



933. The Best Expressions in English are from Shakespeare 📝 Learn English Vocabulary

Hello everyone, welcome back to Luke's English Podcast, a podcast for learners of English.

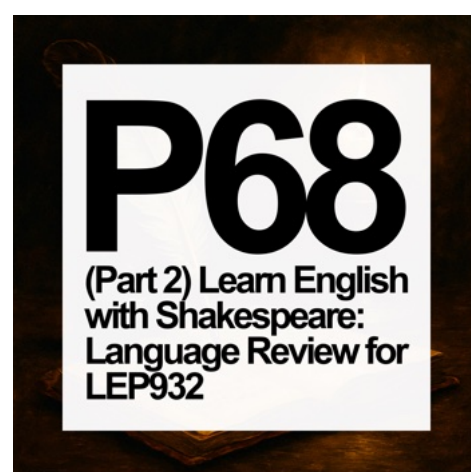
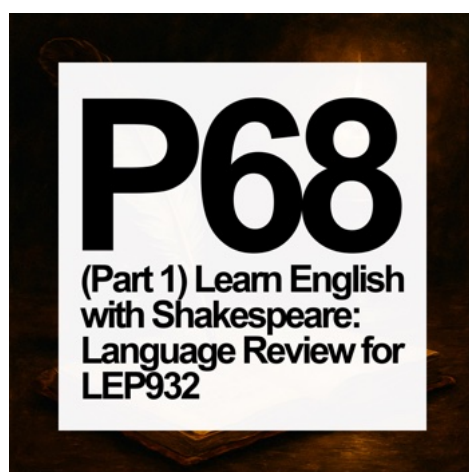
In this episode, we are continuing the Shakespeare theme, following on from the previous episode which was that conversation with my mum and dad about Shakespeare's life and work.

Have you heard that? It's episode 932. *What's so great about Shakespeare?*



If you have ever wondered why people think Shakespeare is so great, or what Hamlet is all about, then that episode is for you. It should be a decent introduction to Shakespeare.

People seemed to like the episode. There were some lovely comments on it from listeners. Thank you for commenting. I am very happy so many people enjoyed it, and yes, I am very lucky to have parents like that.



By the way, I have done a full language review for that conversation - two episodes in which I look at a lot of the specific

words and phrases that my parents used during the conversation, and I break it all down - explaining things, giving more examples, pointing out specific meanings and other important details - so you can really learn to speak English like my parents, if you want.

That's two episodes of LEP Premium - the first two parts of premium series P68. You can get those episodes by becoming a premium subscriber. Link in the description.

Learn English Expressions with Shakespeare

In this episode, I'm going to teach you some English with William Shakespeare.

You're going to get some very useful, natural and lovely phrases that people use all the time these days, which originally came into English through the work of Shakespeare.

We'll also explore Shakespeare's work a bit too, as we look at which plays these expressions came from.

To show you what I mean, I'm now going to give you some samples of English in a variety of situations.

- A football manager doing a TV interview
- An expert talking about the future of AI
- A news report about a natural disaster
- Your friend describing a crazy thing that happened to her
- Your English teacher talking about how to network in English
- Some friends talking about a rollercoaster ride they went on at a theme park
- Two people on a date

You'll hear various words and phrases in each situation. Listen carefully.

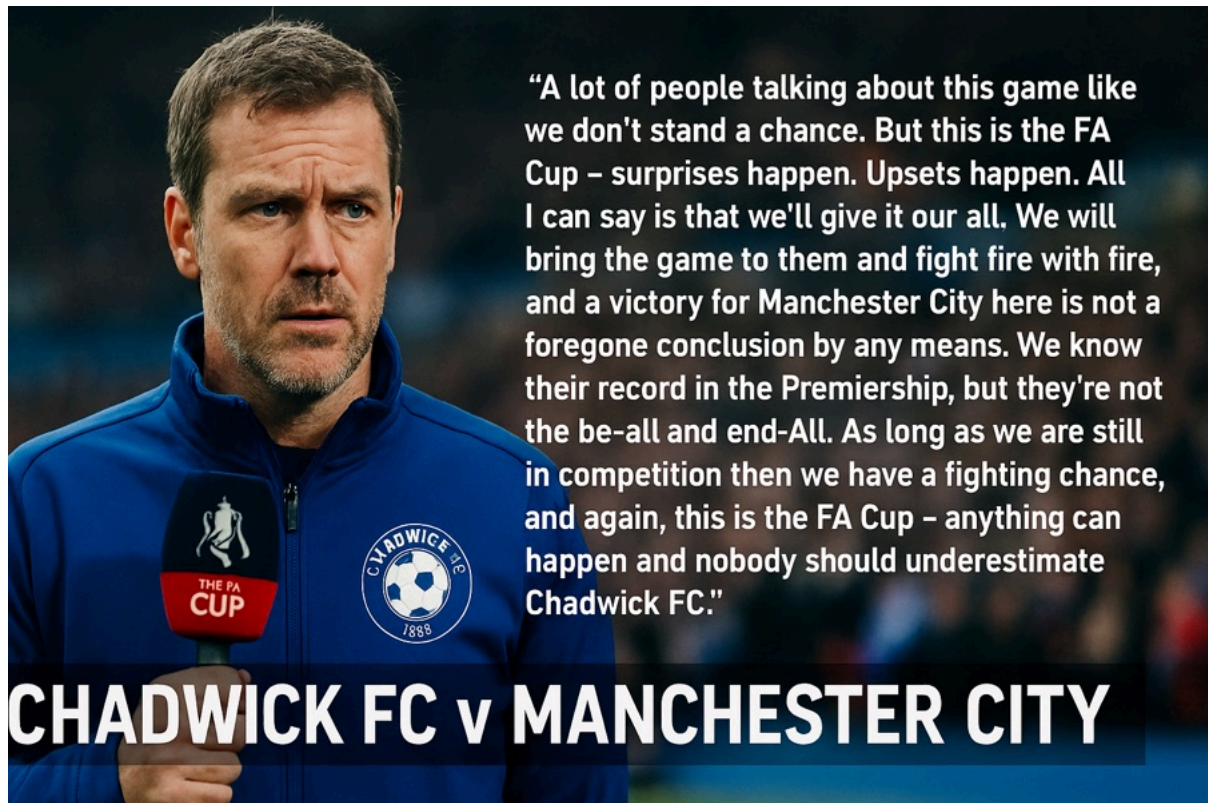
Which bits of vocabulary (phrases, expressions, idioms) here do you think are from Shakespeare?

There are 12 expressions from Shakespeare by the way - and a few other nice bits of vocabulary in fact.

1. A football manager is talking to the press about his team's upcoming game against Manchester City in the FA Cup.

His team is very small (Chadwick FC - you've probably never heard of them) and so they are definitely the underdog team.

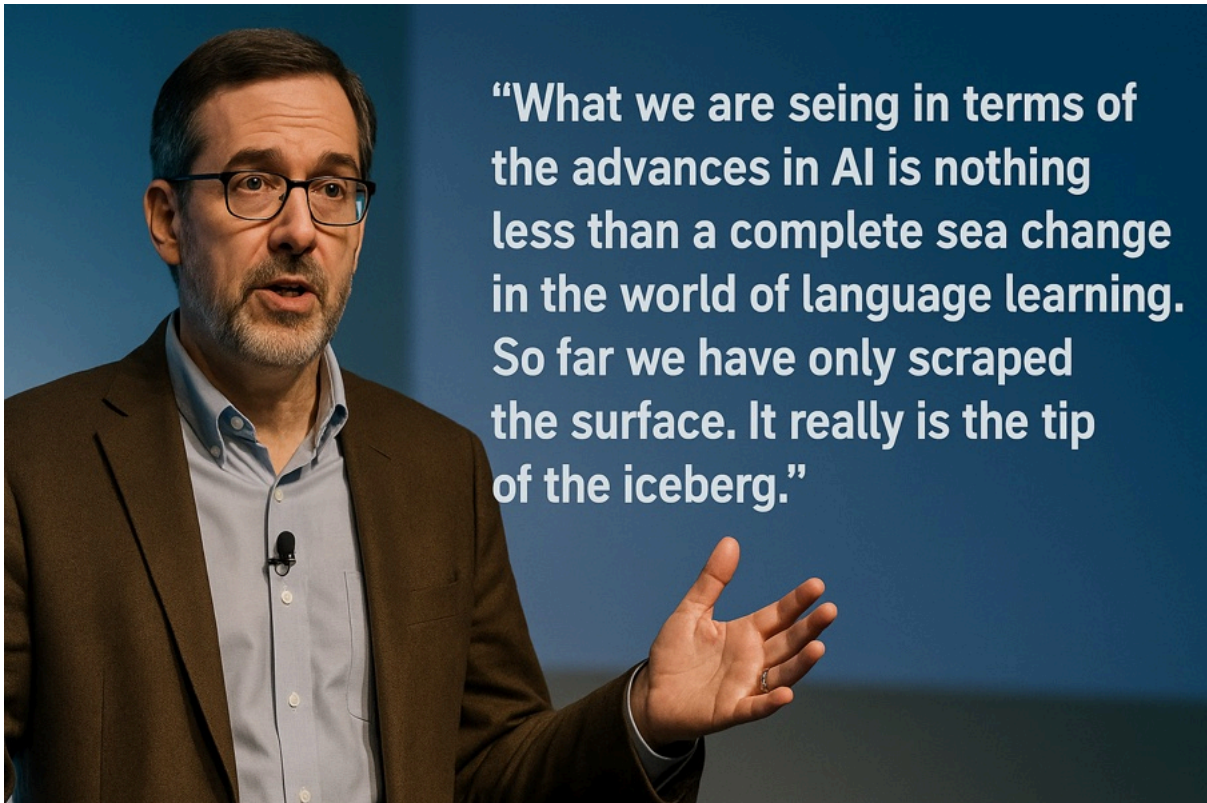
Interviewer: So, Dave Smith, manager of Chadwick FC. Big game next week. FA Cup semi-final. You're up against the great Manchester City? This is **a tall order** for Chadwick, isn't it?



Dave Smith: A lot of people talking about this game like we don't stand a chance. But this is the FA Cup. Surprises happen. Upsets happen. All I can say is that we'll give it our all. We will bring the game to them. We know what we are up against. We know they are strong, but we will fight fire with fire, and a victory for Manchester City here is not a foregone conclusion by any means. We know their record in the Premiership, but they're not the be-all and end-all. As long as we are still in this competition then we have a fighting chance, and again, this is the FA Cup - anything can happen and nobody should underestimate Chadwick FC."

They lost 5-0 by the way.

2. A linguistics expert is giving a talk about the future of AI and language learning.



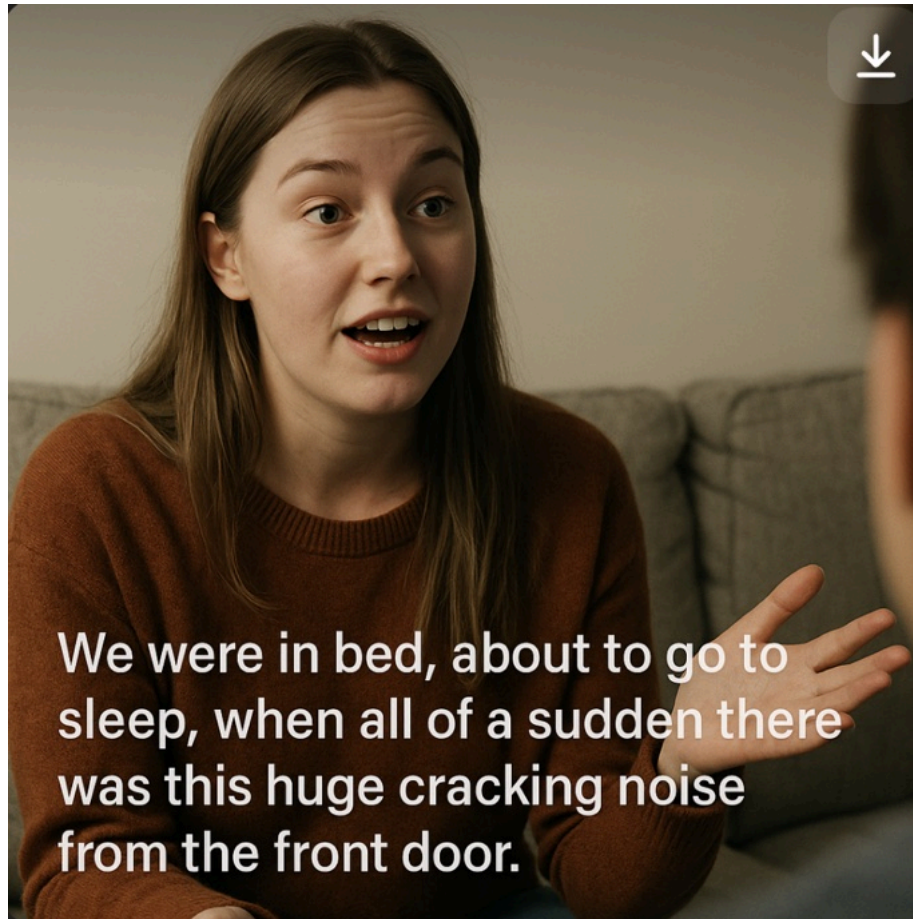
“What we are seeing in terms of the advances in AI is nothing less than a complete sea change in the world of language learning. So far we have only scraped the surface. It really is the tip of the iceberg.”

3. A reporter gives a news update from a town which has been severely damaged by a flood.



“Residents are describing Willow-Upon-Thames this afternoon as a very sorry sight indeed, after flood damage has made many of the homes here uninhabitable, the roads impassable and the town centre completely cut off from almost all modes of transport, except boats, and helicopters.”

4. Your friend is telling you a story about a robbery



“We were in bed, about to go to sleep, when all of a sudden there was this huge cracking noise from the front door.”

They continue...



“But as luck would have it, Jeremy had just installed an alarm, like, literally a couple of days before, but hadn’t put up the stickers on the door so it wasn’t obvious. So, as soon as they forced the door open, the alarm went off, and the security camera got a photo of all their faces. The police managed to find and arrest all the robbers in one fell swoop.”

5. Your English teacher is giving a lesson about social English in a networking situation at work.



“One of the most important things to do at the start of a meeting is to find a way to break the ice, and to get the ball rolling.”

6. You’re describing a rollercoaster ride you went on, at a theme park during a holiday.



“Oh my god it was insane! I tell you, it’s not for the faint of heart this ride, but it is awesome!”

7. A news reader is giving details of the death of a celebrity.



“The star of the Impossible Journey films was found dead in his Hollywood home yesterday afternoon. Police do not suspect foul play at this time.”

8. You're talking to an ex-girlfriend in a cafe who you haven't seen for a long time.



“Isn't it funny? This is exactly where we first met each other. So much has changed, but here we are again.” “I know” you say “It's like we've come full circle.”

Which expressions in there do you think were from Shakespeare then?

Here they are 🙌

1. A foregone conclusion
2. A sea change
3. A sorry sight
4. All of a sudden
5. As luck would have it
6. In one fell swoop
7. The be-all and end-all
8. To break the ice
9. Faint hearted / Not for the faint of heart
10. Fair play / Foul play
11. To fight fire with fire
12. To come full circle

I'll be going through all those things in proper detail in a moment.

In fact that set of phrases is part of a longer list that I've put together that also includes these expressions, which I will be covering in another episode or two later - in LEP Premium.

Have you ever heard these phrases before? (if not - good, it means there's a gap in your English which I can fill)

<ul style="list-style-type: none">● for goodness sake● good riddance● in your heart of hearts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● set your teeth on edge● to vanish into thin air● a wild goose chase
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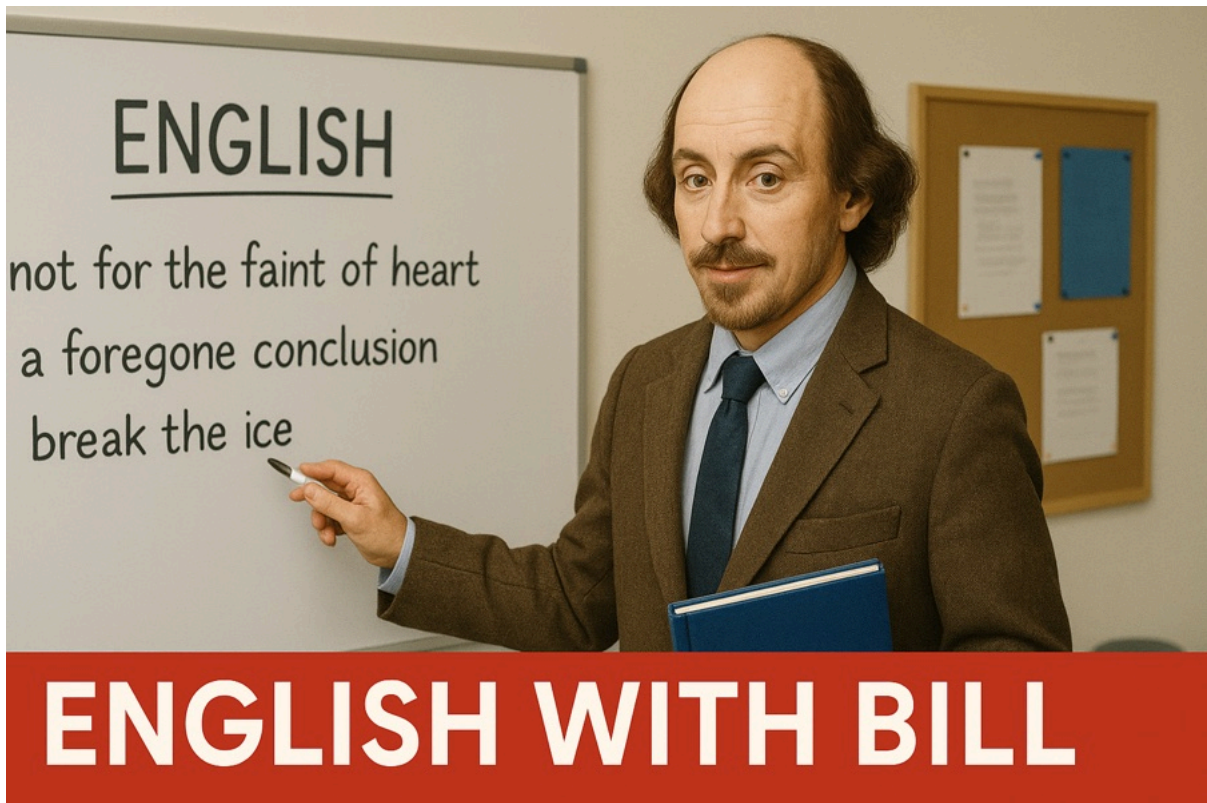
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● to your heart's content● heart of gold● high time● hot-blooded● to not sleep one wink● in a pickle● in stitches● lie low● make your hair stand on end	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● the world is my oyster● come what may● too much of a good thing● a laughing stock● send someone packing● there's method in my madness● to have seen better days
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Expressions from Shakespeare

What I'm trying to do here is to show you the ways that Shakespeare brought so much colour and richness to English by adding lots of idioms and expressions to the language.

We're looking at some of these expressions, and my aim is to help you start using them yourself, expanding your range of vocabulary, and along the way we will learn what the expressions really mean, I will give loads of examples so you get the full nuances and also we will briefly explore which plays they come from.

I think if Shakespeare was an English teacher with a YouTube channel (definitely called **English with Bill**, by the way) I think this is definitely the vocabulary he would teach.



Like I said in the last episode - these idioms and expressions from Shakespeare are some of the best ones that we have in English, in my opinion.

This is because they are rich in imagery and emotion. They capture universal human experiences. They are often quite musical and poetic - they just sound nice. They've stood the test of time, and they connect us to culture, history, and identity. This is why the best idioms are from Shakespeare - because they just have a certain quality to them.

Most of what Shakespeare wrote is still old-fashioned language (but not these idioms)

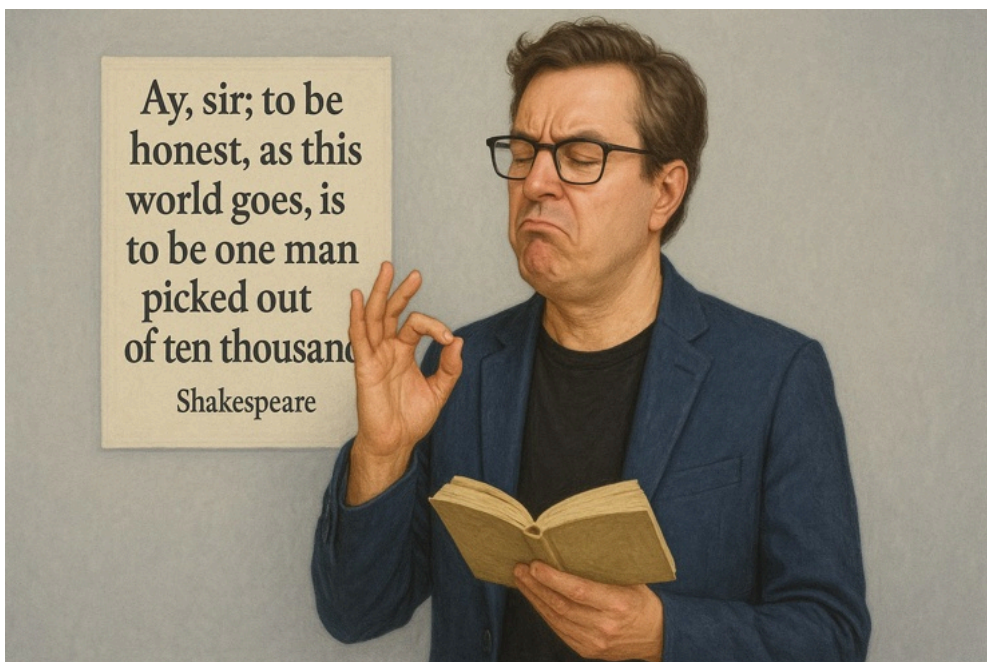
I do want to make a couple of things really clear.

1. Shakespeare's English is quite old fashioned, but not these expressions, because these ones have stood the test of time.
2. I'm talking about common expressions and not quotes or "sayings"

Let me expand on those things for a moment.

Firstly, it's not the case that **every single word** Shakespeare wrote is now a phrase that's used in everyday English.

Just randomly quoting from Shakespeare when you talk would probably make you sound quite pretentious and old fashioned.



Also, most people probably don't know they are quoting from Shakespeare when they use these phrases (which they do).

A lot of us say these things every day, without even realising that they come from Shakespeare's work.

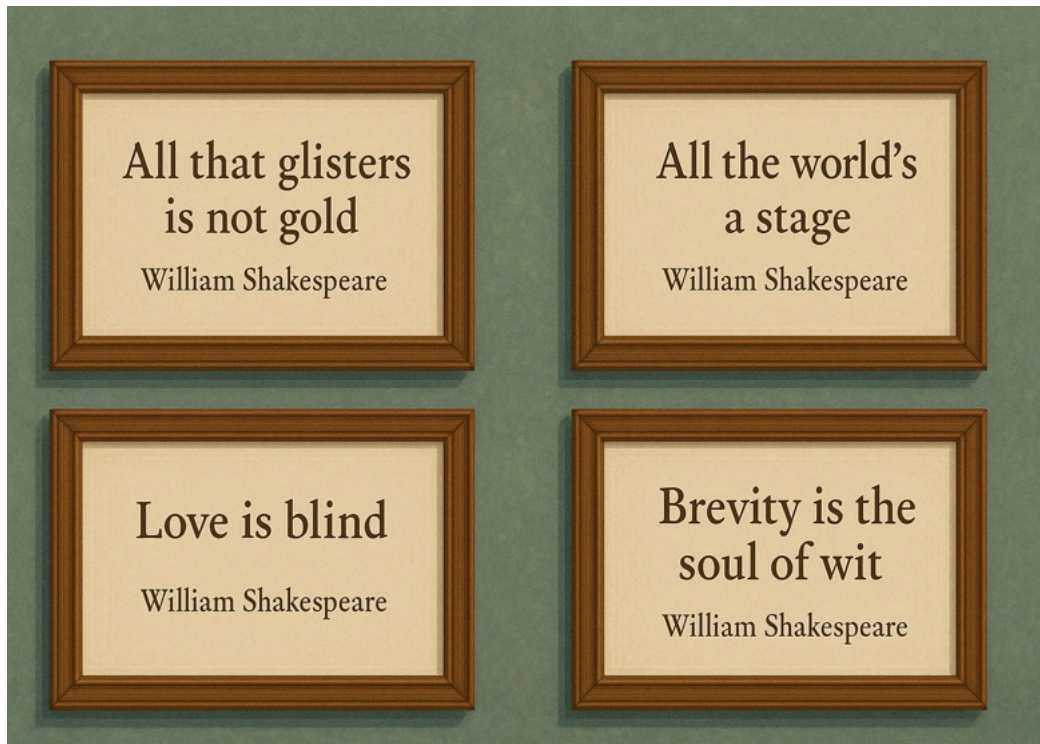


“Thou art welcome” ~Bill Shakespeare

So I’m not talking about quoting lines directly from Shakespeare’s plays. I am just talking about those specific phrases that are part of our common language today.

And the other distinction I want to make is that I’m not talking about the “sayings” that we have which came from Shakespeare.

These are specific lines or quotes which we repeat in order to convey some piece of wisdom or universal knowledge, like “Well, you know, it’s as they say - all the world’s a stage” or “Well, ‘all’s well that ends well’ I suppose” or “Well, like the saying goes ‘All that glitters/glitters is not gold’”.



There is definitely loads of wisdom in Shakespeare, and quotes like these reflect that..

But still, this episode is not about “sayings” which reflect the wisdom of Shakespeare.

What we are looking at is short phrases or idioms which we still use as part of our normal everyday communication, which very neatly express certain ideas or concepts, which have a certain depth, quality to them and which most people probably don't even realise were introduced by Shakespeare.

Let's have a look at some of these expressions, where they come from (which play, which scene), what they mean and plenty of examples.

Download the PDF for this episode free. It contains all the notes I am reading from and a full transcript. There will also be some

memory exercises, a vocabulary quiz and a list of discussion questions for speaking practice. Link in the description.



I have a list of more than 30 expressions here, which is too many for one episode. So, I'll go through about 10 of them here (or at least I will go for about an hour and we'll see how many we can cover), and then I will deal with the rest in some other episodes which I will publish in the premium version of my podcast.

If you want to get those other episodes too, plus the rest of the “Learn English with Shakespeare” series (including the language review episodes for LEP932) sign up for LEP Premium - www.teacherluke.co.uk/premium

A screenshot of the Luke's English Podcast website's premium page. The page has a dark blue background. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'What is LEP Premium?', 'Ask Me Anything', 'Gift a Subscription', 'Login', and a red 'Subscribe Now' button. The main heading reads 'Boost your English. Support Luke. Become a Premium Listener!'. Below this, there is a paragraph of text describing the premium content. To the right, there is a graphic for 'Luke's ENGLISH Podcast W6 REAL BRITISH ENGLISH LEP PREMIUM'. At the bottom left, there are social media icons and a 'Listen on:' label. A 'More...' link is visible at the bottom right of the text area.

That's where I publish regular extra episodes every month, and it's not just bonus content, it includes fully-crafted lessons on vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation, with PDF worksheets and video versions.

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1. A Foregone Conclusion



The result of this climbing competition was not a foregone conclusion, because the climbers had very similar skill levels and so we had no idea who the winner would be.

Example Sentences

"A victory for Manchester City here is not a foregone conclusion by any means" Dave Smith, Chadwick FC manager.

The jury's decision was a foregone conclusion after the overwhelming evidence presented in court.

We knew exactly what the jury would decide. It was obvious. The evidence that the defendant was guilty was overwhelming. The verdict was a foregone conclusion.

Definition

An inevitable or predetermined outcome.

When you know exactly what is going to happen because it is obvious or has been decided already.

This is particularly for things like contests, matches, elections, decisions by a court, or anything else that can be predicted. If it seems obvious what is going to happen, it's a foregone conclusion, as if we've already decided what will happen.

Shakespearean Origin:

"But this denoted a foregone conclusion."

— *Othello*, Act 3, Scene 3

Context in the Play:

Othello, deceived by Iago, believes Desdemona has been unfaithful.

When Iago suggests that Cassio has been seen with Desdemona's handkerchief, Othello declares it a "foregone conclusion," meaning he has already decided she is guilty, even without proof.

Modern Uses

- **Politics:** Election outcomes in heavily one-sided regions, or where the election is obviously fixed.
"The result seems to be a foregone conclusion."
"It's not a foregone conclusion by any means."

- **Sports:** A team so dominant that their victory seems inevitable.
“The result of the FA Cup match between Manchester City and Wycombe Wanderers seemed to be a foregone conclusion, but that was before one of the biggest surprises in FA Cup history took place this Saturday afternoon which saw City plunge out of the cup in the second round, and Wanderers celebrate the biggest win in recent memory.”
- **Personal Life:** When someone assumes the worst in a relationship before knowing the full story.
“What do you think? Is she cheating? It’s a foregone conclusion as far as I’m concerned.”

Further Examples:

- "Given his connections, his promotion was a foregone conclusion."
“Who’s going to get the job?” “Well, it’s a foregone conclusion, isn’t it?”
- "The outcome of the debate was a foregone conclusion—she had all the facts on her side."

YouGlish examples

https://YouGlish.com/pronounce/foregone_conclusion/english/uk

Discussion Questions

- ★ Can you think of a recent election that was a foregone conclusion?
- ★ How about the result of a sports match?

2. A Sea Change



Example Sentences

“What we are seeing in terms of the advances in AI is nothing less than a complete sea change in the world of language learning.”

The introduction of AI in the workplace has brought a sea change in how businesses operate.

Definition

A profound transformation. A big change, a bit like the way the sea or ocean can shift on a huge scale, or the way the epic power of the sea can change things - eroding and reshaping the land, changing anything that it touches.

It's an evocative image, suggesting a deep, profound and long-lasting change.

Shakespearean Origin

Origin:

<https://nosweatshakespeare.com/quotes/famous/sea-change/>

“Sea change” is a phrase in a Shakespeare play with the most beautiful of Shakespeare’s poetry. It’s from a song sung by Ariel in *The Tempest*.

First a bit of background about *The Tempest*, which is one of Shakespeare’s most mysterious plays.

In a nutshell, the story of *The Tempest* centers on Prospero, the rightful Duke of Milan, who was betrayed by his ambitious brother Antonio and exiled to a remote island with his young daughter Miranda.

Years later, Prospero, now a powerful sorcerer thanks to the island's spirits and his extensive studies, conjures a violent tempest (storm) that shipwrecks his enemies – including Antonio, King Alonso of Naples, and Alonso's son Ferdinand – onto the very island he inhabits.

Over the course of the play, Prospero orchestrates a series of magical events and encounters to take revenge on his enemies, test their sense of morality, and ultimately decide their futures.

Love blossoms between Miranda and Ferdinand, various comedic and treacherous plots unfold involving the shipwrecked nobles (royal people) and the island's inhabitants (like the monstrous Caliban and the airy spirit Ariel), and Prospero grapples with the consequences of his power and his desire for revenge.

So, it's a tale of a wronged duke using magic to confront his past and ultimately choosing a path of redemption.

In this particular scene, where the phrase “sea change” occurs, the spirit Ariel (not the Little Mermaid) sings to Ferdinand, about his father who was shipwrecked, and fell into the sea.

*“Full fathom five thy father lies,
Of his bones are coral made,
Those are pearls that were his eyes,
Nothing of him that doth fade,
But doth suffer a sea change,
into something rich and strange,
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell,
Ding-dong.
Hark! now I hear them, ding-dong, bell.”*

She's lying to him - suggesting that his father drowned, which is not actually true.

Let me explain that (because Shakespeare is a bit impenetrable, but when things are explained, the beauty is revealed)

“Full fathom five thy father lies,”

"Full fathom five": A fathom is a unit of depth in water, equal to six feet. So, "full fathom five" means thirty feet deep. This immediately establishes the father's supposed drowning and his location at the bottom of the sea.

“Of his bones are coral made,”

"Of his bones are coral made": This is a poetic and imaginative transformation. Instead of decaying, the father's bones have metamorphosed into coral, a beautiful and intricate underwater formation. This suggests a peaceful and natural integration into the marine environment.

“Those are pearls that were his eyes,”

"Those are pearls that were his eyes": Continuing the theme of transformation, the father's eyes are now envisioned as precious

pearls. This imagery evokes beauty and value arising from what was once a vital part of a living being.

"Nothing of him that doth fade,"

"Nothing of him that doth fade": This line contradicts the natural process of decomposition. It suggests that the father's essence has not diminished or decayed but has instead been transformed into something enduring.

"But doth suffer a sea change,"

"But doth suffer a sea change": This is the key line explaining the unusual transformations described. "Sea change" refers to a profound and mysterious transformation brought about by the sea. It implies a complete alteration of form and substance.

"into something rich and strange,"

"into something rich and strange": This describes the result of the "sea change." The father's remains have become something valuable ("rich") and unfamiliar or wondrous ("strange"), moving beyond the realm of ordinary human existence.

"Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell,"

"Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell": Sea-nymphs are mythical female spirits of the sea. A "knell" is the slow, solemn ringing of a bell, typically announcing a death or funeral. The image of sea-nymphs constantly ringing a bell for the father emphasizes the finality of his supposed demise and adds a mystical, mournful quality.

"Ding-dong."

"Ding-dong": This is the onomatopoeic sound of the bell being rung, bringing the image to life and making it more immediate and sensory for Ferdinand.

"Hark! now I hear them, ding-dong, bell."

"Hark!": An archaic word meaning "listen!" or "pay attention!" This draws Ferdinand's attention to the sound.

"Now I hear them, ding-dong, bell": This reinforces the auditory experience, making Ferdinand (and the audience) believe in the ongoing, melancholic ringing of the sea-nymphs' bell, solidifying the illusion of his father's watery grave.

In essence, these lines paint a fantastical picture of death by drowning, where the body undergoes a beautiful and otherworldly transformation rather than simple decay. The imagery is both sorrowful and strangely comforting, designed to affect Ferdinand deeply and set the stage for Prospero's further manipulations.

Context in the play and meaning

Source:

<https://nosweatshakespeare.com/quotes/famous/sea-change/>

The meaning of "sea change" has evolved into something much more than its original meaning, which referred to something being literally changed by the sea – something like the polishing of beach pebbles, turning them from their original state into something smooth and beautiful.

Modern Applications

- **Technology:** The shift from traditional media to digital platforms.

“We’ve seen a sea change in the way people consume content.”

- **Culture:** Changes in societal attitudes, such as acceptance of remote work.

“COVID-19 brought about a sea change in the way we live and work.”

- **Personal Life:** A person undergoing a major lifestyle shift after a life event.

“She’s been through a bit of a sea change over the last couple of years.”

Further Examples

- "After traveling the world, she underwent a sea change in her perspective on life."
- "The company’s leadership saw a sea change after the merger."

YouGlish examples

https://YouGlish.com/pronounce/sea_change/english/uk

Discussion Questions

- ★ What events in recent memory have caused a sea change in your opinion?
- ★ What technological developments have brought about a sea change?

There has been a sea change in...

This represented a sea change in...

3. A Sorry Sight



Example Sentence

Residents are describing Willow-Upon-Thames this afternoon as a very sorry sight indeed, after flood damage has made many of the homes here uninhabitable.

After the storm, the town was a sorry sight, with trees uprooted and buildings damaged.

You're a sorry sight! What happened to you?

Definition:

A pitiful, unpleasant, or regrettable thing to see.

Shakespearean Origin:

"This is a sorry sight."

— *Macbeth*, Act 2, Scene 2

Context in the Play:

Macbeth says this after murdering King Duncan, looking at his blood-stained hands, realizing the gravity of his crime.

Modern Uses

- **Politics:** A failed government project.
“The new business park which was once hailed as the biggest development outside of London is now a sorry sight since funding dried up.”
- **Sports:** A once-great team in decline.
“Once one of the best teams in the UK, Chadwick FC are a sorry sight these days.”
- **Personal Life:** A neglected home or exhausted worker.
“You’re a sorry sight!” - someone soaking wet from rain
“Gosh, this place is a sorry sight, isn’t it?” - a very untidy and dirty room

Further Examples:

- "The abandoned amusement park was a sorry sight."
- "He looked a sorry sight after pulling an all-nighter."

YouGlish examples

https://YouGlish.com/pronounce/%22sorry_sight%22/english

Discussion Question:

- ★ Have you ever been a sorry sight? What happened to you?
- ★ Are there any places near you which are a sorry sight? What happened to them?

That is the end of part 1

But this PDF is not finished. There's more below.

Overview of contents of the rest of this PDF

1. Lists of vocabulary in this episode
2. Vocabulary exercises: A memory test, and a vocabulary quiz
3. A list of discussion questions for speaking practice
4. A full transcript of this episode



"Thou art welcome" ~Bill Shakespeare

1. Lists of vocabulary in this episode

Below you will see lists of the vocabulary from the episode. I covered items 1-3 in proper detail. I also talked about the other expressions a little bit, so I will include them in the vocabulary exercises. There were also some other bits of vocabulary (not from Shakespeare but still useful) which I explained at the end of the episode. I've included them in the vocabulary exercises too.

Expressions from Shakespeare in this episode

1. A foregone conclusion

2. A sea change

3. A sorry sight

👉 covered in detail in this episode

👈 not covered in detail in this episode, but still mentioned

4. All of a sudden

5. As luck would have it

6. In one fell swoop

7. The be-all and end-all

8. To break the ice

9. Faint hearted / Not for the faint of heart

10. Fair play / Foul play

11. To fight fire with fire

12. To come full circle

Other expressions used in the situations near the beginning of the episode

- We **don't stand a chance** (of winning) = We have no chance (of winning) / We definitely will not win.
- **Upsets** happen = unexpected things which cause problems
- we'll **give it our all** = we will try our best with maximum effort
- We will **bring the game to them** = we will attack and try to dominate the other team
- We know what we are **up against** = facing, being challenged by
- we have a **fighting chance** = a chance of winning if we fight
- nobody should **underestimate** Chadwick FC = to think that Chadwick FC is bad when in reality they're better than that
- So far we have only **scraped the surface** = we have only seen small surface-level details
- It really is the **tip of the iceberg** = a small part of something much larger, which we can't see
- **flood** damage has made many of the homes here **uninhabitable** = flood (an excess of water), uninhabitable (can't be lived in)
- the roads **impassable** = you can't pass through that road
- the town centre completely **cut off** from almost all **modes of transport**
- to **get the ball rolling** = to get things started, to get people talking, to create momentum or movement in a situation

2. Vocabulary exercises: A Vocabulary Quiz and a Memory Exercise to do later

Vocabulary Quiz

This quiz contains vocabulary which came up in this episode, and which is listed in point 1 above.

You will find an answer key below.



Vocabulary Quiz: Expressions and Idioms

◆ Part 1: Multiple Choice (Choose the best meaning)

1. **“A foregone conclusion”** means:
 - a) A decision made on the spot
 - b) A result that is certain before it happens
 - c) Something that can't be decided
 - d) An unexpected event

2. **“All of a sudden”** means:
 - a) Slowly and gradually
 - b) Without warning or preparation
 - c) After a long time
 - d) With no effort

3. **“Not for the faint of heart”** means:
 - a) A suitable challenge for everyone
 - b) Only for brave or strong people
 - c) Something peaceful and relaxing
 - d) Best avoided by confident people

4. **“To come full circle”** suggests:
- a) Getting stuck in a loop
 - b) Moving forward without looking back
 - c) Returning to the original point or situation
 - d) Making little progress
5. **“A sea change”** is:
- a) A minor adjustment
 - b) A big, noticeable change
 - c) A change in the weather
 - d) A wave-related event
-

◆ **Part 2: Fill in the Blank**

6. When the town flooded, many homes became _____ and the roads were _____.
Hint: two words: one means "not livable", the other "you can't use them"
7. We need to _____ if we want to get this project moving.
(Hint: a phrase meaning "to start")
8. The manager said, “_____ we have only scratched the surface of what this team can do.”
(Hint: an idiom meaning "we've only seen a small part")
9. “We know what we are _____,” said the captain.
(Hint: to be aware of the tough challenge ahead)
10. “They may look weak, but _____ Chadwick FC,” warned the coach.

(Hint: don't think they're worse than they are)

◆ **Part 3: Match the Expression to the Meaning**

Expressions	Meanings
A sorry sight	a) Trying your best, maximum effort
The tip of the iceberg	b) Something sad or pitiful to look at
The be-all and end-all	c) Starting conversations or easing tension
To break the ice	d) The most important thing, above all else
We'll give it our all	e) A small part of something much larger, often hidden

◆ **Part 4: Choose the Correct Phrase**

11. Which phrase means "to retaliate with the same methods"?
- a) To fight water with fire
 - b) To come full circle
 - c) To fight fire with fire
 - d) To break the ice
12. Choose the phrase that means "everything happened at once":
- a) In one fell swoop
 - b) As luck would have it
 - c) A sea change

d) A sorry sight

13. Which one fits best?

“The town centre is now _____ from the rest of the region.”

a) broken away

b) cut off

c) passed through

d) backed out

14. “We’re not the favourites, but we _____ of winning.”

a) have a fighting chance

b) make it up

c) do it all of a sudden

d) break the ice

15. “_____, the rain stopped just before the match began.”

a) In one fell swoop

b) As luck would have it

c) A sorry sight

d) Foul play

Vocabulary Quiz - Answers

◆ Part 1: Multiple Choice (Vocabulary Quiz - Answers)

1. **b)** A result that is certain before it happens

2. **b)** Without warning or preparation

3. **b)** Only for brave or strong people
 4. **c)** Returning to the original point or situation
 5. **b)** A big, noticeable change
-

◆ **Part 2: Fill in the Blank** (Vocabulary Quiz - Answers)

6. **uninhabitable**
impassable
 7. **get the ball rolling**
 8. **So far**
 9. **up against**
 10. **nobody should underestimate**
-

◆ **Part 3: Match the Expression to the Meaning** (Vocabulary Quiz - Answers)

Expressions	Meanings
A sorry sight (b)	b) Something sad or pitiful to look at
The tip of the iceberg (e)	e) A small part of something much larger, often hidden

The be-all and end-all (d) **d)** The most important thing, above all else

To break the ice (c) **c)** Starting conversations or easing tension

We'll give it our all (a) **a)** Trying your best, maximum effort

◆ **Part 4: Choose the Correct Phrase** (Vocabulary Quiz - Answers)

11. **c)** To fight fire with fire
12. **a)** In one fell swoop
13. **b)** cut off
14. **a)** have a fighting chance
15. **b)** As luck would have it

Memory Exercise

Just try to complete the example sentences from the episode.

1. A lot of people talk about this game like we don't s_____ a
c_____.
2. But this is the FA Cup. Surprises happen. U_____ happen.

3. All I can say is that we'll g_____ it our a_____. We will b_____ the game to them. We know what we are u_____ a_____.
4. We know they are strong, but we will fight f_____ with f_____, and a victory for Manchester City here is not a f_____ c_____ by any means.
5. We know their record in the Premiership, but they're not the b_____ and e_____.
6. As long as we are still in this competition then we have a f_____ c_____.
7. What we are seeing in terms of the advances in AI is nothing less than a complete s_____ c_____ in the world of language learning.
8. So far we have only s_____ the s_____. It really is the t_____ of the i_____.
9. Residents are describing Willow-Upon-Thames this afternoon as a very s_____ s_____ indeed, after flood damage has made many of the homes here u_____, the roads i_____ and the town centre completely cut off from almost all modes of transport
10. We were in bed, about to go to sleep, when a_____ o_____ a s_____ there was this huge cracking noise from the front door.
11. But a_____ l_____ w_____ have it, Jeremy had just installed an alarm, like, literally a couple of days before.
12. The police managed to find and arrest all the robbers in o_____ f_____ s_____.
13. One of the most important things to do at the start of a meeting is to find a way to b_____ the i_____, and to g_____ the b_____ r_____.
14. Oh my god it was insane! I tell you, it's n_____ for the f_____ of h_____ this ride, but it is awesome!

15. The star of the Impossible Journey films was found dead in his Hollywood home yesterday afternoon. Police do not suspect f_____ p_____ at this time.
16. "Isn't it funny? This is exactly where we first met each other. So much has changed, but here we are again." "I know" you say "It's like we've c_____ f_____ c_____."

Memory Exercise - Answers

1. A lot of people talk about this game like we don't stand a chance.
2. But this is the FA Cup. Surprises happen. Upsets happen.
3. All I can say is that we'll give it our all. We will bring the game to them. We know what we are up against.
4. We know they are strong, but we will fight fire with fire, and a victory for Manchester City here is not a foregone conclusion by any means.
5. We know their record in the Premiership, but they're not the be-all and end-all.
6. As long as we are still in this competition then we have a fighting chance
7. What we are seeing in terms of the advances in AI is nothing less than a complete sea change in the world of language learning.
8. So far we have only scraped the surface. It really is the tip of the iceberg.
9. Residents are describing Willow-Upon-Thames this afternoon as a very sorry sight indeed, after flood damage has made many of the homes here uninhabitable, the roads impassable and the town centre completely cut off from almost all modes of transport
10. We were in bed, about to go to sleep, when all of a sudden there was this huge cracking noise from the front door.

11. But as luck would have it, Jeremy had just installed an alarm, like, literally a couple of days before.
 12. The police managed to find and arrest all the robbers in one fell swoop.
 13. One of the most important things to do at the start of a meeting is to find a way to break the ice, and to get the ball rolling.
 14. Oh my god it was insane! I tell you, it's not for the faint of heart this ride, but it is awesome!
 15. The star of the Impossible Journey films was found dead in his Hollywood home yesterday afternoon. Police do not suspect foul play at this time.
 16. "Isn't it funny? This is exactly where we first met each other. So much has changed, but here we are again." "I know" you say "It's like we've come full circle."
-

3. Discussion Questions for Speaking Practice

Of course! Here's a set of **fun and interesting discussion questions** based on each expression you gave me. These are designed to help your learners **practise using them naturally, talk about themselves, and share personal experiences**:

A foregone conclusion

- Have you ever entered a competition or situation where the result felt like a foregone conclusion? What happened?
- Can you think of a movie or story where the ending was a foregone conclusion? Did it spoil your enjoyment or not?

A sea change

- Has there ever been a sea change in your life, such as a new

job, a move, or a change in attitude? What caused it?

- If you could create a sea change in society today, what would you change?

A sorry sight

- When was the last time you saw a real sorry sight — something messy, broken, or sad? What was it?
- Have you ever been a sorry sight yourself? (For example, after a party, during an illness, etc.!))

All of a sudden

- Tell us about a time when something surprising happened all of a sudden. How did you react?
- Do you prefer surprises that happen all of a sudden or situations where you have time to prepare?

As luck would have it

- Have you ever experienced a stroke of good or bad luck where you thought, "As luck would have it..."? Tell the story!
- Do you believe more in luck or in making your own opportunities?

In one fell swoop

- Have you ever managed to finish a big task in one fell swoop? How did you do it?
- Would you rather deal with problems one by one or tackle them all in one fell swoop? Why?

The be-all and end-all

- When you were a child, what was the be-all and end-all for you? (A toy, a dream, a hobby?)
- Is there anything today that you think is treated as the be-all and end-all in society — but maybe shouldn't be?

To break the ice

- What are some good ways you've found to break the ice when meeting new people?
- Can you describe a situation where someone broke the ice really well (or really badly)?

Faint-hearted / Not for the faint of heart

- Have you ever done something that was **not for the faint of heart**? (An extreme sport, a scary movie, a difficult challenge?)
- Is there anything you *wish* you could do, but it's a bit too much for the faint-hearted?

Fair play / Foul play

- Have you ever witnessed fair play or foul play in real life — for example, in sports, school, or work? What happened?
- If someone gets ahead using foul play, do you think they eventually get caught, or not? Why?

To fight fire with fire

- Have you ever had to fight fire with fire — to respond aggressively to someone else's aggression? How did it turn out?
- Do you think it's better to fight fire with fire or to stay calm and peaceful? Can you think of examples?

To come full circle

- Have you ever come full circle in any part of your life — returning to something you had once left behind?
- Do you think people's dreams or careers often come full circle? Why or why not?

4. A full transcript of this episode

This PDF was generated with the help of AI. It should be completely correct, but if you find any errors, please let me know luketeacher@hotmail.com

933. The Best English Expressions are from Shakespeare / Learn English Vocabulary - Transcript

[Jingle]

You're listening to Luke's English Podcast. For more information, visit www.teacherluke.co.uk

[Luke]

Hello listeners, welcome back to Luke's English Podcast.

How are you doing today? I hope you're doing fine and that you're ready for some more listening practice and also to give your

vocabulary a bit of a boost with this episode. I've been preparing this one for ages, just no end of preparation for this one.

Lots of time spent getting everything ready, but now it's time to actually record, so here we are, here we go. This episode is going to be quite similar to a premium episode, actually, just because, you know, premium episodes, in premium episodes I always teach you vocab in detail. There's a fully prepared PDF with a script and loads of vocab notes and also exercises, discussion questions, memory tests and stuff, so I've done a similar thing with this one.

Even though this is a free episode, it's going to feel a bit like a premium episode, so if you've ever wondered what LEP premium is like, it's a bit like this, to an extent. I also do pronunciation episodes in premium, but anyway, this is a bit like the kinds of episodes I do in LEP premium. I think it's time to get started.

Let me have a sip of water from my Luke's English Podcast mug. Audio listeners, you can't see this, but I'm drinking from a lovely mug with the logo of Luke's English Podcast on it, which you can get if you want. They're available in the Luke's English Podcast merch store, www.teacherluke.co.uk/merch

Okay, link in the description. Yes, I have to remember, put a link to the merch store in the description. Have to remember that.

The other thing I have to remember to do is to drink some water in 30 minutes, so I've started a 30 minute timer. Right. Let's have a look at the PDF now.

I'm going to go to the PDF. This is what I'm going to be using to record the episode. The PDF is available for you to download.

You'll find a link in the description for it. Okay, so let's start doing that in 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Here we go.

This should be episode number 933 called the best expressions in English are from Shakespeare slash learn English vocabulary. Hello everyone. Welcome back to Luke's English Podcast, a podcast for learners of English.

In this episode, we're continuing the Shakespeare theme following on from the previous episode, which was that conversation with my mum and dad about Shakespeare's life and work. Have you heard that? It's episode number 932.

What's so great about Shakespeare? If you've ever wondered why people think Shakespeare is so great or what Hamlet is all about, then that episode is for you. It should be a decent introduction to Shakespeare.

People seem to like the episode. The people who've listened to it seem to like it. There were some lovely comments on it from listeners.

Thank you for commenting. If you did, I'm very happy that so many people enjoyed it. And yes, I am very lucky to have parents like that.

By the way, I've done a full language review for that conversation, two episodes in which I look at a lot of the specific words and phrases that my parents used during the conversation. And I break it all down, explaining things, giving more examples, pointing out specific meanings and other important details. So you can really learn to speak English like my parents if you want.

So that's two episodes of LEP Premium, the first two parts of Premium Series P68, available now. You can get those episodes by becoming a Premium subscriber, link in the description. Right, so learn English expressions with Shakespeare.

That's the idea. In this episode, I'm going to teach you some English with William Shakespeare. And you're going to get some very useful, natural and lovely phrases that people use all the time these days, which originally came into English through the work of Shakespeare.

We'll also explore Shakespeare's work a bit too, as we look at which place these expressions come from. So in terms of expressions, to show you what I mean, I'm now going to give you some samples of English in a variety of situations. So I'm just going to read some read out some samples of English to you from situations like these.

So a football manager doing a TV interview, an expert talking about the future of AI, a news report about a natural disaster, your friend describing a crazy thing that happened to her, your English teacher talking about how to network in English, some friends talking about a roller coaster ride they went on at a theme park. A roller coaster, that's like a crazy, exciting ride that you would go on at a theme park like Disneyland. I've described roller coasters in the past as crazy danger trains, I think.

It's kind of like a train that goes that does loops and spins around and goes really fast. So anyway, some friends talking about a roller coaster ride they went on at a theme park, and two people on a date. So I'm going to read these little extracts of English from those situations now, and you'll hear various words and phrases in each situation.

So listen carefully. Here's a question. Which bits of vocabulary, so which phrases or expressions or idioms here do you think are from Shakespeare?

Okay, right. So there are 12 expressions from Shakespeare, by the way, and a few other nice bits of vocabulary, in fact, that you could also learn. But can you spot 12 expressions that came from Shakespeare?

Right, so the first one is a football manager is talking to the press about his team's upcoming game against Manchester City in the FA Cup. So this football manager, his team is very small, they're called Chadwick FC. You've probably never heard of them, because they don't exist, because I just made them up.

So Chadwick FC, a very small team. And so they are definitely the underdog team, right, meaning that they're the smaller team, who nobody expects to win. It's them this tiny little team, Chadwick FC versus the giant Manchester City.

So Dave Smith is the manager of Chadwick FC, and he's being interviewed on a sports programme. So the interviewer says, " Dave Smith, manager of Chadwick FC, big game next week, FA Cup semi-final, you're up against the great Manchester City. This is a tall order for Chadwick, isn't it?

And Dave says, well, a lot of people are talking about this game, like we don't stand a chance. But this is the FA Cup, surprises happen, upsets happen. All I can say is that we'll give it our all.

We'll bring the game to them and fight fire with fire. And a victory for Manchester City here is not a foregone conclusion by any

means. We know their record in the Premiership, but they're not the be all and end all.

As long as we're still in the competition, then we have a fighting chance. And again, this is the FA Cup, anything can happen. And nobody should underestimate Chadwick FC.

In the end, they lost 5-0. But anyway, so that's that. Next situation is, and by the way, I'll explain this stuff.

I'm going to break these things down. I'm going to point out which expressions are from Shakespeare in each of these things. Okay.

The second one, second situation is a linguistics expert is giving a talk about the future of AI and language learning. And this is what he says. He says, what we are seeing in terms of the advances in AI is nothing less than a complete sea change in the world of language learning.

So far, we've only scraped the surface. It really is the tip of the iceberg. Okay, so talking about big changes in language learning, thanks to the development of AI.

Third situation, a reporter gives a news update from a town which has been severely damaged by a flood. So flood is when let's say a river, there's so much rain, that a river breaks, it bursts its banks, and all the water flows beyond the banks of the river, maybe into a nearby town, and the town gets flooded, right? That's a flood.

So there's too much water, and the water is in people's homes, and it's damaging all the properties. So a reporter, a news reporter, is giving an update from a town which has been severely damaged by a flood. Here it is.

Residents are describing Willow-upon-Thames this afternoon as a very sorry sight indeed, after flood damage has made many of the homes here uninhabitable, the roads impassable, and the town centre completely cut off from almost all modes of transport except boats and helicopters. Okay, so where was the Shakespearean expression in there? I will give you the answer in a moment, just bear with me.

The next situation is your friend telling you a story about a robbery. So your friend's home was robbed, some thieves broke into the home and burgled it, robbed it, okay? And this is your friend talking about it.

So she says this, so we were in bed about to go to sleep when all of a sudden there was this huge cracking noise from the front door, like that. And then she continues, but as luck would have it, Jeremy had just installed an alarm, like literally a couple of days before, but hadn't put up the stickers on the door so it wasn't obvious. So as soon as they forced the door open, the alarm went off and the security camera got a photo of all their faces, and the police managed to find and arrest all the robbers in one fell swoop.

That's your friend describing this robbery where the police, thanks to the footage from the security camera, they caught the robbers and arrested them in one fell swoop. The fifth situation, your English teacher is giving a lesson about social English in a networking situation at work. So your English teacher is talking about, so how do we network in a business situation?

What kind of social English can we learn and what should we be doing in order to communicate effectively in this situation? And she says, one of the most important things to do at the start of a

meeting is to find a way to break the ice and to get the ball rolling. Okay, and you're probably thinking, I know Luke, it's break the ice.

Another person, no, it's get the ball rolling. Could be both, could be just one. We'll see in a moment.

Next, you're describing a roller coaster ride you went on at a theme park during a holiday, a very exciting crazy danger train, which is, you know, that's basically what a roller coaster is, isn't it? Anyway, so you say, oh my God, it was insane. I tell you, it's not for the faint of heart, this ride, but it is awesome.

Have you ever been on a really exciting roller coaster? That's what that was about. Number seven is a newsreader giving details of a death.

It's the death of a celebrity. So a movie, a famous movie star has died and the newsreader is reading the report about it. And he says, the star of the Impossible Journey films was found dead in his Hollywood home yesterday afternoon.

Police do not suspect foul play at this time. So the star of the, the Impossible Journey films. Yeah, not Mission Impossible.

No, no, no, no, no. The Impossible Journey films. The star of the Impossible Journey films was found dead in his Hollywood home yesterday afternoon.

Police do not suspect foul play at this time. Number eight, you're talking to an ex-girlfriend in a cafe who you haven't seen for a long time. And you say, isn't it funny?

This is exactly where we first met each other. So much has

changed, but here we are again. You say to your ex-girlfriend.

Yes. In the same cafe where you first met each other. Isn't it funny?

This is exactly where we first met each other. So much has changed, but here we are again. And the girl, or I don't know who's the other person says, yeah, I know.

It's like we've come full circle, isn't it? Okay. So which expressions in there do you think were from Shakespeare then?

Well, here they are. So it was a foregone conclusion, a sea change, a sorry sight, all of a sudden, as luck would have it, in one fell swoop, the be all and end all, to break the ice, faint hearted or not for the faint of heart, foul play, to fight fire with fire and to come full circle. So I'll be going through all of those things in proper detail in this episode in a moment.

In fact, that set of phrases is part of a longer list that I've put together that also includes these expressions, uh, which I'm about to list now, which I will be covering in another episode or two later in LEP premium. So I'll be doing like the first 10 or something, uh, items in the list, the ones I've just dealt with, and then more, uh, in later episodes. Have you ever heard these phrases before?

If not good, because it means that there's a gap in your English, which I can fill. So these other ones are things like this for goodness sake, uh, to set your teeth on edge, good riddance to vanish into thin air in your heart of hearts to go on a wild goose chase to your heart's content. The world is my oyster, a heart of gold.

Come what may high time too much of a good thing, hot blooded,

a laughing stock to not sleep one wink, to send someone packing, to be in a pickle, to say there's method in my madness, to be in stitches, to lie low, to make your hair stand on end and to have seen better days. So what I'm trying to do here is to show you the ways that Shakespeare brought so much colour and richness to English by adding lots of idioms and expressions to the language. So we're looking at some of these expressions.

And my aim is to help you start using them yourself, expanding your range of vocabulary. And along the way, we'll learn what the expressions really mean. I'll give you loads of examples so you can get the full nuances of their use.

And also we will briefly explore the plays they come from. I think if Shakespeare was an English teacher on YouTube, right, if he was an English teacher with a YouTube channel, which would definitely be called English with Bill, by the way, I mean, it would, wouldn't it? If Shakespeare was an English teacher today and he was on YouTube, I don't know, maybe not.

Maybe he would come up with something more original than English with Bill. But anyway, let's say if Shakespeare was an English teacher with a YouTube channel or a podcast, then I think this is definitely the vocabulary he would teach, right? On English with Bill.

So like I said in the last episode, these idioms and expressions from Shakespeare are some of the best ones that we have in English, in my opinion. This is because they're rich in imagery and emotion. They capture universal experiences, universal human experiences.

They're often quite musical and poetic, just the way that they

sound. They just sound nice. They've stood the test of time and they connect us to culture, history and identity.

This is why the best idioms are from Shakespeare, because they just have a certain quality to them. Now, I do want to make a couple of things really clear at this point, though. So first thing is this.

Shakespeare's English is quite old fashioned. You'll know that if you read any of his work and we'll see some examples. So Shakespeare's English is quite old fashioned, but not these expressions, because these ones have stood the test of time.

These are the ones that we use every day, right? So these ones aren't old fashioned. And also I'm talking about common expressions and I'm not talking about quotes from Shakespeare like to be or not to be or sayings from Shakespeare like all's well that ends well, right?

So I'm not talking about those sorts of things. So let me just expand on that for a moment. Firstly, it is not the case that every single word Shakespeare wrote is now a phrase that's used in everyday English, right?

So just randomly quoting from Shakespeare when you talk would probably make you sound quite pretentious and old fashioned, right? So if someone said to you, oh, you're very honest, aren't you? And you say, aye, sir, to be honest, as this world goes is to be one man picked out of 10,000.

And people would just think you sound a bit pretentious if you do that. So I'm not just saying that everything from Shakespeare can be applied to modern English. It's not the case.

Also, most people probably don't know they're quoting from Shakespeare when they use these phrases, which they do. I mean, they do a lot. A lot of us say these things every day without even realising they come from Shakespeare's work.

So people will just be having a chat or just going about their business using English on a daily basis, possibly using a lot of phrases that originally came from Shakespeare's work without even realising it. And you can imagine like a group of people having a chat. And then in the background, there's the ghost of William Shakespeare just standing there going, yeah, you're welcome, everyone.

Or in fact, he would probably say thou art welcome or something like that. Right. So I'm not talking about quoting lines directly from Shakespeare's plays.

I'm just talking about those specific phrases that are part of our common language today. And the other distinction I want to make is that I'm not talking about the sayings that we have, which come from Shakespeare. These are specific lines or quotes which we repeat in order to convey some piece of wisdom or universal knowledge.

Like, well, you know, it's as they say, all the world's a stage. Or, well, all's well that ends well, I suppose. Or, well, like the saying goes, all that glitters is not gold.

Although most of the time people say all that glitters is not gold. So I'm not talking about those things, those sorts of quotes that represent the wisdom of Shakespeare. Now, there is definitely loads of wisdom in Shakespeare and quotes like these reflect that.

But still, this episode is not about sayings which reflect the wisdom of Shakespeare. I'll say it again. What we're looking at is short phrases or idioms which we still use as part of our normal everyday communication, which very neatly express certain ideas or concepts which have a certain depth or quality to them and which most people probably don't even realise were introduced by Shakespeare.

So let's have a look at some of these expressions, where they came from, so which play, which scene, what they mean and plenty of examples. You can download the PDF for this episode free. It contains all the notes I'm reading from and a full transcript.

There will also be some memory exercises, a vocab quiz and a list of discussion questions for speaking practice. You'll find a link in the description. As I've said, I have a list of more than 30 expressions here, which is too many for one single episode.

So I'll go through about 10 of them here, I think, or at least I'll go for about an hour and we'll see how many we can cover. And then I'll deal with the rest in some other episodes which I'll publish in the premium version of my podcast. If you want to get those other episodes too, plus the rest of this Learn English with Shakespeare series, including the language review episodes that I talked about, sign up for lep premium www.teacherluke.co.uk/premium

Right. So that is where I publish regular extra episodes every month. And it's not just bonus content.

It includes fully crafted lessons on vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation with PDF worksheets and video versions. 200, over 200 episodes in the archive now, plus new ones every month. Link

in the description.

There you go. Right. So the first expression then is a foregone conclusion, a foregone conclusion.

So let's imagine a situation where you can imagine maybe a competition, right? There's going to be a competition. Let's say it's a sporting competition.

Let's say it's a rock climbing competition and you've got two people doing a competitive climb. They're racing up a wall and you're thinking who's going to win. Now you might say that the result of the competition is not a foregone conclusion.

It's not a foregone conclusion. Now, the reason that you would say that is because it's not obvious who's going to win. So the result of this climbing competition was not a foregone conclusion because the climbers had very similar skill levels.

And so we had no idea who the winner would be. Right. It was not a foregone conclusion.

So some more example sentences. The one I had before, a victory for Manchester City here is not a foregone conclusion by any means. That was Dave Smith, the Chadwick FC manager.

Another example, in a legal context, the jury's decision, the jury in a court case, the jury's decision was a foregone conclusion after the overwhelming evidence presented in court. So the evidence was so overwhelming. I mean, the evidence presented, let's say evidence to prove that the defendant murdered someone.

Right. The evidence presented by the lawyer was overwhelming.

There was too much of it.

And it was just too convincing. It was a foregone conclusion that the jury's verdict would be guilty. Right.

Because the evidence presented in court was overwhelming. There was so much of it. And it was so convincing.

Another example, we knew exactly what the jury would decide. It was obvious the evidence that the defendant was guilty was overwhelming. It was a foregone conclusion.

Yeah. The verdict was a foregone conclusion. OK, so the definition then, you know, unless you've already worked it out, because this is the best way to learn vocabulary, you get lots of examples and you look at the examples, look at the phrase in context and you basically work it out.

Right. But anyway, here's a definition. So an inevitable outcome or a predetermined outcome, an outcome is a thing that happens in the end.

So when you know exactly what's going to happen because it's obvious or because it's been decided already somehow, this is particularly for things like contests, matches, elections, decisions by a court or anything else that can be predicted in some way. If it seems obvious what's going to happen, it's a foregone conclusion as if we've already decided what will happen. It's not that we've planned for it to happen, but it's just obvious that that will be what happens.

Right. In terms of the origin of this, it's from Othello Act 3, Scene 3. The quote is, but this denoted a foregone conclusion.

So in the play Othello, I don't know if you're aware of it, but in the play, the character Othello is deceived by Iago. So Iago is lying to Othello and as a result, Othello believes that his wife or girlfriend Desdemona has been unfaithful. So Othello believes that Desdemona has been cheating on him or been unfaithful with someone else.

Right. So when Iago suggests that Cassio, this other guy, not the watch, it's nothing to do with watches. When Iago suggests that Cassio has been seen with Desdemona's handkerchief.

So Iago says to Othello, oh yeah, Cassio, I saw him with Desdemona's handkerchief. So when Iago says this, Othello declares it a foregone conclusion, meaning that he's already decided that she is guilty, even without proof. Well, it's a foregone conclusion then.

So in terms of modern uses, it could be in politics, in sports, in personal life, for example, in politics, election outcomes in heavily one sided regions or where the election is obviously fixed. So you think of an election. In some cases, it's just obvious who's going to win.

Maybe because in certain places, a certain political party just always wins because this part, maybe this area of the country or something, they always vote for one candidate or one party. So the result is always a foregone conclusion. Or we're talking about a situation where the election is fixed, meaning it's the result has been rigged, meaning that they're cheating, that they are fixing the outcome, fixing the votes.

And there's foul play going on. There's another bit of

Shakespearean English. There's cheating going on and the results are being manipulated through corruption.

So that would be the result of the election is a foregone conclusion or the result seems to be a foregone conclusion. Or you might say it's not a foregone conclusion by any means, which is often how it's used in the negative, as if to say there's still a chance for it's a way of saying anything can happen. You know, anything can happen in sports.

A team is so dominant that their victory seems inevitable. The result of the FA Cup match between Manchester City and Wickham Wanderers seemed to be a foregone conclusion. But that was before one of the biggest surprises in FA Cup history took place this Saturday afternoon, which saw City plunge out of the cup in the second round and Wanderers celebrate the biggest win in recent memory.

So it seems to be a foregone conclusion because you thought Manchester City versus Wickham Wanderers. Well, obviously, Man City are going to win. But, you know, in this case, it went the other way.

In personal life, you know, maybe when someone assumes the worst in a relationship before knowing the full story, for example, what do you think? Is she cheating? Well, it's a foregone conclusion as far as I'm concerned.

OK, and some more examples, you might say, talking about a job. So a job is available and you're wondering who is going to get the job or maybe someone you were hoping to get a job in the company, but someone else got the job. Maybe like the son of the boss of the company was given the job and you're like, well, and

you'd say, given his connections, his promotion was a foregone conclusion, given his connections, his promotion was a foregone conclusion.

So, well, who's going to get the job? Well, it's a foregone conclusion, isn't it? Of course, it's going to be him.

You know, he's the son of the boss. The outcome of the debate was a foregone conclusion. She had all the facts on her side.

So you just witnessed a debate in a debating society and you're waiting for the outcome, you're waiting for the judges or the audience to decide who won the debate. And you might think to yourself, well, it's a foregone conclusion. She clearly won the debate.

Now, examples, examples, examples. We always want examples. And especially, you know, when you're learning English and you come across phrases like this, you think to yourself, well, Luke, this is kind of new to me.

I've never come across this phrase before. I've noticed this in students, right? So I'll be teaching a class and I'll teach a piece of English, maybe a bit of vocabulary.

And the students in the class have never heard or encountered that expression before. And their reaction is to kind of go, hmm, I've never, never heard this one before. No, I don't, I don't think I'll, I don't think, no, I don't trust it.

No, thanks. Not today. Because they'd never heard the expression before, they somehow feel distrustful and unwilling to, to then learn it, which kind of think, well, wait a minute, this is the whole point,

isn't it?

You've come here to learn English from me. And yeah, you should be looking for the language that you've never heard before. It's just an interesting thing about human psychology.

But I've noticed it lots and lots of times. And it might happen with you, right? It might be something that happens with you when you come across new bits of language, especially when they are being taught to you by someone.

You might kind of think, no, no, I'm not so sure. Nah, you're all right. I think I'll just leave it.

Thanks. It's very tempting to do that. But the whole point here is that we're trying to help you broaden your range of vocabulary.

But there's something interesting about that. I'd love to explore that phenomenon a bit more, that psychological phenomenon of like, well, something unknown, therefore, I will just sort of ignore it. I'll survive without it.

Instead of kind of taking that step outside your comfort zone and kind of going, well, I'm not too sure about this, but yeah, okay. All right. I'll try and use it.

I'll try and use it. We'll see. I think it's always really important to try and look for real world examples of the vocab being used.

And then you start to be convinced. You start to think, oh, okay. All right.

Oh, wait a minute. So wait a minute. Everyone is using this.

It's not just this mad English teacher who, for some reason, has taken it upon himself to try and persuade me to use this phrase for some nefarious purpose. No, it's actually a phrase that everyone's using. And the reason that you've never heard it before is, well, perhaps just because you haven't spent enough time with the language, with English in a variety of contexts to expose yourself to all of these things.

Or because you're unfamiliar with the phrase, when you hear it, you filter it out. And what I mean by that is that when we're operating in a second language, especially when we are listening, because listening is like the ephemeral form of English, isn't it? It's very impermanent.

I mean, the words exist in the ether. You hear them, but as soon as they've been spoken, they're gone. It's not like when you're reading, the words are right there in permanent print in front of your very eyes.

And after you've read the line, you can go back and, oh, look, the word is still there. It's a lot more permanent and a lot more tangible. The spoken form of English is very intangible and ephemeral, meaning that, yeah, those words and phrases, as soon as they've been spoken, they kind of disappear.

And as a result of that, when someone is talking to you or when you're listening to something, you know, a film or a TED talk or whatever it is, and these bits of language pass you by, what you're doing when you're listening is normally you're trying to understand the bits that you understand, right? Maybe you understand 70, 80% of what you're listening to, and it's the bits that you understand. Maybe it's less.

It could be at times it drops down to even 25%, 30%. You're just like, oh, I think I get the general idea from the words that I'm understanding, but there are holes, there are gaps here in what I can actually identify. So, I think I understand.

I'll just survive until I understand a bit more. And I can back up to understanding 70% or 80%, but there was a bit there where I didn't really understand a lot of the things that were being said, but I'd sort of survived. Now, those bits that you don't really understand, they are invisible to you in a way.

It's not as if you can hear a passage that someone is saying, and you could identify every letter of every word and spell every word correctly as you're listening to it, you know. They're just noises. They're just sounds.

What I'm trying to say is that when you don't know a word or phrase, you don't really hear it either, right? Because you're not used to encountering it as a specific item of vocabulary, and it's just a noise to you until you've noticed it, kind of grabbed it, checked it, identified that it's a foregone conclusion, that that's three words, a foregone conclusion, six syllables, and you see it written down, ah, foregone, like f-o-r-g-o-n-e, a foregone conclusion. Right, okay, ah, this is a thing.

So this is a thing. And when you know it's a thing, in the future, you are much, much more likely to notice it again. In fact, if it's in your mind, and you're doing enough listening or reading, you'll suddenly start to notice the word more and more.

I've talked about this on the podcast previously. I talked with Amber about this a few years ago. There was a famous example of

the word, Hobson's Choice and gaslighting, as well.

We sort of discovered these words, or we talked about these words. The other one was the burlap sack from one of the mystery stories. Amber and I talked about these words and phrases, and then we went off and lived our lives, and we kept, we noticed that we kept coming across these words and phrases again and again and again.

And we would text each other, I found another burlap sack, or gas lighting again. It's that when you make yourself aware of certain phrases, then you start to notice them more and more and more. Okay, so what I'm saying is that, yeah, learning new vocabulary is quite a diverse process.

Part of it is accepting that new language is something that you have to kind of go out of your comfort zone to start using, but to make that process easier, you have to look for real world examples of it. And the more you notice it being used in the real world, the more you can, first of all, convince yourself, okay, this is a commonly used expression. And secondly, you start to notice the typical situations in which it's used, the sort of contexts in which it's used, and also you start to notice the grammatical way in which it's used as well.

For example, we say it's not a foregone conclusion. The result of this thing is not a foregone conclusion. Remember, this is from Shakespeare, so this does sound great.

You know, it sounds impressive to say, well, the result is not a foregone conclusion. You're talking about politics, you're talking about an election. What do you think is going to happen?

Well, it's not a foregone conclusion by any means. Ten points to you for doing that. Now, a way that you can search for real world examples of phrases is to use YouGlish, which you might well be aware of already.

It's a great website. Y-O-U-G-L-I-S-H. Like YouTube, but combined with English, you end up with YouGlish.

YouGlish.com. It's basically a way to search YouTube for samples of spoken English. So if we...

Hold on a sec. Let me just open the window. So if we look for examples of a foregone conclusion on YouGlish, this is what we find.

So let's have a look at this. So this is going to require a little bit of interpretation from me. So what YouGlish does, it gives you a number of different results that include, in this case, the expression foregone conclusion, and it puts them in a list, and you can skip between them.

It also gives you the subtitles underneath. So what we've discovered here is a video from the School of Life, a fantastic YouTube channel, which is all about sort of self-help. And it's about how to survive a loss of reputation.

So if you, let's say, you are someone who, let's say you're an English teacher on YouTube, and you make a video where you get something completely wrong, and you end up teaching English really badly, like you teach some bad spelling or bad grammar or something, and oh god, you know, the internet decides that you're an idiot. So your reputation has been damaged. You've lost your reputation as a great, trustworthy English teacher.

How do you survive that situation? That's what the video is about. And let's skip back a bit.

[School of Life]

Everything that depends on the minds of people in general is now impossible. What people might think disappears from the calculation. It's a foregone conclusion.

They'll think always that one is a demon.

[Luke]

So this is talking about the fact that if your reputation gets destroyed, then you become convinced that everyone will think you're terrible. So what people think of you becomes a foregone conclusion. You will just assume that they think you're a bad thing.

Okay, moving on. So okay, so we move on to another one, which is a TED Talk by Ben Goldacre, who is a scientist and a journalist, and he devotes a lot of his time and attention to battling bad science. Okay, misinformation in the world of science and fighting against it.

And he's talking about anti-psychotic drugs against schizophrenia. Let's see.

[Ben Goldacre]

But that's not the only way that you can rig your data. You can also rig your data by making the thing that you compare your new drug against really rubbish. You can give the competing drug in too low a dose so that people aren't properly treated.

You can give the competing drug in too high a dose so that people

get side effects. And this is exactly what happened with anti-psychotic medication for schizophrenia.

[Ben Goldacre]

20 years ago, a new generation of anti-psychotic drugs were brought in, and the promise was that they would have fewer side effects.

So people set about doing trials of these new drugs against the old drugs, but they gave the old drugs in ridiculously high doses, 20 milligrammes a day of haloperidol. And it's a foregone conclusion, if you give a drug at that higher dose, that it will have more side effects and that your new drug will look better.

[Luke]

So he's talking about a trial, a scientific test of some new anti-psychotic drugs against some old ones. A trial. Now the problem with these trials, scientific trials, is sometimes they are not objective.

And sometimes, let's say, pharmaceutical companies might be guilty of fixing the trial. So it makes their new medicine look much more effective compared to old medicines. But that's just because the way that they've done the test is not very reliable.

And the outcome has been predetermined by the way that the test was done. And so the outcome of this medical trial to test these drugs, the outcome of that becomes a foregone conclusion when you look at the way that the test was carried out. It's obviously a bad test, which is going to result in a certain result.

So the result in that context is a foregone conclusion. That's what he's talking about.

[Ben Goldacre]

That they would have fewer side effects. So people set about doing trials of these new drugs against the old drugs, but they gave the old drugs in ridiculously high doses, 20 milligrammes a day of haloperidol. And it's a foregone conclusion if you give a drug at that higher dose, that it will have more side effects and that your new drug will look better.

[Luke]

Right. Okay. We could go on with that, but we won't.

But there are more and more examples of a foregone conclusion. You can have a lot of fun with YouGlish. Another thing that's interesting about it is that you can hear people just using the expressions without really thinking about it.

You know, I mean, I'm thinking about it because I'm introducing them to you intentionally to help you learn them. But here you can just notice people just using them naturally. So you can actually hear how people pronounce these things, right?

The result is a foregone conclusion, a foregone conclusion, a foregone conclusion, foregone conclusion. So it's the first and fourth syllables across the phrase. Okay.

That's the sort of thing you should be looking for. Oh, my goodness. We've been going for how long?

And I've only, I'm still on the first item of vocab. Anyway, discussion questions. What?

So can you think of a recent election that was a foregone

conclusion? How about the result of a sports match? And with these discussion questions, the idea is that you just practise speaking, practise your speaking, give your answers to the questions and try to use the target vocab in your answer.

So you'd say, well, the result of the election in Fredonia was a was a foregone conclusion, mainly because the president of Fredonia always wins the election because there's only one party, because the president had all of the members of the opposition parties thrown in jail or killed. So, of course, whenever there's one of these fake elections, it's always a foregone conclusion that the president of the Freedom Party is going to win. You know, it's disgusting, isn't it?

How about the result of a sports match? Well, I don't know. England versus who?

Argentina. Well, it's obviously a foregone conclusion that England are going to win the game. Oh, I'm just really annoyed about, well, the entire planet, because, of course, that's not that's not what would happen.

Of course, Argentina are always going to usually going to be England, I would say. I don't know if it's a foregone conclusion, but I think England are the underdogs in that match. Let's say let's put it that way.

Next thing in the list is the expression a sea change, which is, again, a lovely expression, a sea change. So examples, the AI, the linguists talking about AI, what we're seeing in terms of the advances in AI is nothing less than a complete sea change in the world of language learning. Or another one, the introduction of AI in the workplace has brought a sea change in how businesses

operate.

So you've probably worked it out. A sea change is a profound transformation, a big change, a bit like the way the sea or the ocean can shift on a huge scale or the way the epic power of the sea can change things, eroding and reshaping the land, changing anything that it touches. So it's an evocative image, a sea change, suggesting a deep, profound and long lasting change.

Right. There's been a sea change in the way we live. There's been a sea change in the government's approach to the economy.

You know, the origin, the Shakespearean origin of this, a sea change is a phrase in a Shakespeare play with the most beautiful of Shakespeare's poetry. By the way, some of these notes I've, I should credit as being the origin of some of the comments about the origins I've taken from a website called No Sweat Shakespeare, which is a really useful website if you're studying Shakespeare's work. So in my research, I looked at No Sweat Shakespeare.

I looked at phrases.org and a few other websites that I'll be sort of referring to. So the origin of this information now is from nosweatshakespeare.com. So a sea change is a phrase in a Shakespeare play with the most beautiful of Shakespeare's poetry.

It's from a song sung by Ariel in The Tempest. So the play is The Tempest. The character is Ariel.

She's a spirit who sings a song. So first, a bit of background about The Tempest, which is one of Shakespeare's most mysterious plays. In a nutshell, the story of The Tempest centres on a character called Prospero.

He is the rightful Duke of Milan. So he's a sort of nobleman, a royal person, the Duke of Milan, but he was betrayed by his ambitious brother Antonio. Antonio betrayed him and he was exiled to a remote island with his young daughter Miranda.

So Prospero should be the Duke of Milan, but Antonio, his brother, betrayed him and sent him out where he's imprisoned on a remote island in the sea with his young daughter Miranda. Years later, Prospero, now a powerful sorcerer, a kind of wizard, thanks to the island's spirits and his extensive studies. So Prospero is sent to this island.

This island is populated by sort of strange spirits, weird supernatural forces on this island. And they have turned Prospero into a powerful wizard. He's been studying with them and he's turned into this sort of sorcerer.

So Prospero now is this powerful sorcerer. He conjures a violent tempest. So he creates a big storm, a big weather storm that shipwrecks his enemies.

So his enemy's ship gets wrecked on the rocks and his enemies include Antonio, his brother, King Alonso of Naples and Alonso's son Ferdinand. They get shipwrecked onto the island where Prospero is living. And over the course of the play, Prospero orchestrates, so he arranges and manipulates a series of magical events and encounters with spirits and a monster and stuff in order to take revenge on his enemies, test their sense of morality and ultimately decide their futures.

During the story, love blossoms, love grows between Miranda, so Prospero's daughter who's on the island with him, and Ferdinand, the son of one of his enemies. So love blossoms between Miranda

and Ferdinand. Various comedic and treacherous plots unfold and unfold involving the shipwrecked nobles, the royal people and the island's inhabitants like the monstrous Caliban and the airy spirit Ariel.

That's not Ariel from The Little Mermaid, but another Ariel. And Prospero grapples with the consequences of his power and his desire for revenge. Yeah, so it's a tale of a wronged duke using magic to confront his past and ultimately choosing a path of redemption.

Fascinating and mysterious play. In this particular scene where the phrase sea change occurs, the spirit Ariel sings to a character called Ferdinand, sings to Ferdinand about his father who was shipwrecked and fell into the sea. So Ariel is singing this mysterious and beautiful song to Ferdinand, telling him or trying to maybe manipulate him into thinking that his father was killed in the shipwreck and his body now lies deep underwater.

And she sings these lines. She sings full fathom five, thy father lies. Of his bones are coral made.

Those are pearls that were his eyes. Nothing of him that doth fade. But doth suffer a sea change into something rich and strange.

Sea nymphs hourly ring his knell. Ding dong, hark, now I hear them. Ding dong, bell.

So she's lying to him. She's suggesting that his father drowned, which is not actually true as far as I understand. So let me explain that, right?

Let me explain those lines because Shakespeare is a bit

impenetrable. But when things are explained, then the beauty is revealed. Right.

So full fathom five, thy father lies. So full fathom five, a fathom is a unit of depth in water equal to six feet. So one fathom is six feet.

So full fathom five means 30 feet deep. OK, so this this immediately establishes the father's supposed drowning. You drown when you die underwater because you can't breathe and his location at the bottom of the sea.

So basically your father lies 30 feet at the bottom of the sea, 30 feet down of his bones are coral made his bones. You know, the parts of his skeleton of his bones are coral made. This is a poetic and imaginative transformation.

Instead of decaying. Right. Decomposing his father's bones have metamorphosed or changed into coral, which is like that hard substance.

Is it a creature? Is it a plant coral which grows underwater? Right.

You get these huge coral reefs like the Great Barrier Reef in Australia where so many fish live and so on. So coral. So his father's bones have changed into coral, a beautiful and intricate underwater formation.

This suggests a peaceful and natural integration into the marine environment that Ferdinand's father has sort of been transformed into a natural part of the underwater world. Those are pearls that were his eyes. So, again, continuing the theme of transformation, the father's eyes are now envisioned as precious pearls, precious and jewel, not jewel.

They're not jewels. They're not stones. Are they pearls?

They're actually made by oysters, but they're used in jewellery. Beautiful white round. I think they count as stones, don't they?

Because they're made from dirt. Anyway, the father's eyes are now envisioned as precious pearls. So his eyes have turned into pearls.

This imagery evokes beauty and value because pearls are valuable, arising from what once was a vital part of a living being. So the eyes have become these valuable trinkets. Nothing of him that doth fade.

So doth is like saying does, right? Nothing of him that does fade. So nothing of him, no part of him has faded, meaning somehow his life force or something beautiful still remains.

So this line contradicts the natural process of decomposition. It suggests that the father's essence has not diminished or decayed, but has instead been transformed into something enduring, something that lasts. In this case, the beauty of pearls and the natural wonder of coral and other underwater life.

Right? So nothing of him that doth fade, but doth suffer a sea change. So this, but doth suffer a sea change, meaning, but does suffer a sea change, but has been drastically transformed by the ocean.

This is the key line explaining the unusual transformations described. Sea change refers to a profound and mysterious transformation brought about by the sea. It implies a complete alteration of form and substance, right?

But doth suffer a sea change into something rich and strange. This describes the result of the sea change, the father's remains have become something valuable, something rich and unfamiliar or wondrous. So strange in this case, moving beyond the realm of ordinary human existence.

So he's kind of, uh, in his drowned state, he has somehow turned into something otherworldly. Sea nymphs hourly ring his knell. So sea nymphs are mythical female spirits of the sea.

A knell is the slow, solemn ringing of a bell. Dong. Dong.

That's a knell. Typically announcing a death or a funeral. So the image of sea nymphs, these underwater spirits, constantly ringing a bell for the father emphasises the finality of his supposed demise and adds a mystical mournful quality.

What a mysterious image of this man who's drowned and these sea spirits are ringing the bell in the deeps of the ocean. Ding dong. This is the onomatopoeic sound of the bell being rung, bringing the image to life and making it more immediate and sensory for Ferdinand.

Hark, now I hear them ding dong bell. So hark, this is an archaic word or old fashioned word meaning listen or pay attention. And this draws Ferdinand's attention to the sound.

He's like, she's saying, listen, I can hear the bell now. I hear them ding dong. This reinforces the auditory experience making Ferdinand and the audience.

And no doubt when this is performed on stage, there is a bell being

rung. It sort of makes the audience and Ferdinand believe in the ongoing melancholic ringing of the sea nymph's bell, solidifying the illusion of his father's watery grave. So it's all part of this, this sort of deception where Ferdinand is being convinced that his father has died underwater.

But an extraordinary, beautiful and mysterious passage. And the word sea change is at the heart of that, which, you know, it's very interesting when you realise this phrase gets used a lot. It really has stood the test of time since it was written, you know, so many years ago, 500 years ago, nearly 500 years ago.

And we're still using it today and it's used in the newspapers and it's used in conversations and things like that. But this is the origin of it. And it's it's it's beautiful, isn't it?

In essence, these lines paint a fantastical picture of death by drowning, where the body undergoes a beautiful and otherworldly transformation rather than simple decay. The imagery is both sorrowful, meaning sad and strangely comforting, designed to affect Ferdinand deeply and set the stage for Prospero's further manipulations. So, yes, the meaning of sea change has evolved into something much more than its original meaning.

This is important. The original meaning is something being literally changed by the sea, something like the polishing of beach pebbles, turning them from their original state into something smooth and beautiful. You know, like, for example, when on the beach, you sometimes will find glass, but the glass has been in the sea or in the sand for many years and it's all smooth and rounded like a little pebble.

But you realise it's a piece of glass. Let's look at modern

applications of this. So in terms of technology, right, talking about technology, the shift from traditional media to digital platforms, for example, that could be described as a sea change.

For example, we've seen a sea change in the way people consume content. In terms of culture, changes in societal attitudes, such as acceptance of remote work recently, you know, the way that we work has changed and now it's much more normal to work from home, for example, especially with, you know, technology that makes it possible. And also what happened with Covid-19, where we were forced to work from home and then we all realised, oh, wait a minute, I could just do this all the time.

So, for example, Covid-19 brought about a sea change in the way we live and work. Let me just drink some water, excuse me. Or personal life.

You can imagine a person, for example, undergoing a major lifestyle shift after a life event. For example, she's been through a bit of a sea change over the last couple of years. More examples.

After travelling the world, she underwent a sea change in her perspective on life. Or the company's leadership saw a sea change after the merger, meaning after the company merged with another company, there was a sea change in the leadership, meaning a general change in the way the company was being led. We could look at YouGlish again.

Why not? This is Tim Berners-Lee, computer scientist, inventor of the World Wide Web. This is the guy who people say invented the Internet.

And what's he talking about?

[Tim Berners-Lee]

You ask the linked data, which they've now put together, 32 hits, each of which is a protein which has those properties. And you can look at the power of being able to ask those questions of a scientist. Questions which actually bridge across different disciplines is really a completely different thing.

It's very, very important. Scientists are totally stymied at the moment. The power of the data that other scientists have collected is locked up and we need to get it unlocked so we can tackle those huge problems.

[Luke]

I guess he's talking about the way that the Internet has linked data. So data, information is now all linked up together. And in terms of science, like, for example, doing scientific research into, I don't know, something about protein, whatever, you know, just one of the millions of things that scientists do research into.

Let's say scientists are researching protein or something. And now the fact that they can connect all of the information that they've got with all what the other scientists have got so quickly that this represents a sea change in scientific research.

[Tim Berners-Lee]

The power of being able to ask those questions of a scientist, questions which actually bridge across different disciplines, is really a complete sea change. It's very, very important. OK.

[Luke]

All right. How long have I been going now? I think it's got to be around about an hour.

So anyway, discussion questions. What events in recent memory have caused a sea change in your opinion? Well, I mean, you know, Covid-19 is one of the big examples, isn't it?

Covid-19 is certainly you could say caused a sea change in a few different ways. We've talked about the way that we work. But has it, did it cause a sea change in any other way?

Any other events that have caused a sea change? You know, you talk about developments in technology have massive changes. What technological developments have brought about a sea change?

And you could say things like this. There has been a sea change in blah, blah, blah. Or this represented a sea change in blah, blah, blah.

So remember, try to give answers to those questions. Try to use the phrases when you're doing it. Right.

Let's move on to. So this is this is only the third in my list. OK, well, let's do this one.

I guess I've been going for about an hour then. But let me let me do at least. Let me try and do a couple more.

Right. OK, because I've got a lot to get through. So a sorry sight.

You're a sorry sight. Someone might say if they see you. I mean, let's say, OK, let's say here's the situation.

You you went out, you're living in England and you went out for a

nice walk because the weather was sunny and you thought, yay, a sunny day. I'll go for a walk. I'll just pop to the shops and I'll go for a walk and I'll enjoy this nice sunny day.

And of course, you don't bring an umbrella. And you go out for your walk and after half an hour, suddenly the clouds appear over your head and you think, wait a minute, what happened to my sunny day? And then before long, yes, it starts raining and then it's a complete downpour and you're soaking wet.

You didn't have you didn't bring an umbrella. So you're totally soaking wet. Finally, you managed to find you get back to your house where you're staying and you come in and your housemate takes one look at you, dripping wet with water and looking all miserable.

And they say, oh, you're a sorry sight. What happened? And you go, well, obviously I got I got caught in the rain, obviously didn't bring an umbrella.

Oh, you should have brought a brolly schoolboy era. Well, the sun was shining. How am I supposed to know?

You're a sorry sight. Um, another example sentence. This is from earlier on.

Remember, we talked about the flooded town. That news report residents are describing Willow upon Thames. That's the name of the town this afternoon as a very sorry sight.

Indeed, after flood damage has made many of the homes here uninhabitable. Right. So the town is described as a sorry sight.

A person can be a sorry sight. The town can be a sorry sight. Another one.

After the storm, the town was a sorry sight with trees uprooted and buildings damaged. And you're a sorry sight. What happened to you?

So a sorry sight is a pitiful, unpleasant or regrettable thing to see. Something that is in really bad shape, really, really bad condition. And it makes you feel pity.

Oh, are you all right? Unpleasant. Oh, God, this looks terrible.

God, what a sorry sight. This comes from Macbeth, the Shakespeare play Macbeth act to seem to the context in the play. Macbeth says this after he's murdered King Duncan and he looks at his bloodstained hands and realises what he's done.

He realises the gravity of his his crime and he looks at his blood covered hands and he says, this is a sorry sight. In modern uses could be used for all sorts of things in politics, in sports, personal life. Most of the examples I'm looking at, I try to give examples from a range of different situations.

We've ended up with politics, sports and personal life. So in terms of politics, it could be used to describe a failed government project. Let's say the government tried to build a new business park, a huge development outside London, but then the money ran out and they weren't able to finish the development.

And so what's left is a very sorry sight is like a half finished business park, which nobody can use. And it looks terrible. The new business park, which was once hailed as the biggest

development outside of London, is now a sorry sight since funding dried up.

In sports, you could have a once great team that's now in decline, a team that used to be brilliant and they're not anymore. So for example, one of the best teams in the UK, Chadwick FC are a sorry sight these days. Um, I said Chadwick FC was a made up team.

Actually, I used to play for a team called Chadwick FC because this was the name of a town where I used to live back when I was a teenager. And the team was a sorry sight. I can tell you that much like, uh, maybe the worst Sunday league football team in England.

So in England, we have football games, amateur football games on Sunday mornings. It's called Sunday league, right? These are amateur football leagues and up and down the country, small teams from small towns play against each other.

And I was playing for Chadwick FC and, uh, I was 15 years old, right? So this was an adult team and, uh, they needed a goalkeeper. Their goalkeeper was not reliable and he kept letting them down.

He wouldn't, he would like not turn up for games and nobody liked him. So they got rid of him. They kicked him out of the team, but then they realised that they needed a goalkeeper.

And I was playing with the, with the youth team. We used to do training together on Sunday mornings at the end of the field. When the adults, the grownups were playing their games, we would be with the kids playing at the end of the park.

And, uh, someone saw me and decided that I was good. There

was the guy who ran the kids football training, knew the other guys in the adult team. And this guy thought I was a really good goalkeeper.

Now I was all right. I could, I could, I was quite athletic. I could dive and save shots and stuff like that.

I was a pretty good goalkeeper. Um, in fact, I had a nickname, which was the barrier. They called me the barrier.

That was my nickname. Um, but I was 15, you know, and I wasn't that big, but they needed a goalkeeper. And so they got me to play in goal for them.

So there I was a 15 year old goalkeeper for Chadwick FC. And yeah, we were a pitifully pitifully bad team. It was a sorry state of affairs.

It really was. Um, and we would lose games like eight nil, you know, that was a typical score. So I would let in about eight goals, every game playing on these freezing cold Sunday mornings in some, on some terrible football pitch in some little town somewhere in the middle of England.

And these football pitches that we played on were often in really bad condition. The pitch was a sorry site. And often I'd be, you know, cause I'm standing in, in goal cause I'm the goalkeeper.

Often there would be a big kind of hole in the ground in front of the goal, you know, uh, and the hole would be full of water cause it had rained that night and mud and stones as well. Often the, the pitch often had the pitches had stones on them and stuff and all sorts of stuff. So I'd be like diving around in this stuff.

I would let in about eight goals each game, but I would still play the best game that any keeper had played. Do you know what I mean? So I'd play an amazing game, but I would still let in eight goals, meaning that I would save, I would save so many more shots, but the team that our team was so bad that, um, the other team would get so many more shots on target that despite the fact that I'd saved 10, they would still score eight.

And I wasn't good in the air as a goalkeeper. You've got to be very strong and physical when the ball comes over, you've got to leap up into the air above all the other guys and really sort of slam your body against them and grab the ball, maybe kick some people in the back with your knee, be a bit physical and brutal. I wasn't, I was quite sort of slim and, uh, sensitive, but quite, quite able to dive and leap around and stop the ball.

So yeah, we were a sorry site. The pitch was a sorry site. And, uh, normally I was a sorry site at the end of a game covered in, in mud, water, blood as well sometimes.

So yeah, Chadwick KFC, a real team in fact. Um, so that's it for sports. And then for personal life, you could imagine like a, uh, a place like, uh, your home, right.

Um, a neglected home, like a place where some guy is living on his own and he doesn't clean up his kitchen is a total mess. You go around to his house and you look at the kitchen and there's all the dirty plates and stuff. And you go, this is a sorry site, isn't it?

Look at this or, or a worker. Someone you work with is just spent all night working in the office. And you might say, God, you're a sorry site or someone who's soaking wet from the rain.

As I said before, you're a sorry site. What happened or a place?
Gosh, this place is a sorry site, isn't it?

Like a very untidy room. The abandoned amusement park was a sorry site. He looked like a sorry site after pulling an all nighter.

Yes. Okay. You get the idea.

There are more examples from you glitch it just in case you're not convinced, but let's look at the discussion questions. Have you ever been a sorry site? What happened to you?

Can you think of a time when you could, could have been described as a sorry site? What happened to you? Can you tell the story and can you say I was a sorry site at the end of your story?

Like I did. Are there any places near you, which are a sorry site? What happened to them?

You know what? I think we're going to stop here because I decided at the beginning of this, that I wouldn't do more than an hour. I just decided to try to keep things under control here and to sort of restrict this to at least an hour.

I got through three bits of vocab. But the other things that I was planning to go through include, if we remember, we also have all of a sudden meaning suddenly as luck would have it meaning luckily in one fell swoop. Okay.

The police arrested the criminals in one fell swoop. The be all and end all like Manchester city. They're good, but they're not the be all and end all to break the ice.

You've got to maybe ask a question just to break the ice. It's not for the faint of heart. I've been watching the HBO series.

The last of us series two. I don't know if you've seen it. Don't worry.

I won't give any spoilers, but the last of our season two episode two, that is not for the faint of heart. It was intense. If you know about the show, maybe you've seen it as well and you'll know what I mean, but whoa.

So the show is about, it's like, you know, it's kind of like one of these zombie stories. Again, we've seen so many of them, but this does it very well. It's about a fungal infection, a very, uh, very nasty fungal infection, which infects the brain anyway.

But the episode season two episode two of the last of us involves, well, there are all sorts of things that happen and it's not for the faint of heart. I was watching it and I was like thinking this is intense. My wife was on the sofa next to me.

We were watching different things, but I kept going like that and she was saying, are you okay? And I said, oh yeah, yeah, I'm fine. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Fine. It's just this TV show, but it was intense. Not for the faint of heart.

Uh, foul play. You know, the, the movie star was found dead in his hotel room, but the police are suggesting that there's no evidence of foul play, meaning it's, it wasn't murder to fight fire with fire. Like they attacked us, but we're going to attack them back.

We will fight fire with fire and to come full circle. This is where we met each other all those years ago, but so many things have changed, but here we are again. It's like we've come full circle, isn't it?

Okay. Now I'm going to go through all those things, uh, but I'm not going to go through them now because that's enough, I think for this episode. Uh, but I will be covering the rest of these expressions on LEP premium.

Let me just fly forwards on the PDF, which I'll be, I'll edit the PDF together, uh, and you'll be able to download it. Right. But yes, for now, that's the end of the episode, but it's not finished.

As I said on the PDF, you will find a memory exercise for the three expressions that we looked at. Um, no, hold on a minute. Let me back up a bit.

Okay. Let me come full circle and go back to where we started, which was those 12, 12, those, those different situations, right? The football manager, the AI expert.

Let me go through those things again. So you can notice some of the other expressions and I'll highlight them, but also some other bits of language too. So I'm just going to do a very final, a very quick final 10 minutes or so here just to make sure that there's something more than just, uh, three items of vocab, uh, in the PDF worksheet.

So just 10 more minutes, right? Let me just go through those situations because there are other bits of English that I can teach to you here. So a football manager talking to the press about his

team's upcoming game against Manchester city in the FA cup.

His team is very small Chadwick FC. You might have heard of them and they're the underdog team. So Dave Smith, manager of Chadwick FC big game next week, FA cup semi final.

You're up against the great Manchester city. This is a tall order for Chadwick. Isn't it a tall order?

That means a very difficult thing to achieve. And he says, well, a lot of people are talking about this game. Like we don't stand a chance.

We don't stand a chance. We've got no chance, meaning we probably won't win, but this is the FA cup surprises happen. Upsets happen.

An upset is something unexpected, which makes things kind of go wrong. In this case, Chadwick FC beating Manchester city. Wow.

That was unexpected. That changes. That's that changes things.

That was an upset. Uh, upsets happen. All I can say is that we'll give it our all.

If you give something your all, it means you give it everything. You try your best. We'll give it our all.

We'll bring the game to them, which means that we will take an aggressive, um, proactive approach. We'll try to dominate the game. We'll bring the game to them.

We know we are up. We know what we're up against. If you're up

against something, it means you're facing it, right?

You're, you're sort of fighting against it. I know what I'm up against. I'm up against a lot here, meaning you've got challenges.

Uh, we know they're strong, but we will fight fire with fire. There's a Shakespearean phrase and a victory for Manchester city here is not a foregone conclusion by any means. Foregone conclusion.

We know their record in the premiership, but they're not the be all and end all there's a Shakespearean phrase, which is going to come up later in the series. As long as we're still in this competition, then we have a fighting chance. And again, this is the FA cup.

Anything can happen and nobody should underestimate Chadwick FC. We still have a fighting chance. That means we have a chance to win.

If we fight, they lost five nil eight nil, um, linguistics expert. What we're seeing in terms of the advances in AI is nothing less than a complete sea change in the world of language learning. So far we've only scraped the surface.

So if you scrape the surface, it means you just look at the surface. You you've only, we've only looked at a small amount, a bit like with this series in terms of expressions from Shakespeare. Unfortunately, we only scraped the surface with this episode.

I just like to take a very detailed look at these things. You know, that's why these things take so long. Cause I try to do them properly rather than just giving you two examples and moving on rather than just coming up with a good title for an episode and then

delivering some half baked lists to you and then just ending it all within 10 minutes, which on the face of it seems like something good because it's only 10 minutes, but does it have real educational value?

Does the stuff really stick into you really know what those phrases and things mean? If you've just been given a 10 minute list anyway, so we've only scraped the surface. Uh, it really is the tip of the iceberg.

So we scraped the surface. We haven't gone all the way into the subject. We've only looked at the very surface level.

It's only the tip of the iceberg, the tip of the iceberg phrase that you might be aware of already. It's the part, the top part that we can see, but there's a lot more that we can't see that's under the surface, just like with an iceberg. Um, reporter giving a news update from a town that's damaged by a flood.

Residents are describing Willow upon Thames this afternoon as a very sorry site. Indeed, after flood damage has made many of the homes here uninhabitable, they can't be lived in the roads, impassable, meaning you can't drive down them. They're blocked and the town centre completely cut off, meaning disconnected from almost all modes of transport except boats and helicopters.

Why do they always end their reports like that? Leaving the town centre completely cut off from almost all modes of transport except boats and helicopters. This is Michael McMichael for the BBC.

Um, modes of transport. You can say types of transport, forms of transport or modes of transport, which is quite nice, isn't it? Your friend is telling you about a robbery.

We were in bed about to go to sleep when all of a sudden there's the Shakespearean phrase. It will come up later in the series available to premium subscribers. www.teacherluke.co.uk/premium

All of a sudden there was this huge cracking noise from the front door as robbers broke in and then they continue. But as luck would have it, there's a phrase that's going to come up in the series. Jeremy, this is presumably her boyfriend or husband, had just installed an alarm like literally a couple of days before, but hadn't put up the stickers on the door so it wasn't obvious.

So if the stickers had been on the door, then they wouldn't have burgled the house, I suppose. So as soon as they forced the door open, the alarm went off. And yes, alarm alarms go off, meaning they start ringing.

Right. And the security camera camera got a photo of all their faces. The police managed to find and arrest all the robbers in one fell swoop.

There's the other Shakespearean phrase in one fell swoop. Your English teacher giving a lesson about social English. One of the most important things to do at the start of a meeting is to find a way to break the ice and get the ball rolling.

So to break the ice is the phrase from Shakespeare, meaning sort of, you know, at the beginning of a social situation, sometimes things are a bit cold, like at the beginning of a party. Everyone's standing there feeling kind of uncomfortable. I don't know anyone.

And you might, you know, ask a question to break the ice. So how do you know? How do you know, Dave?

And get the ball rolling to get the ball rolling is to get things started, to get the momentum going. Once the ball is rolling, then you can start playing with it, right? You're describing a roller coaster ride you went on at a theme park.

Oh, my God, it was insane. I tell you, it's not for the faint of heart, this ride, but it's awesome. It's so the faint of heart or the faint hearted.

That means people who are not brave, not courageous. So if you say that something is not for the faint of heart, you mean that it's it's only for people who are really brave. A newsreader about the details of the death of a celebrity, the star of the Impossible Journey films was found dead in his Hollywood home yesterday afternoon.

Police do not suspect foul play at this time. Foul play, meaning criminal activity, often murder. The opposite of fair play.

And you're talking to an ex-girlfriend in a cafe who you haven't seen for a long time, and she says, isn't it funny? This is exactly where we first met each other. So much has changed, but here we are again.

And you say, I know it's like we've come full circle now. Would you like to come back to my place? And she says, what are you thinking?

Don't be ridiculous. You know, I'm married to Richard. And you say, but you're not wedding.

You're not wearing your wedding ring. And she goes, oh, that's

right. I must have taken it off.

So there were the Shakespearean expressions and a few other bits of vocab thrown in as well. Check the PDF. You'll find some memory exercises, some sort of vocabulary quiz with a list of the vocab that you're expected to remember and that will be in the exercises, OK, and discussion questions as well.

Check them out. Use the exercises. They can really help you to reinforce what you've learned from the episode.

You'll find a link in the description. It's just free to download from my website. Thank you for listening to this episode.

If you want to get the rest of the series where I'll be going into detail about a lot more expressions, then just check out LEP Premium link in the description. Otherwise, have a lovely day, morning, afternoon, evening or night. Leave your comments in the comments section.

If you made it through to this part of the episode, just use any of the bits of vocab that have come up. I'll let you choose. But just to prove that you've made it this far, say something about a circle coming full circle.

That would be good. Or use any of the other expressions in your comment or not. You could just comment anything, anything at all.

But I'd love to hear from you. Thanks for watching. Thanks for listening.

There's my timer again. I will drink. I'm going to make myself a cup of tea now.

OK, speak to you in the next episode of this podcast. The free next free episode will be about completely different. But in premium, you'll be getting more Shakespeare themed stuff as we go through P68, which is the the the the premium series that I'm working on with all of this language.

OK, I am planning to do one more episode which will be looking at specifically looking at lines from Shakespeare's plays. We did a bit of the Tempest in this one, but I want to do some stuff where we look at look at some famous scenes from Shakespeare plays, read them out and explore what the language all means. So that's something else that I'm going to be doing at some point.

It won't be the next episode. It'll come later. All right.

Great. Cheers, everyone. Have a lovely afternoon, evening, morning or night.

I know I've already said that, but there you go. I said it again. Until next time, I will just say good bye.

Bye. Bye. Bye.

Bye.

[Jingle]

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