position of maturity or authority relative to the subject.

Overall, in Gen Alpha speech *bro* functions almost like a default pronoun or noun for any person in casual contexts. Its widespread use exemplifies the casual familiarity that this generation injects into language. By calling everyone *bro*, teens create an atmosphere of

egalitarian informality—everyone is on the same level, part of the same narrative. At the same time, the semantic stretching of *bro* (and *lil bro*) adds creative nuance to their storytelling and interactions. It can foster a sense of kinship among peers (“we’re all bros here”) and simultaneously serve as a humorous device to comment on others (turning people into characters like “our bro over here”). This dual role of *bro*—camaraderie-building and comedically narrative—shows how a simple word can be repurposed to great effect in youth culture.

### **Pookie**

Pookie is a cute nickname that Gen Alpha has co-opted into a slang term of endearment. In general English usage, *pookie* has appeared as a generic pet name (often in an affectionate or romantic context) in songs, movies, and pop culture. Today’s teens use “*pookie*” to playfully address close friends, significant others, or even favored celebrities and influencers (Weaver, 2025). For example, a girl might caption a selfie with her best friend as “*Hanging with my pookie*”, signaling closeness and fondness. Alternatively, in fan communities, one might see comments like “*Happy Birthday to my pookie [idol’s name]!*” directed at a pop star, illustrating a kind of intimate fandom.

The nuance of *pookie* in Gen Alpha slang is that it’s often used *light-heartedly*. It doesn’t carry the heavy seriousness of saying “my love” or “dear.” Instead, it’s purposely over-the-top cutesy, and sometimes employed with a sense of irony. Two guy friends might call each other *pookie* in an exaggerated sweet tone as a joke, precisely because it sounds silly—thus simultaneously expressing bromance-like affection and mocking the convention of mushy nicknames. On the other hand, a teen couple might genuinely use *pookie* as a pet name, enjoying its playful sound. The versatility lies in tone and context: said earnestly, it’s an endearment; said with a smirk, it’s a comedic gesture.

That *pookie* has become trendy among youths highlights Gen Alpha’s comfort with blurring sincerity and irony in how they express affection. In an era of texting and memes, even sweet nicknames can carry a wink. Nonetheless, whether ironic or sincere, using such a term signals a level of closeness — you wouldn’t typically call just anyone *pookie*. It’s firmly an in-group word, meant for someone who you assume will appreciate the familiarity (and perhaps the humor) of being addressed that way. This term, while seemingly frivolous, underscores how Gen Alpha continues the age-old practice of linguistic creativity in expressing friendship and love. Each generation finds *new* words to say “*you are special to me*”; for some Gen Alpha teens, that word is *pookie*, delivered with a smile.

### **Slaps**

In youth slang, if something “slaps,” it means it is excellent, exciting, or highly enjoyable. This term is most often applied to music (“that song slaps!” to praise a track with a great beat), but it can refer to anything awesome, from food to movies to experiences. For example, “*Grandma’s curry slaps*” would mean the curry is amazingly good. The slang use of *slap* (as a

verb) to mean “to be great or impactful” originated in African-American slang and gained broader popularity in the late 2000s and 2010s, particularly regarding music with a heavy beat. A song that “slapped” was one with a rhythm so strong that it metaphorically “hit” the listener (Owens, 2025).

Generation Z embraced *slaps* as part of their lingo, and Generation Alpha has continued to use it as a general positive descriptor. According to one Gen Alpha glossary, *slaps* simply means “excellent, amazing, or very good” in their usage (Yazgan, 2025). One notable feature of this term is that it’s often used in a sort of impersonal construction: “X *slaps*,” without needing to specify a subject. This pattern (saying “It *slaps*” rather than “I love it”) gives the statement a bit of flair and informality. It’s similar to slightly older slang like “It’s lit” or “That’s fire,” which also convey that something is great.

Slang users also creatively extend *slaps* in comparative or hyperbolic expressions. For instance, teens might say, “This new song *slaps harder than anything else on the album*,” or use humor: “This pizza *slaps harder than my math homework did last night*,” implying the pizza is much better. The phrasing “*slaps harder than \_\_\_*” is a playful way to intensify the compliment with an unexpected or funny comparison.

The popularity of *slaps* in the Gen Alpha lexicon highlights how youth language often innovates and recycles in the realm of praise and positive reactions. Much as *cool* and *awesome* served previous generations (and are still around), Gen Z/Alpha have added words like *lit*, *fire*, and *slaps* to the vocabulary of approval. These terms are punchy and vivid (consider the imagery of something *slapping* your senses). They also fit well with digital communication: short, expressive slang that can react to a video or a song in a single word. In a world of constant content sharing, being able to succinctly endorse something as “it *slaps*” is both functional and stylistically on-brand for internet-savvy kids.

## **Chopped**

Chopped is a slang adjective used by Gen Alpha to indicate that something is bad, ruined, or of very low quality. If a student says “This game is *chopped*,” they mean the game is awful or has been spoiled in some way (Yousef, 2025). Similarly, describing a situation as “*chopped*” conveys that it turned out horribly—“Our plans got *chopped* because of the rain,” i.e., the plans were wrecked. The term has also taken on the meaning of “unattractive” when applied to people. For example, “He’s *chopped*” is a blunt way of saying that a guy is not good-looking (Yazgan, 2025). In essence, *chopped* in youth slang aligns with the general notion of “trash” or “messed up.” It’s a dismissive label: whatever is *chopped* is regarded as worthless or completely undesirable.

The origins of this usage likely lie in earlier urban slang. In some hip-hop contexts, *to chop* can mean to cut or screw something up (as in *chopped and screwed* music, or “*chop shop*” for cars), and in New York slang of the 2010s, calling someone “*chopped*” was a casual insult for being ugly. Generation Alpha has basically inherited and broadened the use of this word.

Owens (2025) notes *chopped* as meaning “bad, ruined, messed up, or of poor quality,” which covers the various shades of negativity the term can take. The flexibility of *chopped* is noteworthy: it can describe an experience (“*The party was chopped*” – it was a bust), an object (“*These headphones are chopped*” – they’re broken or bad), or a person’s looks or performance (“*His jump shot is chopped*” – implying it’s terrible).

When used in conversation, context and tone make clear the intent, since *chopped* is a broad brush insult. Usually the speaker’s disdain or disappointment is evident. There is nothing subtle about calling something chopped—it’s a quick linguistic takedown. The appeal of a word like this for young people is its blunt force and slightly edgy feel (because it’s slangy and maybe a bit impolite). It allows them to convey strong criticism without resorting to profanity, for instance. Moreover, because *chopped* in its standard meaning simply means “cut into pieces,” using it as slang carries an implicit metaphor: the thing in question is so bad it’s as if it’s been mangled or utterly destroyed. In summary, to label something *chopped* is to dismiss it as broken, failed, or irredeemably subpar, reflecting Gen Alpha’s continued tradition of colorfully re-purposing everyday words into potent slang.

## **Rizz**

Rizz refers to a person’s ability to flirt or attract romantic/sexual interest – essentially, it’s slang for charisma in the dating context (Blackwell *et al.*, 2025). If someone comments, “*He’s got rizz*,” they mean “*He’s got game*” or “*He’s charming; he can smoothly attract others.*” The term burst into popular use around 2021–2022, largely due to a New York-based streamer and YouTuber named Kai Cenat who popularized it among his followers (Subhan, 2025). While many assume *rizz* is just a clipped form of “*charisma*,” Cenat has stated that he coined it independently (the resemblance may be coincidental or a subconscious riff on *charisma*). Regardless of origin, the link to *charisma* is a helpful mnemonic and has shaped how people understand the term.

In practice, *rizz* can be used as a noun or a verb. As a noun, it denotes the abstract quality of allure—e.g., “*Her rizz is off the charts*” means “*she has a ton of charm/sex appeal.*” As a verb (often phrased as “*rizz up*”), it means to flirt successfully—e.g., “*I saw you rizzing up that guy at the party!*” or “*He rizzed her up with just one line.*” Teens discuss *rizz* in a self-reflective way too, often humorously assessing each other’s romantic prowess: “*Do I have any rizz? I’m so awkward around my crush,*” or “*Teach me how to get rizz.*”

The concept proved so catchy that a whole playful lexicon formed around it. For instance, “*unspoken rizz*” refers to a scenario where someone attracts others effortlessly, without even trying or saying much (imagine a person who just stands there and people swoon—teenagers might joke, “*His unspoken rizz did all the work*”). Conversely, someone who is trying too hard might be said to have “*no rizz*” or even “*rizztopheles*” (a joking extreme). Another derived title is “*Rizz God*,” meaning a person who is seemingly omnipotent in flirting, able to charm anyone

(Yazgan, 2025). Social media further propelled these sub-terms; memes emerged classifying fictional characters by their level of rizz, etc.

The rapid spread and creative expansion of *rizz* is a textbook example of how Gen Alpha (and late Gen Z) coin and disseminate slang. A hyper-specific bit of streamer lingo went mainstream globally in a short span, showing up in high school hallways and TikTok trends across countries. It filled a kind of linguistic niche—while terms like *game* or *charm* exist, *rizz* gave the concept a fresh, edgy label that felt native to the TikTok era. It's short, a bit mysterious to outsiders, and carries an insider quality. Moreover, talking about “rizz” allowed young people to discuss flirting and attraction in a somewhat abstract, humorous way, making a potentially awkward topic more lighthearted. In sum, *rizz* highlights how quickly youth vernacular can form around social experiences and how these new terms become cultural badges—if you know *rizz*, you're attuned to the youth scene of the early 2020s.

### **Simping**

Simping refers to the act of excessive adoration or eagerness to please someone, often someone with whom one is infatuated. In contemporary teen usage, it usually implies that the person (the *simp*) is being too submissive or is putting the object of their affection on a pedestal to an embarrassing extent. For example, a friend might tease another by saying, “*You're really simping for Alex, huh?*” if they notice over-the-top efforts to impress or placate Alex. To call someone a *simp* is generally not a compliment—it's gentle ribbing that suggests “*you're doing too much for someone who isn't reciprocating equally.*”

The modern resurgence of this term has an interesting trajectory. The noun *simp* itself has existed in English slang for quite a long time, historically meaning a simpleton or fool. In the late 20th century, it took on the specific connotation of a man who foolishly dotes on a woman without reciprocation (often used in African American communities and early internet forums). As noted, R&B group Boyz II Men even had a track titled “*Sympin'*” in 1992, using the term in that older sense. However, *simp* all but disappeared from mainstream use until around 2019, when it exploded on platforms like TikTok, Reddit, and Twitch (Nashrudina *et al.*, 2025). Young people began using it in memes and videos—sometimes seriously shaming perceived over-eagerness, other times ironically as self-deprecation (e.g., “*I'd simp for that celebrity any day*” meaning “*I adore them and would do anything for them*”).

The term became so widespread that it drew backlash and moderation: by early 2021, Twitch (a live-streaming platform) notably announced that calling someone “simp” could be considered harassment under their policies, effectively banning the word in certain contexts. This move was widely discussed in internet circles and ironically may have further cemented *simp* in the youth lexicon, as it highlighted how common the term had become. The Merriam-Webster dictionary also noted the spike in usage, defining a *simp* as someone who shows excessive devotion, especially “a man who is overly submissive to a woman” (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

In Gen Alpha's slang repertoire, *simp* and *simping* are used with a mix of sincerity and humor. One might admonish a friend, "Stop *simping*, she's not even into those grand gestures," which is genuine advice cloaked in slang. Or online, teens might jokingly identify themselves as *simps* for their favorite pop stars or fictional characters, basically meaning they are loyal, adoring fans— "I'm *simping* for this K-pop group, I can't lie." In that sense, to *simp* for someone can mean to idolize them (even non-romantically), and Gen Alpha often uses it this way in fandom contexts.

Despite these lighter uses, the core idea carries a cautionary or teasing tone about "losing oneself in devotion." It reflects an age-old teen concern: navigating the balance of affection in relationships (platonic, romantic, or parasocial). The slang just packages that dynamic in a modern, sardonic way. In one word, *simping* encapsulates a scenario every adolescent recognizes—liking someone *way* more than they like you back and maybe making a fool of yourself as a result. Generation Alpha's embrace of the term, and the proliferation of related memes (like "*Simp Nation*" or the mock motivational phrase "*Simpin' ain't easy*"), shows how they collectively process and poke fun at the pitfalls of teenage crushes through a shared linguistic lens.

## **Sigma**

Sigma, in the context of Gen Alpha slang, is a multifaceted term that has been largely detached from its serious origins and repurposed humorously. The word comes from the concept of the "sigma male," which gained attention in certain online circles in the late 2010s. A "sigma male" was touted in some fringe masculinity blogs and videos as an alternative to the alpha/beta male hierarchy—a lone wolf type who is successful and confident but chooses to operate outside of traditional social dominance structures (Nabilah & Adika, 2025). In that original context, being sigma was meant to be aspirational, though the idea itself became the subject of much internet parody due to its pseudo-scientific nature.

By the time *sigma* permeated youth slang, however, Gen Z and Alpha were mostly treating the term ironically. Now, calling someone "a sigma" can carry a genuine compliment—implying that the person is independently cool, does their own thing, and doesn't need approval (essentially the lone-wolf vibe)—but more often it's used with a *wink*. Teens will label exaggerated or comically hyper-masculine behavior as *sigma* in a mocking way. For instance, a meme might show a video clip of a toddler refusing to hold his mom's hand while crossing the street, captioned "*literally sigma behavior*", lampooning the idea of a toddler being a stoic lone wolf.

In everyday teen speech, "sigma" has also become a casual superlative, similar to saying something or someone is awesome or legendary. For example, "*He finished his homework in 5 minutes – sigma!*" just humorously tags the feat as impressively independent or hardcore (Nabilah & Adika, 2025). If a friend makes a savvy life decision or stands up for themselves, one might jestingly praise them with "*very sigma of you*." The memetic nature of the term

even led to absurd phrases like “*What the sigma?*” (a playful variation of “What the heck?”) circulating in some schools, deliberately to mystify teachers with a seemingly random substitution (Yuldashaliyevna, 2025).

By 2023–2024, *sigma* was widely recognized in youth internet culture to the point that mainstream outlets noted its usage. Merriam-Webster, tracking new slang trends, commented on how *sigma* had come to be used in an “*increasingly ironic, meme-ish way*” among Gen Alpha (Merriam-Webster, 2025). Furthermore, *sigma* was featured in various parody content. TikTok and YouTube creators made comedic videos stringing together *sigma* with other Gen Alpha buzzwords, exaggerating how everything is “sigma this, sigma that” to poke fun at the slang saturation (Ishita & Mamidi, 2025).

In summary, *sigma* as used by Gen Alpha straddles a line between sincere admiration for independent coolness and satirical mockery of try-hard masculinity. The same teen might one moment earnestly aspire to have *sigma* qualities (e.g., self-sufficiency, confidence on one’s own terms) and the next moment laugh at a “*sigma grindset*” meme that parodies entrepreneurial bravado. The trajectory of this term—from serious ideological concept to tongue-in-cheek teen slang—illustrates how Gen Alpha can deftly take a term with weighty or self-serious origins and deflate it into something lighthearted, all while retaining a kernel of its original meaning. It’s a linguistic transformation powered by meme culture, wherein the term *sigma* has been collectively *owned* by youth not as a rule-bound label, but as a flexible token in their humor and praise vocabulary (Subhan, 2025).

## Ohio

In Gen Alpha meme parlance, “Ohio” has taken on a meaning far removed from its geographic origin. What started as the phrase “*Only in Ohio*” – an internet joke implying that bizarre or cursed things happen uniquely in the state of Ohio – has evolved into “*Ohio*” being a shorthand for anything surreal, chaotic, or absurdly unfortunate. Around 2022–2023, TikTok, Twitter, and other platforms were flooded with jokes attributing strange images or videos to Ohio: for example, an oddly edited clip of a distorted street might be captioned “Meanwhile in Ohio...” (Nguyen, 2024). The humor was in suggesting that Ohio (for no particularly logical reason) is an alternate dimension where the normal rules don’t apply.

Over time, the meme snowballed. People began using just “*Ohio*” as a descriptor. If something looks off or “*cursed*” (another slang term meaning it gives you an unsettling feeling), a teen might comment “*Ohio vibes*” or “*that’s so Ohio.*” The term “go back to Ohio” became a punchline aimed at anything or anyone that seemed outlandishly weird – as if to banish the weirdness to the mythical land of Ohio. Conversely, when encountering a chaotic situation, someone might exclaim “*What in Ohio...?*” (trailing off) to express astonishment at how messed up it is, invoking the meme that this must be an Ohio-level aberration.

Linguistically, using *Ohio* in this way is an example of a metonym in youth slang: a proper noun (a place name) comes to stand for a whole set of attributes – in this case, the uncanny and

bizarre (Lopez, 2025). It's similar to how *Florida* has been used in memes in the past (e.g., "Florida man" stories implying crazy news), but *Ohio* took on a more surreal, less reality-based connotation. Importantly, this usage is heavily steeped in irony. Gen Alpha doesn't literally believe Ohio is a wasteland of memes; it's just a running joke, a shared absurdist reference that immediately communicates "*something about this scenario is delightfully ridiculous.*"

The popularity of the Ohio meme speaks to Gen Alpha's layered meme culture. It required a kind of cultural comprehension to know why saying "*Ohio*" is funny in context – one had to be aware of the meme trend and play along. By transforming a state's name into a broad concept (chaos/absurdity), youths showed how even the most familiar words can be recontextualized with new meaning in their communication (Smith & Torres, 2025). It also illustrates a characteristic of Gen Alpha humor: there's often no *straightforward* punchline to explain to the uninitiated. Saying "*This picture is so Ohio*" is funny to those who know and completely confusing to those who don't – which is exactly the kind of insider-outsider delineation that gives slang its social power.

## **Conclusion**

The slang of contemporary youth—particularly Generation Alpha—provides a compelling window into their digital lives, values, and creativity. As demonstrated, many of their expressions (such as "6-7," "skibidi," "aura farming," "brainrot," "it's giving," "rizz," etc.) originate from internet culture, where memes, viral videos, and online personas drive rapid linguistic innovation (Newmark, 2025; Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Gen Alpha's slang is characterized by its fast turnover, its blend of extreme irony with genuine emotion, and its penchant for repurposing existing words with new meanings. In their hands, terms like "sus" and "simp" have become everyday descriptors; "bro" has evolved into a universal pronoun/noun; and even arbitrary elements like a number ("6-7") have turned into meaningful inside jokes. Though these expressions often perplex outsiders, they are far from "garbled nonsense." Rather, they function as an in-group code of belonging. Mastery of this evolving lexicon allows teens to bond with their peers, often by confounding authority figures or older individuals who do not speak the language (Aleksic, 2025). It creates a cultural space where youth can assert their identity and creativity.

Furthermore, external forces such as social media algorithms have amplified the pace of slang evolution. As linguist Adam Aleksic observed, algorithms and digital media act as "*a new inflection point for language,*" creating a feedback loop where young people coin new terms online and those terms rapidly explode across platforms (Aleksic, 2025, as cited in Newmark, 2025). The result is a youth lexicon that differs markedly from that of older generations—one heavily influenced by the instantaneous, participatory nature of internet culture (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Popular slang now emerges from comment threads, video edits, and viral trends more than from movies, TV, or music lyrics (the traditional drivers in the 20th century). This shift underscores a significant change in how language innovation occurs: it's more decentralized, democratized, and accelerated by technology.

From a scholarly perspective, Gen Alpha slang underscores timeless linguistic phenomena manifested in real time. We can observe language change as it happens: semantic shifts (e.g., “*bop*” transforming from meaning a catchy song to a term for a promiscuous girl), functional shifts (e.g., “*slaps*” evolving from a verb meaning *to hit* to an adjective meaning *is excellent*), and the invention of entirely new idioms (e.g., “*it’s the \_\_\_ for me*” to highlight what stands out most in a situation). These young speakers are essentially linguistic innovators, even if they are just playing with words. Moreover, the content of their slang often reflects and influences social dynamics. Some terms convey a sort of humorous resilience or self-awareness—embracing a word like “*brainrot*” indicates they can jokingly critique their own media habits. Other terms reveal emerging norms and attitudes: for instance, the casual way Gen Alpha discusses concepts like “*simping*” (gender dynamics in romantic pursuit) or “*sigma*” (ideas of independence and masculinity) indicates an ongoing negotiation of gender roles, identity, and self-image among young people.

For educators, parents, and anyone interested in youth development, keeping up with this slang is more than a curiosity—it can be key to understanding teens’ worldviews and ensuring effective communication. As discussed, missing the meaning of a slang insult or compliment could lead to missed cues in the classroom or at home. A teacher unaware that “*bop*” has a negative connotation now might not realize when a student is being bullied verbally; a parent who doesn’t know that “*brainrot*” refers to internet overuse might not catch the lighthearted self-critique in their child’s comments. Conversely, when adults make an effort to stay informed about youth slang—and perhaps even use a bit of it appropriately—it can help bridge the generational gap. It shows respect for the validity of youth culture and can make teenagers feel seen and understood. Of course, there’s a fine line: nothing makes a slang term die faster than teachers adopting it cringingly. But awareness and a light touch can turn slang from a barrier into a conversation starter between generations.

Ultimately, slang is a living dialect that Gen Alpha members have collectively authored—one that captures the humor, anxieties, and aspirations of growing up in the 2020s. Although specific slang phrases are dynamic and sometimes fleeting (today’s “*skibidi*” might be tomorrow’s forgotten fad), studying them reveals consistent threads in linguistic evolution. Generation Alpha’s quirky expressions—from “*fr, bro*” (short for “for real, bro,” an affirmation of truth) and “*bet*” (signaling agreement or acceptance) to “*main character era*” (the feeling of being the protagonist in one’s life)—serve as building blocks of their generational identity and culture. Far from being meaningless, these terms carry rich subtext about what this generation finds entertaining, relatable, or important. As slang continues to evolve, it will remain an important area for linguistic and social research, affirming the notion that language is ultimately “about vibes, not rules”—a sentiment that Generation Alpha clearly exemplifies in their everyday communication.

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