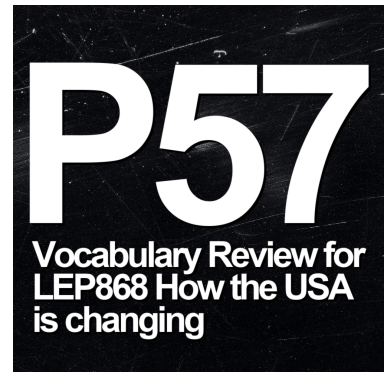


Hello premium
subscribers,



This is P57. At this stage, I am not sure if this is going to be a single episode, or if this is just part 1 of another multi-part series. We'll see how much I manage to do in just one episode here. In any case, this is P57. Hello!

In episode 868 I spoke to Lindsay McMahon from All Ears English about how the USA is changing, and we had an interesting conversation about politics, economics, culture and society, comparing social changes in the USA and the UK.

Have you heard that episode? It's number 868.

Here in this premium episode I'm going to recap a lot of the vocabulary which came up during that conversation.

So here is an episode full of vocabulary related to social changes, politics, employment and workers rights and so on.

I was inspired to do this premium episode by a comment from a PLEPster called Raquel.

Raquel on 868. How the USA is changing

<https://teacherluke.co.uk/2024/02/12/868-how-the-usa-is-changing-with-lindsay-mcmahon-from-all-ears-english/>

My comments or
corrections are written (in
brackets).

Hi Luke,

I must admit that this
episode was hard for me to
understand.

Many (a lot of) specific vocabulary about politics which I'm not familiar with. Could you please make a premium episode about this free one? That would be extremely helpful 😊.

I am writing from Spain. North of Spain, which is pretty different from the typical image of Spain. Not

only the landscape but culturally speaking. I am not very into politics but I know that we are living convulsive moments (we are living through turbulent times); the left wing president got the position thanks to harsh negotiations with many different parties and he had to make a lot of compromises. The right

wing party is not very
happy with those and the
situation is quite tense.

And in the middle of all
that are we, the citizens (is
us - “are us” is also correct
but I think here we are
referring to “us” as a single
unit), who seem that we
are not important at all. 🙄

(who seem not to be
important / who don't

seem to be important at all)

I have the feeling that we

never really abandon

(abandoned) the feudalism

(feudal) system.

Sorry for the long

message.

As always thanks and, see

you....bye

There are various reasons
why you might have found

it a bit tricky to understand that conversation.

Specific vocabulary is certainly one of them, but also things like speaking speed - connected speech in pronunciation, a lack of familiarity with the topic, specific references to places and situations you aren't so familiar with (US and UK society/politics)

and familiarity with the voices you're hearing.

But surely, vocabulary is a huge one here as we used quite a few specific words and expressions when talking about this topic.

So, let's re-cap some of the vocabulary from the conversation with Lindsay.

I know I always say this, but I really want to fly through this quickly. I don't plan to do another 8-part series so this is genuinely going to be an express vocabulary review, where, like an express train doesn't stop at all the stations on the route, in this express episode we're not going to stop for every possible detail.

Instead the main aim is to briefly clarify the main meanings of certain words or phrases that came up in the conversation, so that you can feel you understood this conversation more clearly, especially if you choose to listen to it a second time after listening to this.

I do recommend that by the way. Listen to 868, then listen to this, then listen to 868 again.

If you want, you can try to use the language in this episode to describe changes in your country. Using new language is an important part of learning it.

I've prepared samples of language from the first 30 minutes of my conversation with Lindsay in episode 868. The vocabulary which I'm focusing on is in bold.

There are 50 items in my list here, so I'm probably being unrealistic to expect to get through this in only one episode, but that's what I'm going to try. Also, I think I

won't do a pronunciation episode for this. Again, because I'm trying to be lean and efficient here. Feel free to repeat the words after me as you hear me say them during this episode.

Since this is an express episode, all you will see on the PDF is the samples of

language taken from the conversation.

My explanations are all going to be done spontaneously, as if I was just standing up in class and my students asked me to explain some things we have just read.

I've changed these samples slightly, just to make them a

bit clearer here, for example
I've removed things like
false starts, incomplete
sentences which are normal
in spoken English.

**Vocabulary extracts from
868 How the USA is
changing with Lindsay
McMahon**

1. I've seen a number of **shifts** in our culture in politics.
2. I'll just say it in two in three words, **unions** are hot.
3. A **union** is an organization that workers for generally larger companies can join. Usually it's by choice. You can join it, you **pay**

dues to this union and
they fight for you.

4. We're in a **pro-labor
moment** which is kind of
rare for the US.

Spelling: **Labor** (US)

Labour (UK)

5. It's something we
haven't seen since I
guess you could say the
days of the **car boom** in
the **Rust Belt** of the

United States where unions dominated the car world.

6. Detroit Michigan, the whole Midwest was a major car industry and unions **dominated** at that time.

7. And then when we went into the Reagan **era** and the Bush **era** we really went into more of a big

business **era**. Unions were weak. People didn't like unions.

8. People are still **skeptical**. I'm still somewhat **skeptical** of unions as well depending on what's going on but I think overall this is a positive thing because people in the US are able

to negotiate for **raises**.

UK: **pay rises**

9. I mean there's been very high-profile events that have gone on like the Hollywood **strike**, the writers' **strike**.

10. So it's a **collective bargaining** thing where usually there's a president of the union and they will at certain

times when things aren't
right for you as a worker
they will **go to bat for**
you and negotiate for
raises, negotiate for **time**
off things like that.

Also: wages & salaries,
healthcare benefits,
retirement benefits,
working hours, workplace
safety, job security -
protections against

layoffs or redundancies,
grievance procedures,
training.

11. You mentioned the
car manufacturing
industry which in the US
was such an important
industry.

12. You're talking about
the **manufacturing**
center of the country.
Centre (UK)

13. In the UK ... the unions were **a huge presence** in the country especially in the 1970s when things really **came to a head**, where the unions really had a lot of power and they were really **putting their foot down** and negotiating hard with the government, especially

**the steel industry and
the coal mines.**

14. Okay so we've moved
in parallel politically
somewhat.

15. Thatcher fought hard
with the unions and
almost **obliterated** the
union movement in the
UK and she changed the
country. She **liberalized**
the economy. We moved

away from a
**manufacturing based
economy** and towards a
**financial services based
economy.**

16. Bill Clinton who
actually **made some
conservative leaning
moves** even though he
was a Democrat.

17. We're now seeing the result of this more **conservative economy**.

18. We've had a lot of **billionaires** being created in the last 20 years due to this but we've also got a lot of **poverty** in the US.

19. Poverty is a **relative term**, right? I have to be careful using that word.

It's different around the world.

20. The result is that workers have fewer **rights**.

21. Exactly, less **bargaining power** than they used to.

22. These days you talk about you know the the 1% or the 0.1% where something like 99% of

the wealth, 99% of of all
of the **money and**
capital and ownership is
in the hands of 1% of the
nation then you know
that's not a very healthy
situation.

23. We're seeing this
shake out now and so
we're seeing a massive
increase in
homelessness.

24. In cities like Phoenix Arizona there's entire homeless **rows** where you'll see streets and streets where businesses have **gone out of business** because there's so many **homeless people** on the streets.

25. We've had some **major high-profile wins**

like the Hollywood strike
and I think what **tipped**
that one is that the actors
got involved.

26. So it was the writers
that went first and then
finally the actors **tipped it**
into a win for them.

27. I hadn't actually
realized that the unions
were **rallying** in this way
in the United States.

28. In the United Kingdom we don't have a **nationalized** rail Network anymore. It was sold under Margaret Thatcher to private companies, the understanding being that the **competitiveness** of the market would make sure that services would be as good as they can be.

29. The train companies similar to the water companies and other ones, basically **their bottom line** was the most important thing and so the **shareholders** got their **profits** and not enough money was being **invested** in the the train networks.

30. I think it's normal that societies **flip** from one side to the other. There's always a **backlash** no matter what direction you're going.

31. Their focus is on making sure that the **shareholders** get their big **dividends** you know and that the **company directors** get their

bonuses. I'm sorry but
the idea that
competition results in
the best service for
customers isn't always
true.

32. When companies,
their main objective is to
essentially **scrape profit**
out of the whole
enterprise.

33. [you see] large
companies doing a round
of **layoffs** and you see
their **stock surge**.
Something is **out of**
whack.

34. That's the biggest
shift that we've seen and
it'll be really interesting to
see what **Gen Z** does,
because this **translates**
down in the US to a new

generation of workers
entering the workforce
that never really went to
the office.

They're **working from
home** because they
graduated into the
pandemic and they're
asking for for more
money they're asking for
what **they're worth**.

35. Baby boomers, Gen X, millennials, Gen Z.

36. There's a shift from being **loyal to** a company and now being **loyal to** one's own career and oneself.

That's the shift I've seen on the individual level.

We don't stay at companies for a lifetime

and that was before the pandemic that had changed but that's even more **amplified** now.

37. There's a very sort of **fluid workforce** in terms of changing from one job to another maybe a bit more regularly but also in terms of location.

38. It forced everyone to **work from home** and

that's kind of **stuck with us** hasn't it.

39. It's really interesting and it's like **WFH work from home**, versus **WFA work from anywhere**.

I'm seeing a lot of people **in my circle** kind of taking their **laptops** and having a **well-paying full-time job** in tech **with**

benefits and everything
but taking the laptop.

40. Cities were kind of
coming back, they were
getting safer, they were
having **a boom** and now
they're having **a bust**.
They're becoming more
sparse. You don't see
people **downtown** as
much anymore on certain
days.

41. It makes me wonder how are things going to change within the US **demographically.**

42. Downtown areas become almost like a city **theme park.** They're places where you go for the day to have a shopping experience or something or a **leisure** experience rather than a

place that you go to do
your job.

43. I just **pulled a stat**
from Forbes that they're
saying now **as of June**
there was **50%**
occupancy in Midtown
Manhattan, like
downtown New York City
for the office buildings.

44. It might **be edging up**
to 60/65 now but the

question to me is, is it always going to be less than before or is it going to fully come back.

45. The **vendors**, those **lunch spots**, **delies** just don't have the business they need...

46. We saw people **relocate**. Did you see that in the UK? Did people buy second

homes or move out of
London?

47. We're seeing **second tier, third tier** cities become more popular and this **collides with** the price of **the cost of living**. Even though New York City is **half empty** or **three quarters empty** it's still really expensive to live there. So people

are ... the **math is just not making sense for people anymore.**

48. They want a cheaper cost of living and that's another big **trend** like our **housing costs** are up 50% since 2019.

49. 50% oh my god and **and not to mention energy costs as well** because I don't know if in

the States it's the same
but in the UK there's
been a huge energy
crisis, even though the
energy companies
recorded record profits
where literally all the
consumers their energy
bills **doubled**, some
people just **couldn't**
afford to heat their
homes.

50. People who previously lived in cities are going out to more **rural** places. Then it's interesting what happens in those **rural** areas because in the States in the past there's been quite a large cultural **divide** between the sort of **metropolitan** side of things and the **rural** side of things.

Memory Exercise

Just try to put the target vocabulary back into the extracts from episode 868. Check the list above for the answers.

1. I've seen a number of
s_____s in our culture in
politics.

2. I'll just say it in two in
three words, **u_____s**
are hot.

3. A **u_____n** is an
organization that workers
for generally larger
companies can join.
Usually it's by choice.
You can join it, you
p_____y d_____s to this
union and they fight for
you.

4. We're in a **pro-l_____r**
moment which is kind of
rare for the US. Spelling:
L_____r (US) **L_____r**
(UK)

5. It's something we
haven't seen since I
guess you could say the
days of the **car b_____m**
in the **R_____t B_____t** of
the United States where

unions dominated car the
car world.

6. Detroit Michigan, the
whole Midwest was a
major car industry and
unions **d_____d** at
that time.

7. And then when we went
into the Reagan **e___a**
and the Bush **e___a** we
really went into more of a
big business **e___a**.

Unions were weak.

People didn't like unions.

8. People are still

s _____ **l**. I'm still

somewhat **s** _____ **l** of

unions as well depending

on what's going on but I

think overall this is a

positive thing because

people in the US are able

to negotiate for

r_____s. UK: p____y

r_____s

9. I mean there's been very high-profile events that have gone on like the Hollywood **s_____e**, the writers' **s_____e**.

10. So it's a

c_____e

b_____g thing

where usually there's a president of the union

and they will at certain times when things aren't right for you as a worker they will **g**____ **to b**____ **t** **f**____ **r you** and negotiate for **r**_____**s**, negotiate for **t**_____**e o**____ things like that.

Also: wages & salaries,
healthcare benefits,
retirement benefits,
working hours, workplace
safety, job security -

protections against
layoffs or redundancies,
grievance procedures,
training

11. You mentioned the
car m_____g
industry which in the US
was such an important
industry.

12. You're talking about
the **m_____g**
center of the country

13. In the UK ... the unions were **a huge presence** in the country especially in the 1970s when things really **came to a head**, where the unions really had a lot of power and they were really **p_____g their f_____t d_____n** and negotiating hard with the government, especially **the steel i_____y**

and **the c_____l**

m_____s.

14. Okay so we've moved

i___ p_____l

politically somewhat.

15. Thatcher fought hard

with the unions and

almost **o_____d**

the union movement in

the UK and she changed

the country. She

l_____d the

economy. We moved
away from a
m_____g
based economy and
towards a **financial**
s_____s based
economy.

16. Bill Clinton who
actually **made some**
conservative
l_____g moves

even though he was a
Democrat.

17. We're now seeing the
result of this more
conservative
e_____y.

18. We've had a lot of
b_____s being
created in the last 20
years due to this but
we've also got a lot of
p_____y in the US.

19. Poverty is a
r_____e t_____m,
right? I have to be careful
using that word. It's
different around the
world.

20. The result is that
workers have fewer
r_____s.

21. Exactly, less
b_____g power
than they used to.

22. These days you talk about you know the the 1% or the 0.1% where something like 99% of **the wealth**, 99% of of all of the **money and capital** and **ownership** is in the hands of 1% of the nation then you know that's not a very healthy situation.

23. We're seeing this
s_____ **e o**____ **t** now and
so we're seeing a
massive increase in
h_____ **s**.

24. In cities like Phoenix
Arizona there's entire
homeless **rows** where
you'll see streets and
streets where businesses
have **g**_____ **e o**____ **t**
of b_____ **s**

because there's so many
h_____ **s people**
on the streets.

25. We've had some
major
h_____ **h-p**_____ **e**
w_____ **s** ike the
Hollywood strike and I
think what **t**_____ **d**
that one is that the actors
got involved.

26. So it was the writers
that went first and then
finally the actors
t_____d it into a
w_____n for them.

27. I hadn't actually
realized that the unions
were **r_____g** in
this way in the United
States

28. In the United Kingdom
we don't have a a

n _____ **d** rail

Network anymore. It was

sold under Margaret

Thatcher to private

companies, the

understanding being that

the **c** _____ **s**

of the market would

make sure that services

would be as good as they

can be.

29. The train companies
similar to the water
companies and other
ones, basically **their**
b_____ **m** **l**_____ **e**
was the most important
thing and so the
s_____ **s** got
their **p**_____ **s** and
not enough money was
being **i**_____ **d** in
the the train networks.

30. I think it's normal that societies **f_____p** from one side to the other.

There's always **a**

b_____h no matter what direction you're going.

31. Their focus is on making sure that the

s_____s get

their big

d_____s you

know and that the
company

d_____ **s** get their

b_____ **s**. I'm sorry

but the idea that

c_____ **n** results

in the best service for

customers isn't always

true.

32. When companies,
their main objective is to
essentially **s**_____ **e**

profit out of the whole

e _____ e.

33. [you see] large
companies doing a round
of **l** _____ **s** and you
see their **s** _____ **k**
s _____ **e**. Something
is **o** _____ **t** of **w** _____ **k**.

34. That's the biggest
s _____ **t** that we've
seen and it'll be really
interesting to see what

Gen Z does, because
this **t**_____ **s**
d_____ **n** in the US to a
new generation of
workers entering the
workforce that never
really went to the office.
They're **w**_____ **g**
f_____ **m** **h**_____ **e**
because they graduated
into the pandemic and
they're asking for for
more money they're

asking for what **they're**
w_____ **h**.

35. Baby boomers, Gen
X, millennials, Gen z

36. There's a shift from
being **I**_____ **I to** a
company and now being
I_____ **I to** one's
own career and oneself.
That's the shift I've seen
on the individual level.
We don't stay at

companies for a lifetime
and that was before the
pandemic that had
changed but that's even
more **a**_____ **d**
now.

37. There's a very sort of
f_____ **d**
w_____ **e** in terms
of changing from one job
to another maybe a bit

more regularly but also in
terms of location.

38. It forced everyone to

w_____k f_____m

h_____e and that's

kind of **s_____k with**

us hasn't it.

39. It's really interesting

and it's like WFH

w_____k f_____m

h_____e, versus WFA

w_____k f_____m

a_____ **e**. I'm
seeing a lot of people **in**
my c_____ **e** kind of
taking their **l**_____ **s**
and having a **well-paying**
full-time job in tech **with**
b_____ **s**
everything but taking the
laptop.

40. Cities were kind of
c_____ **g b**_____ **k**,
they were **getting**

s_____**r**, they were
having **a b**_____**m** and
now they're having **a**
b_____**t**. They're
becoming more
s_____**e**. You don't
see people
d_____**n** as
much anymore on certain
days.

41. It makes me wonder
how are things going to

change within the US

d_____ **y**.

42. Downtown areas

become almost like a city

t_____ **e p**_____ **k**.

They're places where you
go for the day to have a
shopping experience or
something or a

l_____ **e** experience

rather than a place that
you go to do your job.

43. I just I **p_____d a**
s_____t from Forbes that
they're saying now **a___**
o___ June there was **50%**
o_____y in
Midtown Manhattan, like
downtown New York City
for the office buildings.

44. It might **be**
e_____g up to 60/65
now but the question to
me is is it always going to

be less than before or is
it going to fully come
back.

45. The **v**_____ **s**,
those **lunch s**_____ **s**,
delies just don't have the
business they need.

46. We saw people
r_____ **e**. Did you
see that in the UK? Did
people buy second

homes or move out of
London?

47. We're seeing **second**

t_____r, third t_____r

cities become more
popular and this

c_____s with the

price of **the c_____t of**

l_____g. Even though

New York City is

h_____f-e_____y or

t_____e

q_____s empty it's
still really expensive to
live there. So people are
... the m_____h is just
not m_____g
s_____e for people
anymore.

48. They want a cheaper
cost of living and that's
another big t_____d
like our h_____g

costs are up 50% since
2019.

49. 50% oh my god and
and **not to mention**
energy costs as well
because I don't know if in
the States it's the same
but in the UK there's
been a huge energy
crisis, even though the
energy companies
r_____d

r_____d profits

where literally all the
consumers their energy
bills **d_____d**, some
people just **c_____t**
a_____d to heat
their homes.

50. People who previously
lived in cities are going
out to more **r_____l**
places. Then it's
interesting what happens

in those r_____l areas
because in the Dtates in
the past there's been
quite a large cultural
d_____e between the
sort of
m_____n side
of things and the
r_____l side of things.

Discussion Questions

These discussion questions are designed to help you practise your speaking and to use the vocabulary which came up in this episode.

They ask you to discuss the topics which Lindsay and I talked about.

But, they are quite difficult questions to answer! They

require quite a lot of knowledge of the subject. Nevertheless, you can try to answer these questions. It can really help you to use the vocabulary in this episode. Don't worry if you struggle to give full answers though. Just try to use the vocabulary in meaningful ways. Feel

**free to skip any questions
that you don't really want
to answer.**

**Say your answers out
loud, with your voice.
Don't just write them.**

1. How have you noticed
shifts in our culture
impacting politics?

2. What are your thoughts
on the recent surge in
interest in unions? Do you

believe unions are becoming more influential in today's society?

3. Can you explain the concept of a union and its role in advocating for workers' rights?

4. Why do you think there's currently a pro-labor sentiment in the US, and how does it compare to previous eras?

5. Reflecting on history, how did unions influence the car industry during the Rust Belt era?

6. In what ways did political leadership in the US, such as Reagan and Bush, affect the strength of unions?

7. Share your thoughts on the benefits and drawbacks of union membership. Are

you personally supportive
of unions?

8. How do collective
bargaining and negotiation
contribute to improving
workers' conditions?

9. Discuss the significance
of high-profile strikes, like
the Hollywood and writers'
strikes, in shaping labor
movements.

10. How has the shift from a manufacturing to a service-based economy impacted workers' rights and income distribution?

11. What are the implications of wealth inequality and its effect on labor rights and social stability?

12. How do homelessness and economic disparity

reflect broader societal issues related to labor and wealth distribution?

13. What role did actors play in influencing the outcome of the Hollywood strike, and why was their involvement significant?

14. In what ways have changes in transportation infrastructure, such as privatization of rail

networks, affected workers
and consumers?

15. Do you agree that
societal changes often
result in a pendulum swing
between different
ideologies? Why or why
not?

16. How does the pursuit of
profit by corporations
sometimes conflict with the

interests of workers and consumers?

17. Discuss the impact of remote work on the dynamics of the labor market and individual career choices.

18. How has the pandemic accelerated trends of remote work and altered perceptions of loyalty to employers?

19. Reflect on the implications of a more transient workforce in terms of job stability and geographic mobility.

20. What are the economic and social consequences of urban depopulation and the rise of remote work?