

## Episode 1000 (Transcript)

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Hello listeners and welcome to Luke's English Podcast. This is episode 1000. Here it is.

Finally, you've probably been waiting for some time for this one. It's taken me a little while, but here it is. And I'm wondering what you've been expecting.

The expectation has been building, hasn't it, for episode 1000. Of course, I've been mentioning it fairly regularly on the podcast, talking about what I might do, what I could do for episode 1000. And then there's been a fairly long wait since the last episode.

This long period of time, several weeks have passed. You've been thinking, oh, what's going to happen for episode 1000? The anticipation has been rising and that sense of expectation for what is going to be included in this episode. Well, finally, it's here.

To be honest, it's been a little bit difficult to find time to work on the podcast recently, because I'm basically on holiday with my family in the French countryside. And for example, last week, we took a trip down to the south of France in the car, stopping at various locations, doing the typical French holiday thing. And so there were absolutely no opportunities for working on this or recording this while we were doing that.

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But now we are back here in the countryside in our house that we're staying in at the moment. And I've taken this particular opportunity to start recording episode 1000 here. My son is currently having a nap.

So he is upstairs sleeping. My daughter's doing some homework. My wife is lying down with our son at this point.

So there's a quiet moment here this afternoon. So I've taken this chance to record at least the first part of this episode. And I'm doing this in the garden.

I've taken a little table and a chair out down to the back of the garden down to the bottom of the garden. I've taken this chair and table and my computer and my microphone and stuff. And this is my recording space.

This is my recording studio surrounded by trees and birds singing and other little creepy crawlies and things like that. This is where I've decided to do this. And when I be interrupted, probably at some point, expect one of the children will wander over and demand my attention.

But I'm going to in fact, one of them's already doing it. What what is it? What is a collective noun? She's asking me. A collective noun is a noun for lots of different things.

Do you know? Do you know? Can you have any examples? You see, you see, it's almost impossible even now in the quietest moments. I'm being interrupted by my daughter who fair enough is doing her English homework. And she's asking me what a collective noun is.

What is a collective noun listeners? Isn't this when we talk about, for example, groups of animals, like a something of like a murder of crows, a school of fish? Isn't that what a collective noun is? I think so. But we're about to find out as the very first interruption of episode 1000 is about to happen and she's back now. So give me some examples of what a collective noun could be.

You said a shoal of fish swam into the bay. So a shoal of fish, a shoal is a noun for a group of things. In this case, a group of fish, a bunch of grapes, a boy picked up a bunch of grapes, a bunch.

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That's a collective noun in this case for grapes. And you tend to find that certain things we use certain collective nouns for different things. So a bunch of grapes, a shoal of fish, also a school of fish, a flock of birds, a fleet of ships, a colony of ants, an audience of people, for example, my podcast audience.

So those are collective nouns, right? Nouns that describe a group of things. Okay, so we can look forward to the next time she interrupts this podcast. She didn't have a microphone then so you couldn't hear what she was saying.

But that's what episode 1000 is going to be like, I'm afraid. It's going to be a little bit shambolic. It's going to be probably quite long.

It's going to be very rambling. There will be interruptions. It'll be recorded in different locations, in the house, in the garden.

Who knows, maybe I'll even record in the car as my last resource. I'll escape somewhere in the car and record there. I don't know how I'm going to do this, but I'm determined to get this done one way or another.

So there you go. Right now, I did prepare some notes for this, which I should start reading from. Yes, episode 1000 is here.

And you've probably been waiting for this one. As I said before, I hope that I haven't built up your expectations too much. Because maybe you're expecting something phenomenal, something incredible, something outstanding.

And all I'm trying to do is just record, just successfully finish episode 1000. Who knew that this would be the most difficult episode to actually record. But this episode will mainly just be me.

It's just going to be me mostly rambling in a fairly self-indulgent way about my own podcast. And also celebrating this milestone with you, my audience, and a few familiar voices that you will hear in the episode. My daughter is back again with another question about her homework.

Don't knock the table. Complete each phrase with a suitable noun. And I don't know.

Complete each phrase with a suitable noun. Okay. A choir of something.

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Yeah, a choir of singers. A bouquet of flowers. At least my listeners are learning some collective nouns.

A choir, that's a group of people all singing at the same time, like at Christmas. A crowd of listeners. Yeah.

Okay. A crowd of people. Yeah.

Okay. A bouquet of flowers we had before, which is nice. A bunch of flowers all arranged together nicely.

A herd of zebras. That's nice. A herd of zebras.

Often herd is probably the most common collective noun for a group of animals. A pride of lions. Yeah.

And here there are things like a swarm of bees. A swarm of bees. A pride of lions.

A team of children. A team of children. I don't think so.

A team of firefighters, maybe? A team of firefighters. No, a team of police. A team of police.

No, a team of football players. A team of football players. Okay.

For example, which team? Which is the best team? England. Of course. Well, we're not actually.

Spain are the best. Don't knock the table. So what was I saying? Yeah, this is mainly going to be me rambling in a self-indulgent way about my own podcast, but also celebrating this milestone with you, my audience, and a few familiar voices, because you will hear some guests during the episode.

I'll be peppering the episode with various guests, because I've been helped by friends, family, and guests who featured on the podcast in the last couple of years. They have sent me questions in text form, audio form, or video form. So you'll hear some familiar voices during the and my brother James will be interviewing me in a few minutes.

We recorded an interview together last week, and I'll be playing that for you in a couple of minutes with a few questions that he has gathered from his own brain, and also from the brains of some friends and family. And listeners, you might be thinking, but Luke, I want to be able to ask you a question as well, please. Well, you can.

You can ask me questions in the comments. So if you've got any questions for you, because you might be thinking, I've got a question, maybe that's what you'll be thinking. Please write your questions in the comments section.

In fact, I will be asking for your comments and questions regularly during this episode. So please do write your comments and questions in the comments section, and I'll take them, and I will record another episode with them as well, because I do want to give you the opportunity to be involved in the sort of celebrations for episode 1000 here. So comments, any comments or questions, put them in the comments section.

I'll mention that again for you later. I will use your comments and questions in a forthcoming episode. And also, I am very interested too, in your stories of English learning success.

Okay, I'm really interested in that. So please get in touch with your questions, but also with your stories of success in learning English, either with this podcast or without. Obviously, I would be delighted to receive a number of stories from you describing how this podcast has helped you to learn English.

That would be wonderful. But even without my podcast, if you can send me your success stories of learning English, and you might think, well, but Luke, my English isn't a total success yet. No, I'm looking for specific things that have helped you in specific ways.

Or I'm looking for some grand life story about how you were lost, and just your English was terrible, and you didn't know what to do with yourself. And then one day, you discovered this incredible podcast for learners of English, and you listened to it, and your life was never the same after that, and your English just skyrocketed. You know, that sort of thing.

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So leave your comments and questions in the comments section. Or you can email me, [luketeacher@hotmail.com](mailto:luketeacher@hotmail.com) Yes, I am still using Hotmail. So that would be good.

Also, during this episode, I will be taking a trip down memory lane, as suggested by Alex, as I mentioned on the podcast recently. And I'll be reminiscing about a selection of episodes that I've picked from my episode archive. So rather than mentioning every single episode I've ever done, which would take much too long, I've gone through it and selected, I think, about 50 episodes, which I think I have one or two things to say about episodes, which mean something to me, or which have little stories attached to them.

I'll be doing that as well and sort of talking about those. So yes, a selection of about 50 episodes. I wonder if you've heard them all.

So this is episode 1,000. Have I said that already? 1,000 episodes of this podcast. Or is it more? I think, in fact, it is more.

But just to keep things simple, let's say this is episode 1,000. Over 17 years this podcast has been going. Over 17 years.

I think probably there are some listening to this podcast who were born after I started making these episodes. There's probably people listening in my audience who are younger than the podcast itself, which is quite an extraordinary thing. But 17 years, 17 and a half years, nearly, over 150 million downloads the last time I counted.

I can't remember when I actually counted that number of 150 million downloads. It's probably closer to about 200 million downloads these days, to be honest. Over 1.8 million subscribers on YouTube.

Not that YouTube's subscriber count is a particularly significant metric these days, but still, it's not nothing. 1.8 million subscribers on YouTube. So this is great.

What this means to me is that it's a success. I've actually done something in my life which is successful work-wise. I don't know if it is work.

Is it work? I suppose it is, because I do work on it and I do get paid for it these days. So I suppose that means it's work. And this is more or less my full-time job,



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although I still teach several classes a week at the British Council in Paris, and I have two children that require plenty of attention.

But I think the podcast is, well, it's certainly, professionally speaking, the main thing that I do. Also, unprofessionally speaking, it is also the main thing I do as well, because I think that although this is my, more or less, my full-time job doing this, I think I'm reasonably unprofessional about it as well, which I see as a strength. Does that make sense? I think if I was just only sort of professional about this, if that was the only reason I was doing this, if I was only sort of doing it for the money, let's say, it wouldn't be the same, would it? So I'm both professional and unprofessional in, I hope, the healthiest way.

But I feel very lucky, basically. I feel lucky for lots of reasons. I feel lucky because I do what I love to do.

That's the main thing, that I have the opportunity to do this, that I feel privileged enough to be able to spend most of my time doing this. So I feel very lucky. But I couldn't do this without you.

I couldn't do this without you listening, without you commenting, giving thumbs up on my episodes, subscribing to my podcast, signing up to Luke's English Podcast Premium, which is a huge thing for me. That's one of the main ways that I'm able to actually keep doing this with my premium subscription and the income that I get from that basically allows me to keep doing this. I've said it before.

If I wasn't making money from doing this, I'm not sure I could justify doing it. I might be doing it in some casual way, not very regularly. But the income I get and the support I get from mostly the premium subscription does allow me to keep doing this.

So with your premium subscription, if you are a premium subscriber, not only are you getting all those episodes, and there's like over 250 of them now, and all the stuff that you get from that, but you're also helping to keep this podcast alive. So thank you very much for that. And also not just premium subscriptions, listeners who send me donations to keep the podcast going.

And every now and then I get some incredibly generous listener, I get an email saying that someone has donated some money to me. And every now and then it's like quite a lot of money. And I mean, I'm stunned.

I'm genuinely stunned when that happens. So thank you very much to you for all the support that you have given me over the years. And also the messages from listeners who talk about how much they enjoy my episodes, or messages from people who've told me stories about, for example, how they've managed to get great IELTS scores, particularly in their listening.

After, you know, being a follower of my podcast for a while, and they tell me that they got an excellent score in IELTS, or even the people who say that the podcast has helped them in their life in another way beyond just learning English. Like, for example, many years ago, the woman whose name I can't remember at this point, but she wrote to me, telling me how listening to my podcast, listening to episodes of my podcast helped her to recover from neurosurgery. Literally, she found it to be therapeutic and a great way to help her brain repair itself.

Or from, if you remember, Iñaki from episode 799, who used my podcast to help him find peace of mind in the middle of a sort of crazy nightmare that he experienced after having had an operation, which involved a full-body anaesthetic. And I told the story in episode 799. Uh-oh, that's the end of that.

My son is awake. Okay, so let's try this again. It's now the next day, almost exactly 24 hours later, and I had to stop there, stop recording, because yes, my son woke up from his nap and came along and interrupted me, which is fine.

He's very sweet and adorable. My daughter, too, joined him. She was running after him.

He came running out of the house, running down here. She came running after him, trying to make him stop. She couldn't.

It's very hard to stop this boy. So I couldn't record with the two of them playing around and stuff. So it's now the very next day.

Okay, let's see how much I can actually get done now. He's finally, he is asleep. He's in the middle of his nap again.

It seems I can only do this when he is asleep. And oh, it took a long time to get him to fall asleep, because he was resisting arrest. So we had to get the police, the nap police, to come down, because he was resisting arrest.



Do you see the joke, resisting arrest? That's a crime. That's where the police try to arrest someone. And if you fight back, then that becomes another crime that you can be charged for.

But also to resist a rest, because arrest, that's a synonym for a nap, isn't it? So we had to call the police because my son was resisting arrest. Okay, terrible. I've told that joke on the podcast in the past.

Anyway, let's carry on now. Let's see how much more I can do before I get interrupted again. So what was I talking about? I was talking about the fact that it's amazing to me that this podcast has had an impact on people in terms of their English.

And I do get quite regular emails from people telling me how the podcast has helped them. And I want more. I want more of those things.

I love sharing those stories. But also, over the years, I've had messages from people who tell me that the podcast has helped them in other ways. Obviously, there's all those people who use my podcast to help them fall asleep at night, which I will take as a compliment.

But also, there have been other people who've told me that the podcast has kind of kept them company during difficult times during COVID. During the COVID lockdowns, a lot of people wrote to me to say how much they appreciated being able to spend the time listening to me during those kind of slightly strange, paranoid, lonely weeks and months. And I was talking about Iñaki, who actually I devoted a whole podcast episode to, because he had an operation.

And for the operation, they gave him a general anaesthetic. That's like an injection that makes your body fall asleep so that they can do an operation on you. And sometimes, anaesthetics can have a strange reaction.

People can have a strange reaction to anaesthetics. And this was the case with Iñaki. He kind of woke up, but the anaesthetic was still wearing off.

And it caused him to have these horrendous nightmares, like waking nightmares and paranoid visions, full of anxiety and terror, horrible panic attacks. And the only

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thing that helped him to calm down was listening to episodes of my podcast. So it's amazing to me that the podcast helps people in various ways.

And not only that, there have been Lepsters who have found love with other Lepsters via this podcast. Several cases of people who have got together and found love with fellow Lepsters. And in fact, it was the podcast that kind of brought them together.

So that's amazing. And I expect there have been other profound life experiences that listeners have had in connection with this show. If you have something like that, then please do get in touch.

Email me with your stories, learning English stories, but also life stories connected with this podcast. And as I said, I will do another episode with your comments and questions. I should also mention the sort of scary paranormal experiences episodes that I talked about several months ago.

That is still in the pipeline, I promise. And I've got a short list of really interesting stories from listeners about creepy and sort of paranormal unexplained experiences. That is still in the works.

And I'm just waiting for Anna to finish reading the stories I've selected. And then I'll be doing that. But that will be coming soon.

So anyway, I find life stories from listeners to be amazing. And they really encourage me to continue doing these episodes. So thank you so much for all the support, all the feedback, all of the input that you've given to me over the years.

And I was saying that I feel lucky. I do feel lucky for various reasons. As I've already said, maybe I started early, maybe that's one of the reasons why my podcast is successful at all, is that I just got there early and started doing this before most other people.

Or I'm also lucky to have been born speaking a language that a lot of other people around the world would like to learn. You know, I think that is a sort of privilege that I was born with. Because obviously a lot of people want to learn my language.

And so my language is a sort of commodity, which I can, I don't know, that I can offer to people. But personally, I think it's sort of fair enough. As a native English

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speaker, I feel a certain sort of duty, maybe a responsibility to help other people to learn this language.

If it is indeed the main international language, which at the moment it is, right, that most people in the world need to get, you know, want to, need to get a decent standard of English, it's the main international language. And so I feel I have a certain duty or responsibility in a way to balance things out, right? I don't have the challenge of learning English, but I do feel I have some responsibility to help other people in the world to learn it. That's a sort of common ground, I think.

But I have worked very hard on this podcast, even if it doesn't always seem like work. I work on these episodes all the time, and I still feel like I'm never really getting it right. You know, I'm always, I'm always thinking about it, always thinking about ways that I could try to improve it, and I do my best.

Sometimes I feel like it works, despite myself. Other times I feel like there's still a lot more to be done. So I'm sort of always in this process of, on one hand, being quite happy with the work I do, and then, on the other hand, feeling that it's just not right, and this kind of puts me into a loop that allows me to continue doing this and doing this.

But I enjoy doing this, but also I do feel like sometimes I'm not quite getting it right. And I said this to Michael Lavers from the Level Up English podcast not long ago. I feel like either I'm buzzing from the last episode, I feel like I did a good job on the last episode, and therefore I want to do it again, and you know, that keeps me motivated, or I feel like the last episode wasn't quite good enough, and so I'm just keen to improve on what I did before.

And so this kind of creates this sort of momentum that keeps going and going and going. My daughter is now waiting again in the sidelines because she's got a question for me, and this time she'll have a microphone so you'll actually be able to hear her. Okay, come over here little girl.

What's your name today? Her name is Olivia. Pick up that microphone if you would. Okay, so you need to hold it close to your mouth.

Okay, so you have a question for me. Yes. Go ahead.

Well my question is not like a question about like learning and everything, it's a question about life. Oh. My question is, how did the sun get so hot? How did the sun get so hot? Wow, that's an incredible question isn't it? But I have like four more or something like that? I'm not entirely sure, to be honest, how the sun got so hot, but what I can say is as far as we know, this is the scientific explanation of these things, that first of all there was a big bang, right? Yeah, the big bang.

The big bang, and that sent out matter flying across the universe, and that matter then became subject to all the laws of physics, right? One of the laws of physics is that mass, we've talked about this before, mass attracts things to it, it creates gravity, right? And so the sun essentially, what that is, is a lot of matter, a lot of stuff with a huge amount of mass, and that mass, that gravity puts a lot of pressure on all of that matter, forcing it into the core of itself, and there's so much matter, so much pressure, that it gets hot, and it gets so hot that it just keeps burning. It's like, imagine so much gas, all pressed in together, more than you can imagine, and it gets so hot that it heats up our entire galaxy, and causes all this sunshine, causes all these plants to be able to photosynthesise, gives you sunburn if you don't put suntan lotion on, and all that stuff. So that's my non-scientist answer, I think based on the basic scientific knowledge I've got.

Do you have one more question before you let me continue? Well, I'm gonna... It's supposed to be episode 1000, so it's supposed to be questions for Luke about his podcast, or about anything else that you've always wondered. I'm gonna come back because I don't have any shoes on. So you mean your feet are getting spiked by the dry grass? Yeah.

Okay. Bye-bye. Bye-bye.

Anyway, right, I think I should probably stop rambling and let you hear the conversation I had with James, which contains various questions. Yes, I think I will do that. I'll do that.

I was going to say, what was the world like when I first started this podcast in 2009? Can you listen back, can you think back to the year 2009? What was the world like? And well, just context, for context of when I started the podcast, think about this. In those days, first of all, internet wasn't quite as developed as it is now. I mean mobile internet in particular.

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These days we have 5G, rapid, high-speed internet, which our phones are all connected to. We all have smartphones, all connected to the internet. So we can stream podcasts very easily and very conveniently through our phones, which is how most people do it.

But back in 2009, it wasn't quite the same story, was it? I don't know if we had 3G, did we? I don't know. But people had these things called iPods and MP3 players, right? Now, we still bought our music on CDs mostly, but what we did was we put those CDs into the computer and then converted them to MP3 format and put them on our iPods. And most people listen to their music like that.

But then there were also these things called podcasts, which you could find. I think most people found podcasts through the Apple iTunes store. You'd have all your music and then there was another section that said podcasts.

And you could go into the podcast directory on iTunes and see all the different podcasts they have there. And you could subscribe to them free of charge. And this was amazing.

This was a new medium. And I remember back in the old days, even in 2006, 2005, 2004, when I sort of was on the internet, on my computer at home and I had an iPod. I had a little iPod Nano, I think it was.

And I was listening to the Ricky Gervais podcast. That might have been the first one I listened to, a trailblazing podcast, Ricky Gervais, Stephen Merchant and Carl Pilkington. You can still find the archive of episodes of that online, but just hilarious rambling conversations.

And I guess the thing that was attractive about that was that they were unscripted. They didn't seem to be edited very much. That was very kind of loose and anything goes.

And you didn't really get that same kind of content anywhere else, just people talking. And it was incredibly amusing and comforting. I would do the washing up in my kitchen, listening to it.

And then there were all the podcasts that you could get on the BBC because they converted a lot of their radio programmes into podcasts. The thing about podcasts is that you could download them and play them anytime you wanted, anywhere you

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wanted. And you could go back and listen again and pause and continue from exactly the same spot later.

Adam and Joe, the Adam and Joe show was one of my favourite podcasts. And what they did is every Saturday they had a radio show and then they would create a sort of best of the radio show form, like about an hour would be turned into a podcast. And that was just wonderful.

So many humorous sections and very funny jingles. It was very inspiring. Also the Kermode and Mayo Mark Kermode and Simon Mayo's film review podcast, actually a radio five show which then got converted into a podcast.

But what I loved about that was the rambling nature of these film reviews that often spilled over into other conversations about life, the universe and everything. And I loved and I still do the way that Mark Kermode talks about films and about everything. Again, in a sort of chaotic, quite chaotic way.

He's famous for his Kermodean rants. Anyway, also Mark Maron was a podcast that I listened to in the early days. And I really enjoyed his very personal approach to doing his interviews, where he would do a rambling 20 minute introduction.

Very personal, perhaps even oversharing a lot of details about his life before the actual interview took place. And I've always really, really enjoyed that. I think some people didn't enjoy, didn't appreciate the 20 minute ramble at the start before the actual interview began.

But for me, that was just so captivating. And probably is one of the things that influenced me and caused me to do similar to do the same thing. I always thought, if Mark Maron does it, and he's so successful with that format, then that's the sort of thing I'd like to do too.

So that was the context in which I started doing my podcast. Now, in a moment, we're going to switch to the interview that I recorded with James, my brother. Was it last week? I can't remember.

Two weeks ago. This episode's been in the pipeline for a while. So James collected various questions from friends and family and from himself.

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And he's going to pose those questions to me. And when I had finished doing the recording with James, I checked the results. And I was, again, incredibly frustrated to learn, to notice, to see or to hear that I, again, had had the wrong microphone selected during that.

And as a result, my voice was all distant and unclear again, because it had been captured from the microphone in my laptop. That's how I used to record the podcast in the early days. I would just sit in front of my laptop and use the inbuilt microphone.

These days, I think that just sounds awful. It sounds so terrible, probably because when it happens accidentally, like in the conversation with James that you're about to hear, the laptop is normally quite far away and I'm not talking to that microphone. I'm talking to a microphone in my hand.

So I had to, again, use artificial intelligence to fix the audio. And thankfully, the results are not too bad. You can hear me pretty well.

It sounds quite warm and clear. But it does cut out any other sounds that are not me talking. Anything that's not English words get just completely cut out.

So all the sounds of me laughing all get removed. If you're watching the video version, you will see me laughing. You just won't hear me laughing.

And if you're listening to the audio version, you'll just have to imagine those moments of silence are filled with me cracking up and just bursting out laughing because there are a few moments in this conversation that were very funny. Anyway, that's that. Now my daughter's come back.

So just before James interviews me, I'll let Olivia interview me a little bit more. You've thought of another question? Two other questions. Okay, let's get to it.

My first one was, how did ink exist? How did ink exist? What a random question. Have you just tried to choose the most difficult question? Nope. I just saw my pen and I just said it.

Okay. So a few days ago, you and I and your mom and your brother went to visit these caves in the centre of France. These are some of the most ancient examples of human artwork in the world, ancient 20,000-year-old cave paintings.



Absolutely amazing. So humans for many, many, many years have wanted to draw things or wanted to write things, and they've needed materials for that. And in the past, what have they done? They've used rock or coloured rock, and then they made it go into little pieces, put water on it, and then they made ink.

Yeah, they made a sort of powder out of coloured, and then they turned that into paint. Ink, I think, is slightly different. I'm not sure exactly what material is used to make ink, but essentially it's a liquid, a coloured liquid that could be used to make permanent drawings or even writing.

So I don't know, the first ink, I'm not sure exactly how it was invented, but it would be something like that. Some permanent kind of paint that could be used to write, maybe with a stick or maybe with a feather. You know about this, the plume, the feather? You take a feather, cut the end of it in a certain way, and it looks like the end of a fountain pen, and you can dip that into ink, and then you can write with it.

And for hundreds of years, people wrote with feathers, like Shakespeare in the days of Shakespeare, they used feathers. But then people took the name of a feather, like plume, and so in my class, my teacher asked me to write a lot with a styloplume. It's like a... Styloplume is French, in English we call it a fountain pen, but styloplume is like a feather pen, yeah? So it's based on the same design, the nib, the end of the pen is the same design.

Anyway, next question, please. My next question is... Into the microphone. My next question is, why do we need AI for in the world? Do we have our own brains? This is a brilliant question, well done.

Why do we need AI? Why do we need it? Okay, she's the most intelligent thing. She? That's fine, you've decided to call it she, that's okay. Because there's Alexa, or... Siri.

Or Siri. You think of those as female. Yeah, there are other forms of AI as well.

Okay, they're so intelligent, but... Arguably, yeah. Not as intelligent as perhaps everyone wants us to think. Yeah.

But they are certainly intelligent. But we also are very intelligent. Yes.

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So, well, why do we need them? Yeah, a perfectly good question. To play music and things like that, like Alexa plays music. Yeah, you could argue that we don't need AI.

Yes. Anything AI does, we could do already. But you'll see through history, we've developed technology that has essentially saved us time and saved us energy and potentially saved us money, right? Yeah.

For example, the grass in this garden, okay? Now, you could just use shears. Those are like big scissors that you cut the grass with. Or you could use a scythe, which is a tool with a big curved blade.

Yeah. And you cut the grass with one of them. Yeah.

Now, we could do that ourselves, right? Yeah. Instead, these days, we have lawnmowers. Is that AI? No, wait a minute.

I'm just talking about technology that arguably we don't need, but which has definitely made our lives easier. There are also AI lawnmowers, automatic lawnmowers. Oh, yeah.

With my mum, we saw a white thing moving. Before, we thought it was a dog just like that. Plastic dog? No, like who was bent.

Okay. But then I said, oh, there's a lawnmower who's cutting the grass by himself. Who? A lawnmower that is cutting the grass? Cutting the grass by itself.

Itself. Itself. Wow.

So that's a form of AI. I mean, there's various types of AI, but that's a form of artificial intelligence in the sense that the lawnmower can move around on its own. Don't tap the microphone.

Move around on its own. So why do we need AI? Well, arguably, we don't need it, but people perhaps want it because it makes our lives easier in some ways. For example, as a sort of an assistant to help us do various types of work, we can also automate a lot of things that otherwise people would have to do.

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So we don't really need it. But people, for some reason, want it because it allows them to save time and save energy and save money as well. Do we need it? Is it as powerful as people really say? Well, that is another question for another time.

Okay, thank you. Okay, that's it. Okay.

And I'm going to stay to hear the podcast. But I'm not going to say anything, only if I have a question. Okay.

All right. So this is what Episode 1000 is like, I'm afraid. Just full of interruptions, full of technical glitches and things like that.

But enough is enough now. Right, that's the end of this first section. I will now let you listen to the interview with James, my brother, recorded a couple of weeks ago, I think it was.

And then after that, we'll return. I don't know if it's going to be today, but we'll return. And there'll be questions from other guests.

You'll hear the voices of some well-known guests that have been on this podcast. There are a few little video clips and questions. So Episode 1000 will continue.

But now let's listen to the conversation with James, recorded a couple of weeks ago. And here we go.

Hello, James.

Hello. Hello. Do you remember the first time you were on this podcast? I have to say I don't really.

No, it would have been a long time ago. I remember. You weren't one of the first guests.

But I'm just, if I just have a look in my episode archive, available listeners at [teacherluke.co.uk/episodes](http://teacherluke.co.uk/episodes) then I can see. And it was, oh, oh, a long time ago. Oh, how things have changed.

Um, I'm trying to find it. It was called, I think it was called talking about grammar. With my brother, you didn't arrive on the podcast.

Yeah. Discussing grammar with my brother. You didn't actually arrive on this podcast until episode 53, which is quite sort of deep into doing this.

That you first arrived. I think I remember it now. Is it where you asked me basic grammar questions and I didn't know any of them? Yeah.

And I think the point was. English speakers don't always know that the rules of grammar, you know, sort of off by heart, but they can still communicate fairly well. Yeah.

That was all just the. Which I proved very well, I think, because I knew nothing about the grammar terms. I'd forgotten them all, basically.

It was a bit embarrassing, but yeah, just to prove to native speakers, sorry, to prove to non-native speakers that actually a lot of the time, they know more about English grammar than most native speakers do. But it was quite, quite a funny conversation. But in those days, I was being a bit more experimental about it.

And we had background music and like loads of ridiculous reverb and echo on the record. That was a bit annoying. It must have been, but people seem to like it.

Okay. You've dropped the reverb for now then. I've dropped the reverb and the background music.

I don't know why I thought those things were a good idea. But in those days, it was all just kind of a bit of an experiment. But since then, you have been on lots and lots of episodes over the years.

You're possibly the most frequent guest on this podcast. Frequent flyer. Yeah.

Airlines. Yeah. That's the future of this podcast.

Turn it into an airline. If you want to make the real money, go with the burning up of the fossil fuels as fast as possible. A lot of companies do that.

They kind of start with one sort of business model and they end up going into flying for some reason. Started out as a record label and became an airline and a brand of cola. I think that was just a promotional gimmick really, the cola.

But they did all sorts of things, didn't they? Well, that's the future of Luke's English podcast. Turn it into an airline. And a sandwich chain.

Sandwich. Sandwiches and flying. Flying sandwiches.

Luke's UK subs. How about that? UK subs. Well, they're a band and also you could sell subway.

What are they called? Subway sandwiches. What are they called? Submarine sandwiches. Submarine sandwiches.

That's what a sub is short for, right? Yeah. Submarine sandwich because it's kind of sort of long, like the shape of a submarine. Yeah.

And that's it. Most of it's on underwater. No, it doesn't.

So that's familiar. Similarity ends. That's just a submarine.

That is just a submarine, not a sandwich. I hope this conversation is an appropriate way to celebrate episode 1000 of this podcast. I've got to say congratulations.

Well done reaching this incredible milestone. Milestone. Podcast history.

Thank you. Thank you very much. I was just thinking before doing this, I was thinking I should record an intro, which I haven't done yet.

I might do it later. But I was thinking, how do I put into words the sort of momentousness of this occasion? How do I verbalise these things? And it just made me think to be a great kind of statesman, you've got, there is a certain skill in being able to put into words the spirit of a certain moment. And I was just trying to work out how to do that for this, but 1000 episodes, I suppose that's a good thing, isn't it? Is that something worth noting? As long as people are still listening, then it is a good thing.

And I think they are, right? Yeah. They appear to be. I don't know if it's the same people that I had in the beginning.

In fact, if any of those people are still listening slash alive, then I'd be very impressed and you can get in touch. So it might not be the same people, but certainly I've just done a thing and I haven't stopped doing it for ages. That's what.

How many hours do you think you've spent podcasting then? You mean in terms of how many hours of podcasts are available in my archive or how many hours have I spent actually working on this? Well, probably the second, actually really hard to tell because each episode takes a lot longer than obviously just the runtime of the episode. So I don't know how many, but if I've done a thousand, if it's on average about a thousand hours, okay. A thousand episodes equates to something like a thousand hours, maybe a lot more.

Then surely it's got to be multiplied by about five to 10 times. Maybe you need 10,000 hours to be an expert at something. Don't know.

That's right. There was, that's Malcolm Gladwell. Isn't it? He came up with that idea.

I don't know. It is Malcolm Gladwell. Um, and he released halfway, you released halfway there, put it like, yeah, at least halfway there.

You've done incredibly well. You, you, you have carved carved out a, um, a niche is I suppose that's something you carve out, isn't it? You do. You carve out a niche.

I mixed my metaphors then, but I decided not to. No, I think you do carve out a niche. I have carved out a niche for myself.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, definitely.

Yeah. It's good. Well, to celebrate your thousandth episode, I have collated some questions from mainly from members of your family.

It wasn't a very widely cast net of questions. I basically texted a few people last night. So it's not as complete as it could be.

We didn't ask your viewers, your listeners, I don't think for questions, but hopefully these will cover them, you know, kind of questions they would have asked anyway. I'm going to, I'm going to, by the way, I'm going to sort of, uh, extend this whole thing over a couple of episodes. So I probably will let my listeners ask me questions for which I can reply to on the podcast as well.

And also I might do a YouTube live, um, fairly soon. So people can kind of get stuck in there as well. I haven't done one for a while.

The episode 1000 celebrations will, will go on beyond just this one episode, I think. Good. In some form.

Yeah. So listeners, you will have the chance to ask me questions and do all that stuff in due course. Anyway, you, so you've prepared some questions.

Some of them come from friends and family. Yeah. Others come just from you.

Yeah. All right. Hit me.

Okay. Let's just get started. Yes.

First one I'm going to read out is from your mom and mine. Our mother. Simple question.

What's the best thing about doing a podcast or doing your podcast? What's the best thing about doing my podcast? Yeah. Um, Hmm. I don't, have you ever heard standup comedians talking about the best thing about being a standup is that they can get up in the morning, um, whenever they want and they write one joke and then they take the rest of the day off.

It's, it's a bit like that, although it's, there's a lot more work to it than that, but I suppose it's the fact that I, uh, get to choose whatever I want to do. Um, right. I've completely, I have total creative control.

It's like the Bill Hicks thing. I don't have a boss. Yeah.

I'm not speaking. That's that is Bill Hicks is like boxes are annoying. You know, um, I can't, I couldn't live in a box.

Why aren't you working? Why? Yeah. Bosses come up to you. Why aren't you working? Well, there's nothing to do.

We pretend like you're working. What do you pretend I'm working? You pretend I'm working. You get paid more than me.



You fantasise buddy. Um, but yeah, I don't really have a boss. I can choose what I want to do.

And a lot of the time, what I want to do is to just talk a load of sometimes what feels like a load of nonsense, although the, the, the, the bigger picture is that it's not a load of nonsense. Of course, it's all leading to something useful. Profound is there's, it's all establishing a profound human connection around the world.

Yeah. And also to do something constructive, which is to try and help people with their English. That's great.

Because as a teacher, what normally happens to me is that I get students for a certain amount of time in my classes, uh, it might be a couple of weeks or something, and then that's it. They go and I never see them again. And that can be a little bit frustrating because you never get the sense of long-term progress.

You're always starting again after a week or two. Uh, but doing this podcast has been nice. One of the best things about it is the sort of, um, the fact that it continues, you know, the continuity of it, uh, it's one long running project, one long body of work, which is very satisfying.

So it's that producing a large body of work that has continuity to it, uh, helping people with their English genuinely around the world, because they do write to me and tell me, which is amazing. And also the fact that I don't have a boss and I get to choose what I want to do, uh, in each episode, which is what I always wanted to do, you know, to kind of have a kind of a radio show, stand up sort of thing, combining those things with my actual work. So, um, in a way it's, um, it's, I feel very lucky that I've managed to find work that doesn't really feel like work, um, that combines all the things that I like and that I'm reasonably good at, um, Confucius, you know, Confucius.

I've heard he was a philosopher, right? I don't know any more than that. I don't know where he's from. I don't know what his background is.

I don't know. He was Chinese, but he's, he's the sort of, uh, it was Chinese philosopher, right? And you find his quotes in little books of philosophy and stuff. And one of his quotes was, um, find a job that you love and you'll never work a day in your life.

I don't think he said it in English. Well, I mean, in Chinese, right, right, right, right, right, right. I don't think he suddenly spoke English or wrote in English, but, um, that's quite a good, that's quite a good, uh, quote.

I think it doesn't feel like, well, that's great. I'm quite jealous. Um, okay.

Let's go on to another question. This is from your wife. What is your greatest joy in life? No pressure.

No pressure. Obviously my family, my wife and my children, that is clearly the number one thing. My greatest joy in life, aside from just, you know, simply spending wonderful time with them.

Um, Oh, it's a hard question, actually. Well, that can be your answer if you want. Yeah, that's, that is the answer.

But you want something else? But obviously, I mean, obviously that's the answer, but then making people laugh is quite, quite good. Yeah. Making a room full of people laugh.

Your family laugh, your close family. Uh, yeah, maybe not intentionally. Sometimes they just laugh at me.

They just point at me and laugh at me because I've done something stupid. So I do make them laugh for, you know, just that this, the little things, but, um, making people laugh and through the podcast, doing something on the podcast that I feel is going to be funny. And then people comment to say that it is funny.

That's, that's great. That's a, that is a great joy. Being able to bring joy and laughter to people's otherwise boring and uneventful lives.

Okay. Bring. Yeah.

Okay. That's, that's great. Um, I've got a question here from Aaron Barmer.

Aaron, a mutual friend of ours who speak could have been on the podcast a couple of times. Not, not that regularly, but a few times. Yeah.

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Aaron says, I've just seen the odyssey. What's the most heroic thing you've ever done? Having children doesn't count. So he's just seen the odyssey, which is obviously this big Christopher Nolan film about the, the, uh, Greek legend myth, uh, written by Homer.

Yeah. Although I think it was written down later. I think it was, uh, he didn't write it.

It was a vocal for, I think. Okay. But anyway, we call it an oral story.

Yeah. But the great Greek myth has been turned into a sort of a blockbuster film by Christopher Nolan and Aaron's just seen it. What's the most heroic thing I've ever done? Um, I mean, just in my life or, or in relation to this podcast.

No, just in your life. I was going to say, I think, you know, teaching, teaching young learners is pretty heroic stuff. Um, but in my life, God, I don't know.

Jesus. I don't think I've been in particularly heroic. Have you ever saved anything, anybody or anything from that? Never saved a human life.

I mean, I hopefully haven't caused the loss of one, but you know, you never do with the butterfly effect. I don't know what we have. Why do you think so? Yeah.

Do you ever think that, but you think if I just crossed the road a little bit earlier or faster, I might've prevent, you know, that could have caused a car accident or some little thing that I did. Who knows what the knock-on effects are, but anyway, we're talking about being heroic. No, I've never done anything particularly heroic.

I don't think so. I don't think so. Um, I mean, what, what classes is there's heroic.

What would be yourself to, to save others? I suppose. Oh God. No, I don't think I've ever, no significance that you've done.

That's, you know, just recorded a thousand. I've spent maybe 10,000 hours recording a thousand podcasts for learners of English around the world. But I think that's probably it genuinely.

That is the most heroic thing that I've ever done is just provided, um, motivating listening materials for people on the internet. I, I'm not particularly heroic as a person. I think I might've saved a few animals over the years.

Okay. That'll do what animals have you saved? Just like little creatures that our cat caught in the garden. I was thinking about running into a bushfire to save a family of, you know, raccoons or something.

No, I mean, we don't have that many bushfires in England or raccoons, although it's getting worse, isn't it? Um, so no, I've never done anything particularly heroic. Okay. Well, yeah.

Sorry. Sorry, everyone. That's honest, at least.

Okay. The next one comes from Ilana. Yeah.

This is your girlfriend. And she says, yes, she came up with quite a good question. What do you think you'd be doing if you hadn't started this podcast? What would I be doing if I hadn't started this podcast? A dark thought or a dark.

Oh dear. I don't know. Alternate universe that is.

I'm just thinking back to myself in London in 2009 and I had the idea to do this if I hadn't started doing this. Okay. That's a really difficult one.

So I don't know. I might, I might be doing standup. I might still be doing standup more than this because there was a point where it was kind of, should I pursue the podcast or should I pursue standup or should I pursue English teaching? And I ended up kind of mainly doing podcasts, then English teaching and then standup.

So I'd like to think that I would be still doing standup comedy and I'd have more time and energy devoted to that. And that maybe I'd be. Unlock the wake by now.

I'd be a professional, well-known comedian doing all of the panel shows on the BBC and live at the Apollo and the Edinburgh fringe and things like that. That's what I'd be doing. You'd be minted, man.

You think so? If you do the O2, you get minted. To have a career as a standup comedian, you need to put a lot of time in. There needs to be a lot of failure.

So who knows? I might be in the kind of the doldrums of my career and, you know, you're going to put in those, those difficult years before you actually ascend to the

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top. So who knows? I might be homeless or sort of living in a one bedroom flat, desperately trying to get on the BBC. That's probably what I'd be doing.

That's the comedy dream, isn't it? Really? To be just living in a one bedroom apartment. Not really dream, but more. Yeah.

Should we have some quick fire questions from Jake Brady? Yes. Okay. Are you ready? This is the Jake that was mentioned actually recently on the podcast in my conversation with Jez Booker when we kind of took a little trip down memory lane to the days of sixth form college.

And Jake's name was mentioned a few times because he was in, I was in bands with him and I kind of made friends with him at sixth form. And he was an important person for both Jez and me growing up. So Jake is a legend, a musical genius, and someone I've known for many, many years.

He's never been on the podcasts. There's this. Maybe I'll get him on sometime anyway, but yes.

What's the question? Right. Quick fire questions. How is your bongo playing these days? How's my bongo playing? I think it's as good as it ever was.

Although I haven't been practising, but my bongo playing kind of reached a peak around the year 2003 when I unlocked new bongo abilities and bongo skills and bought myself some decent bongos. Right. And I was in a band in Japan, a kind of funk fusion band playing bongos, which was a dream come true.

I think being the percussionist is one of the best jobs in a band. It's not often thought of, is it? I mean, not me. I don't know much pressure.

You're just adding a bit of sauce on top. Aren't you? Really? Exactly. And you can actually add the funk.

But if you make a mistake, no one's really going to notice. Yeah. You're just adding that layer of groove, but you're not the most important thing.

Like as a drummer, there's a bit more pressure because you've got to get everything right. You're the backbone of the band. But the bongo, you're just adding bongos or tambourine or whatever.

You're just adding a little bit of sort of, what's the word for it? Addering, sprinkling some salt and pepper. Fairy dust. Exactly.

Yeah. So playing bongos, you'd have to interact quite well with the drummer. Yeah.

You have to have a similar sense of rhythm because otherwise, if you're the drummer and you can hear the tambourines going out of time, that could really throw you. So you need to be on good terms with your drummer, I suppose. But no, I think bongo wise, I think those skills are probably locked in at this point.

Okay. Next question. Do you still have a mini disc player? Yes, I do.

I've got at least one. Is that from Jake as well? Yeah. These are all from Jake.

Yeah. I still have a mini disc player. Definitely.

I've got one in my office and I've got a bunch of old mini discs with some interesting recordings on them. I've seen a few mini discs on sale again recently. Not many, but a couple of obscure electronic artists put stuff out on mini disc.

I don't think I would choose mini disc as my listening medium of choice, but I've got a lot of old mini discs with recordings that I made because the mini disc recorder, you could stick a microphone in it and get really good quality digital recordings. And it also worked as a line in. So you could mess about with something on your stereo, doing a sort of crude mix and record it all onto your mini disc.

And you can also just plug a microphone into it and record stuff on the top of that as well. So, um, yeah, I've got some old classic mixes that I did with the mini disc and other, um, sort of weird field recordings that I did with it when I was outdoors. I remember just before I left Japan, I went out and just recorded myself walking into a local, um, uh, shopping mall and just all of the typical sounds that you could hear in the streets and in the shops and things like that.

So I've got some curious stuff still on mini disc. Could you send that to me? I'd need to, I'd need to, uh, get into the, get the mini disc and record it on, you know, digitise or read it, digitise it as MP3 or something. And then I'll do it.

Yeah. Well, that means you probably won't, but okay. Another question from Jake, do you still use toad in Mario cart? Another question from Jake.

Do I still use toad in Mario cart? If I was to play a game of super Mario cart on the super Nintendo entertainment system. So Jake and I were big, big fans of the game and we used to play it all the time. In fact, we, we had this musical project in the summer of probably 1994, making music together with all his equipment.

And we, we play music and then go into the house and play super Mario cart. And they go back into the garage and make more music. And we were so into Mario cart that we named the project after one of the characters.

So we named it after toad from super Mario brothers, who is a toad. He's a little toadstool mushroom. Um, yeah, I'll have a go on toad.

Yeah, definitely. He's definitely one of my favourite characters. Although I think the best characters in Mario cart are actually controversially bowser and donkey Kong.

They're the heaviest and therefore have the highest top speed and also are strong enough to bump all the other characters off the track. If you bump into them, they take a long time to get up to speed, but once they're up there, you can just race around the track. As long as you never crash, they're the fastest.

So don't stumble. Bowser are the expert choices, but a toad or Cooper trooper solid choices too. So, yeah.

Okay. Let's see. I've got a few of my own questions now.

My notes are really badly written. What's been the best or weirdest comments you've received online or some favourite, favourite comments you could say? Oh God. Oh, that's a really good question, but it's really hard to remember some of the specific comments because I get a lot and I look at most of them and every now and then there are some pretty weird and bizarre things.

I'm just trying to remember, but I forget them quite quickly. You know, I try not to let them bother me too much. I've had quite a lot of comments saying that I look like Shakespeare, which I don't really understand.

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That's a weird one. Quite a lot of people have said that. I mean, the people say that I look like Luka Modric or that I look like Harry Kane or that I look like some other person, but then Shakespeare every now and then I get someone who tells me that I look like Shakespeare and I think that's odd because I don't think I look anything like him and I'm not wearing a rough.

I don't have tights on usually no tunic and I don't have that completely bald slap head with the kind of Bob haircut and the goatee beard and all that stuff. So I don't really understand the Shakespeare comparison. That's a good one.

And also, if I'm going to be compared to Shakespeare, it's not what I don't want is to be compared to the way he looks. I'd much rather be compared to Shakespeare in terms of my ability to tap into the human experience or my clever witty control of language. But no, it's you look like Shakespeare.

Oh, okay. Thanks a lot. I don't, but that's interesting.

And there's no photographic evidence of Shakespeare. So we only have a few drawings or crude drawings that aren't or paintings that aren't like photorealistic. So we don't know exactly what he looked like.

Anyway, that's a good one. Quick other question. This is kind of related to that one.

If you could be a famous or well-known person from history for a day, who would you be? Oh, if I could be a famous or well-known person from history for a day, or even not well-known, just anyone from history. If I could be someone from history for a day, who would I be? Gosh, that's a really difficult conceptual question. So I have to decide.

So I could choose someone who basically spent all day lounging by a swimming pool drinking cocktails. I mean, there's, I don't know who that would be, or I could be someone who just led a very interesting life and did all sorts of further, all sorts of interesting things. Someone from history, I could be, I don't know.

Maybe start with a period in history that you'd like to see, and then maybe that'll give you an idea. Maybe you could be Shakespeare for a day. Yeah, I'll be Shakespeare.



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Go up to you and go, you look like Luke Thompson. You look like Luke from Luke's English podcast. Oh, I'd be Shakespeare.

I'd like to be Shakespeare seeing one of my plays being performed at the Globe Theatre and then having all those adoring people come up to me and tell me what a genius I am. And all my groupie fans would come up and, you know. Yeah, we don't need to go into that.

Yeah, but that's, that's my fantasy to be a sort of 16th century, 16th, 17th century celebrity being adored by, um, Tudor ladies. Babes. Yeah.

And would you have a codpiece? Not, not by the end of the night, not by the end of the night, I wouldn't. A codpiece. What's a codpiece? What is a codpiece? I've never, ever talked, I don't think that word has ever come up on this podcast before, over a thousand episodes.

Padded groinal piece of clothing, which probably resembles a cod. A cod, like the fish? Well, I'm thinking that's, it must be because it looks like a cod fillet. I mean, I don't know why I call it a codpiece.

It's sort of a padded jock strap, isn't it? It's a thing that covers the man's groyne, right? As it's an item of clothing that goes over the man's groyne and it makes it look large. It's like a padded thing that men might wear on their groyne. And there are certain periods of history when the codpiece was quite, quite well used, quite common.

Would I wear a codpiece? Yeah. Why not? Why not go with the times? I mean, they'd be like, God, he's not even got codpiece on. Playwright is he? Yeah.

You've got to have a codpiece. And also I was going to say, it'd be nice to know what it felt like to have that kind of brain. Oh, I thought you'd be real.

It'd be a real comedown, that kind of codpiece. But no, it'd be a real comedown going back to itself, wouldn't it? If you'd been Shakespeare for a day, you'd be like, my intellect is huge. My understanding of human nature is unparalleled.

My artistry is very good. The words, just the words and the phrases flying through your brain all the time. We've got to get this all down.

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And then you come back to being Luke again. Has anyone got any of those decaf tea bags left? Yeah, that's the level of highlight of your day. That's the level.

Have we got any milk in the fridge? Yeah. Yeah. It would be quite shocking, quite a shocking contrast to be so thick again.

Oh, I forgot. There's one more Jake question. Yeah.

Did you enjoy Andor and Rogue One? Did I enjoy Andor and Rogue One? So that is a Star Wars related question. Yeah, I did. I think of all the Star Wars output that we've had over the years, I think Andor, the series, and Rogue One are two of the better ones.

Yeah. Rogue One, I mean, it has been criticised for just being a big sort of, it's essentially the movie version of some big kids who grew up with Star Wars and now are old enough to make a film just playing with Star Wars toys in a movie. You know, that's kind of what it felt like.

Oh, look, AT-AT walkers and here's an X-Wing and lots of that sort of, it was sort of like the way that you and I used to play with Star Wars toys when we were a kid. In our imagination, we were essentially doing Rogue One and then they made that into a film. But it's good.

I really like it. And Andor is great, actually. It's much better than most Star Wars stuff.

And it sort of tells the story about how the world of Star Wars, um, the rise of authoritarianism in that universe and the rise of the rebellion that tries to fight against it. It's good. If you could choose, this is a question from me.

If you could choose a sponsor for the podcast, who would it be? A dream sponsor. And I'm assuming you get free products and, you know, you get some freebies from this company, whatever it might be. Also a product or brand that fits the podcast.

Well, do you think I'd love to be able to say Luke's English podcast is sponsored by wholesome pills or, you know, whatever it might be. I think probably for this podcast, it could be something like, um, Yorkshire tea or McVitie's chocolate digested biscuits or, um, that's nice. Yeah, that would be great.

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Wouldn't it? Yeah. If anyone's from the tea or biscuit company, preferably McVitie's slash Yorkshire. Yeah.

Any of the big tea companies. There's a company called Thompson tea. Did you know about that? Would you, would you accept Tetley as a sponsor? Tetley.

I mean, it's not the Tetley and winings or twinings. Twinings are big in America. I've noticed everyone drinks bloody twinings in America.

But it's horrible though, isn't it? Twinings is rubbish. It's crap. If you, if you go to the supermarket breakfast is like, you have to ring out to get anything out of it.

You need three tea bags and you have to squeeze them so hard to get anything near a decent cup of tea. So no, that Tetley twinings. And there are others as well that I can't think of at this point.

Those brand typhoo. Yeah. I think it is brands that you will find in any supermarket in the world.

Um, with English breakfast tea, those are normally terrible ones. The decent ones. Yeah.

I would accept a sponsorship from, from them as long as their tea is ethically sourced and sometimes it is on it. If he's got a frog on it, you're safe. Right.

Okay. That's the logo. I don't know what the frog means, but it's got a frog on it.

It's gotta be all right. Yeah. As long as it's ethically sourced and there's a frog on the packet, not in the packet, just a picture of a frog on the packet and the tea bags are biodegradable and stuff.

Then yeah, I'd happily be sponsored by a tea company and they could just keep me in tea. The current supply of tea. Massively teed up continuously.

Yeah. Yeah. Yes.

Yes, please. Okay. Let's have a quick question.

I wish I had tea. Well, I've got some downstairs. Right.

Another question from me. If an alien landed in your garden, what would you show them of earth culture? I'm not going to say the answer. The first answer that came in my head, then what the org? No, that's not what I'd show it.

Alien come in my background. What would you show them? Have a look at this. If an alien landed in my background, what would I show it to sort of think of it like you know, and he sort of wanders in and discovers him.

And if you could say, okay, you've shown me your universe. Now let me show you our world. I think I'd show it.

We've got this. We've got like a wireless vacuum cleaner. Yeah.

You need to be impressed by that. I can do to just come from zillion miles from outer space, travelling beyond the speed of light, which is probably impossible crossing light years of distance. Can you show him a cordless vacuum cleaner? Hey, right.

Come and look at this. Right. Yeah.

Nevermind. It's a vacuum cleaner, right? You just press that and it just goes around the, the, the, it goes around the carpet, hoovering up pretty good robot one that goes around hoovering for you. Automatic robot robotic vacuum cleaner is the most impressive thing in my house.

If an alien landed, I'd show it that. And the alien were like, seriously, that's the best you can do. Um, I dunno, what, what, what would I show it? I mean, I'm assuming that they know about fire.

I might show it. We'll light a candle and go, Ooh, look, this is fire. This is the basis of all, all of, uh, major technologies.

And look at this, this is a wheel. That's pretty good. Isn't it know about the wheel and about fire? Yeah.

Well, you never know. Well, you never know. Maybe they don't.

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I imagine an alien culture will have developed technology that is based on entirely different principles, like sort of liquid liquid metals or something like that. You know, that's the sort of stuff that aliens are going to be doing things in a different way. They'll have liquid metal or it'll be based around, um, I don't know.

It'd be based around sort of, um, uh, like metal parts that slide up against each other or something, you know, uh, smooth friction, frictionless electromagnets. It's all about electromagnets, electromagnets. Exactly.

And they never would have seen the wheel before. So I'd show them a wheel and go, look at this as it goes round and round all the way around. And then it carries on again.

So you can make your car, you can make cars out with these wheelbarrows and stuff. Yeah. Pretty, pretty cool.

Um, yeah, that's it. And then I'd show it then. I don't know.

What else would I show it? I'd show The Big, The big Lebowski, The Big Lebowski. Yes. Jeff Bridges, the Coen brothers film.

Well, there you go. Hoover wheel. Now sit down.

Let's watch The Big Lebowski together. Pretty good. Pretty good.

First day for an alien on a first date for an alien first date with an alien. And then we were like... putting your arm around it. [Putting] My arm around it's shoulder. Get off with an alien.

Yeah. I mean, we don't know. Maybe these aliens are going to be really attractive. Yeah, could be. Maybe there won't be, but in films, normally it's the opposite.

Normally they're hideously ugly and they've got eyes on stalks and things, but maybe they're going to be sexy, sexy aliens. We can only hope. If it's anything like the original Star Trek series, then you're onto a winner.

Yeah. That's right. Captain Kirk went around having, having sexy time with lots of lovely looking female aliens.

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Didn't he? He certainly did. Right. A question from our father, Rick Thompson.

Okay. Are you ready? Who in the world is the person you admire the most and would like to have on your podcast? Yeah. Who's the one on your podcast that you admire? Dad is always going on about how I should be trying to get big name guests on this show.

And he, he quite seriously expects me to interview Paul McCartney. I said to him, Oh dad, episode 1000 is coming up. And he said, I think you should get a big guest.

I think you should try and get Paul McCartney. Did you see that Rick Beato video about I will never host Paul McCartney? Yes, I did. Rick Beato, he's a, he's a, he's a YouTuber.

He's a kind of boomer on YouTube. He does videos about music. He's good.

But the thing that I found interesting, he breaks down the numbers that they're getting from the traditional media that are going with like BBC, Rolling Stone, et cetera, which are traditional media that don't have a massive internet presence, not as massive as he has. He's saying, if you're basing it purely on numbers, all of these put together, don't get as many views as I get. And my fans are pure music fans, not just every day.

People have wandered in off the street. You know, they're quite a specific audience. He's saying, you know, why can't I get a look in? And I was thinking, well, mainly because you film your entire show in front of a green screen.

It doesn't, it's not a green screen. Well, it looks like a green screen. It does look like a green screen, but it's not.

That's genuinely his studio. That is his studio. A studio that looks more visually appealing to a guest.

Like, you're not expecting Paul McCartney to stand. All right. Okay.

It looks like a green screen. So he should maybe rearrange it so it doesn't look like a green screen. Yeah, I guess maybe.

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That's the only thing I'd say. But yeah, it is very interesting. The fact that why are these agents or whatever not interested in new forms of media, like podcasts and stuff, which may not be big names.

But if you're after numbers and hitting, you know, exposure, viewers, numbers of viewers, why not go for Rick Beato or you, for instance? Hmm. Yeah. Okay.

Okay. Universal music group or whoever it is. Come to me.

Come to me. If you, if you want to get exposure, international exposure. Uh, don't just get some boring BBC interview.

Paul McCartney should come on my podcast. Ringo. I would have Ringo.

That's my answer to dad's question. Right. Yeah.

Ringo star, please. Just want to just chat to him about, uh, that thing he did on tomorrow. I never knows.

Do you think he's, I'd ask him, how did he come up with that? And he'd just go, well, I don't know. It's just instinctive really. It was Paul.

Like most of the things Paul came up with. He just sat down on the drums and said, play this. And so I did.

But how much, yeah. But when people ask musicians about their greatest songs, I think the honest answer is I can't really remember. I just came up with it.

I don't know where it came from. I just sat down and wrote it half in one day and half in another day. And I don't remember specifically writing it or particularly recording it because it's just one of a thousand other songs they did in a lot of cases.

And it's only the importance comes with the listeners. They decide which ones are the big smashes and which ones aren't. And sometimes you don't even know when you're making it where this is, you know, sometimes you do.

I'm guessing Paul thought yesterday was pretty shit hot when he was recording it. I should imagine. But I think a lot of them, they, they don't know.

They're just trying something and they don't specifically remember. Probably. How did you come up with that riff? I just did is the only answer that you can give really.

Yeah. Yeah. That's right.

But that's not what people want to hear. I was inspired by rah, rah, rah, rah. And, you know, it was a cold Tuesday and I just stepped out of my new car and, you know, I saw this bird flying across the sky and I just, no, it's never that.

Yeah. Yeah, that's right. Okay.

Um, what else have we got here? My notes are so messy. Do you have many more regarding your podcast? Any regrets regarding my podcast? Differently, or. There's been a few episodes where I forgot to press record.

Always extremely painful. That time you interviewed Paul McCartney and you did that. That was, that was a bad one.

Yeah. Yeah. So unprofessional.

Regrets. Well, that'll do. That's a good one.

It's always an interesting, wasn't it? When you talk about regrets or ask about regrets. I don't really have that many regrets generally. And regarding the podcast, I don't have any specific regrets that I can think of.

That's good. Okay. That's fine.

Move on. We're trying to keep this fairly. Quick.

Really quick fire. Have you ever feared for your life? Have I ever feared for my life? A little bit. I was on a plane once.

We were flying in Thailand, about to land in Bangkok. And we were landing in the middle of a really severe electrical storm. That was pretty scary.



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I remember walking back from the toilet. The seatbelt lights came on and I was walking back to the toilet and the turbulence was so bad. I remember just walking along and suddenly just the ground dropped out from under my feet.

Yeah. And you were just in midair. Yeah, just for a second.

And then kind of like fell back down onto the ground and then strapped in next to my wife. And the lightning was flashing all around us and like heavy rain. And we were the plane was running around the plane.

Yeah. And we were trying to come into land and stuff and it was terrifying. And both of us were like holding onto each other thinking, oh my God, this could be the end.

But obviously the pilot knew what he or she was doing. That was okay. There was another experience out in Indonesia, again, with my wife.

We were travelling from one of the little islands to a tiny little island off its coast. So we're really remote to begin with, but then we wanted to travel to an even further remote island where we were going to stay for a few days. And to get there, everyone basically got on board this really basic wooden, long wooden fishing boat.

And it was clearly not designed for the number of people that were on it. There were so many people crammed onto this boat. Yeah.

So many people and animals and food and loads of tourists and locals. And it just more and more people kept getting on. And it was sitting so low in the water, so horribly low in the water.

And the engine was like on the back of it, working so hard. And you had to get out to this island. And we'd heard people say that you must not swim.

You know, you mustn't swim out there because the currents are so strong. They'll pull you out to sea. And we got into this boat and we were in the boat and the, uh, you know, it was just, just about, I don't know, 10, 15 centimetres from the edge of the boat was the water.

And just, it just felt so sketchy. And I just thought, you know, every now and then you read some random little report in the newspaper about, you know, uh, a boat off

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the coast of Lombok in Indonesia sank two British tourists drowned in the incident. I just thought we're going to be one of these little stories, aren't we? In the news.

On page seven. Exactly. Footnote in page seven of the independent newspaper.

Uh, so that was terrifying, but everything was all right in the end. Thank God for that. Horrible.

That kind of thing, isn't it? Cause you're completely out of your control. Yeah, that's right. Okay.

One last question. What advice would you give your 18 year old self? Oh, that's a good one, isn't it? What advice would I give to my 18 year old self? So I would probably say to my 18 year old self, go, actually go to a few lessons at sixth form and apply yourself to it and read the things you're supposed to read. Study a little bit more because the more you study, the more interesting it is.

So I would probably tell myself to be a bit more disciplined, but then also maybe I would just say to my 18 year old self, I would say, you know what? Don't worry about anything. Everything's going to be all right. Um, uh, live these years.

These are the best, potentially the best years of your life. Have fun, enjoy yourself, but keep your head on your shoulders. Don't look after yourself, but have a, have a great, have a great time all the time, you know, because you kind of think when you're only 18 once and you can, you wouldn't listen anyway, because your parents told you to do all that stuff anyway, and told you to study and told you to do this and that, and you just ignored them.

So I'd probably say, just carry on. You're great. You just carry on, do what you're doing, live your life.

Everything's fine. So maybe, you know, that would be great thing to hear. Wouldn't it? From someone who'd come to you and say, I've come to give you advice from the future message for you.

Nice one, mate. You're doing great. Carry on doing whatever you want to do.

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Just don't worry about it. Just do whatever you want to do and start a podcast as soon as possible. Start doing standup and a podcast as soon as, as soon as that's technically possible.

Podcasts don't even exist. iPods don't even exist. So you would have invented the podcast before the pod.

Yeah. I would have just be recording myself onto cassette tape and then sending cassettes all around the world. Something like that.

Yeah. Do more recordings, do more creative stuff, make more things, record things, make stuff all the time and then you get better and better at it. That's what I'd say.

Okay. I think that's all the, all the good questions. Thanks very much.

I think what I'm going to do now is I'll record it later. I'm going to do some sort of ramble at the end, but I don't know, I'm trying to, I'm trying to find the words to explain how profound this is to have reached a thousand episodes, but I'm thinking maybe it's not that profound. It's just a thousand episodes of a podcast.

It doesn't have to be that profound, but just, just show gratitude. I think through the main thing. Yeah.

Yeah. Let other people do the aggrandising for you, which I'm sure they will. Yeah.

Okay. Um, but yeah, congratulations. Very good.

Very well done props. Thank you very much. It's also going to ask, maybe you could ignore it.

How much money do you make out of podcasting? Oh, I make a, I make a lot of money. I make, um, very successful. Um, I make a, I make a respectable, so I'll make a respectable living and I make more than I would do if I was teaching 30 hours of classes a week, which is what I was doing before, but it's taken me a long time to get to that position, but I'd, I'd earn more if I was chasing up those sponsors that I talked about before.

Do you have an agent? No, I don't know if it's just me. Maybe you should get an agent and they'll get you the money. Yeah.

But then I'd have to pay the agent money. Oh, they just kiss 10% of the arses. Or whatever it is.

Yeah. Well, that's obviously, that's a thing, you know, I've got to a certain level and, and to an extent, the logical next step is to make it bigger and bigger and get, and start to employ people and get an agent and this, that, and the other. But I actually, like I said before, I don't like having a boss, but I don't necessarily want to be a boss either.

I'm quite, I'm not, I'm okay with this lean sort of, um, arrangement that I've got, where it's more or less just me. I like the freedom that brings, and I don't really want to have people under me because then I've just the responsibility and the, the, the way that I have to, I have to treat them so fairly. Well, the agent would be more alongside you than underneath you, or maybe above you, but they just, you just be on their books and they, it's not like you have to employ them.

You work together. Well, ACAST do some of that. That's my podcast host.

And they do actually do that to an extent and bring me sponsorship reads and stuff. They do that quite regularly. So in a way I've got an agent.

Well, I just wondered, I think you're doing good. I don't swamp the thing with ads. No, I don't want to overkill it with ads.

Like, um, during the world cup, I was listening to various football podcasts and the most famous one is the rest is football. You know, Gary Lineker's one, and he really, they really went overboard with the ads this time where there's like three or four minutes of host read sponsorship ads at the beginning of every episode. And they're always the same ones.

They do it, record it once and then repeat this, play the same recording every time. And it, it really annoying, very unpleasant to hear and doesn't, doesn't really, um, uh, please the audience. So balance, you know, want to get the balance, right? Yeah, definitely.

Thank you, James. Thank you for the questions. You're welcome.

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Thank you for all those episodes that you've done on this podcast over the years. It's all, it's all part of the rich soup, uh, that forms the basis of this whole project. Can I drop a quick, um, plug? Yeah, of course you can.

New new EP out called the high score table EP. This is a new, a new, uh, music EP. Yeah.

That is out. It's available in which formats? Minidisc. Vinyl.

It's not on minidisc. It's on vinyl and it's on MP3 download. Bandcamp copies have sold out, but there may be some copies in your home country.

If you're in Europe, Japan, USA, there's copies around in those countries as well as UK. He's got quite a good distribution. This one.

So just look up Jim Thompson, the high score table EP. You could even play five seconds of it now. Jim Thompson, high score table EP.

I'll put a link in the description. I could play five seconds worth of it now to give you a little flavour. Maybe I'll do that at the end of this conversation.

As I, um, move into the next part of this episode. I'll do that. Thank you very much, James.

Thank you. Have a lovely day. See you soon.

You're going to come here with your, uh, girlfriend and your child. You're going to spend some time here in this lovely house in the countryside. That we are very much looking forward to that.

It's going to be great. Sweet. Okay.

All right. No, have a great day. Um, thanks for, you know, all your hard work for your listeners.

Okay. Thanks, James. It's speak to you soon.

Cheers. Bye. Okay.

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Thank you very much to James for interviewing me there and for being good enough to collect questions from some family members and some friends. Um, I really enjoyed that. Uh, but let's continue now.

And, uh, I'm still here in the garden. My son apparently is still asleep. So I'm going to use this opportunity to continue and to do a bit more recording here.

Uh, I wonder how many different recording sessions are going to be needed to get this episode done so far. It's three separate occasions, but there's a lot more to this episode yet to be done. Uh, so who knows, but anyway, I'm going to keep going now for a while.

And in this section, what you're going to get is more questions from regular guests or, um, friends of the podcast, let's say, and you'll hear some familiar voices, voices that you've heard on this podcast over the last couple of years. I didn't go through the entire archive and go into the deep, you know, history. Um, but, uh, over the last couple of years, here are some people who have featured on this podcast, uh, with their questions.

A reminder, if you have questions for me, if you'd like to get involved and ask me questions, I mean, this, again, this does seem rather self-indulgent. Like you can ask me questions as if, um, I have any, uh, particular value beyond anyone else. I mean, you know, but anyway, I suppose it's episode 1000, but if you do have questions, you can, um, get into the comment section, write your questions there.

Also remember, I'm looking for English success stories. I'm looking for life stories connected to Luke's English podcast, uh, as well. And I'm going to collect all that stuff and turn it into, um, another episode, right? Um, so that that's your chance to ask me questions, but I've got some questions here in text form, audio form, and video form from, um, various other guests.

My daughter's just arrived again. She has pulled up a chair now in front of me, um, which has become her seat. I mean, is this the way it's going to be? Like every time I do a podcast, you're going to jump in.

Are you going to kind of, um, uh, how do, how do I say this? You're going to sort of force your way into the podcast again to become my co-host. Nope. Okay.

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But do you have a question? Yes. Um, it's a really dumb question. Really dumb question.

Okay. But, uh, is, is at a T a verb? Okay. What's happened happening here is that she is, I've asked her to do some more English homework and she's come to try to try to squeeze the answer to one of her questions, uh, out of me.

Are you, are you passing sentences? Yes. Passing P A R S I N G. This is where you go through a sentence and you have to identify the different parts of speech. Is at a verb? Nope.

Nope. Okay. But what is it? We've been through this many, many times.

Okay. Right. Nouns and verbs are the most important words in a sentence.

So tell me what nouns are again. Nouns are, what nouns are the names of persons, people or places. So they're like the things.

Persons or objects, people or places. Okay. It has capital, capital thing.

Capital letters. Well, sometimes. So teeth is a noun.

The sun shines and the grass grows. Right. Tell me the nouns in that sentence.

Sunshine. The sun. So sun shines.

Well, what shines? Shines is a verb. Is a verb. Right.

So verbs are the things that happen. Okay. Normally doing words.

Yeah, I know. That's the easiest. Yeah.

Okay. And with verbs, you change the form of the verb for the past, the present, the future. Right.

Yeah. Yeah. Okay.

So verbs are in different tenses. Don't scrape the microphone on your jumper. Oh, goodness me.

So is at a verb. Well, what do you think? Based on what we just said. Can you conjugate the word at? Can you put it in the past? No.

So where does at go in a sentence? What comes after the word at? I can't remember. At one place. Okay.

So I learn English at school. Right. Yeah.

Or you like a gnash. Gnash. Gnash your teeth.

Gnash your teeth at a bone. You've been learning spelling words with gn and gnash. G-N-A-S-H.

To gnash your teeth is to kind of do that. Like the way a dog bites a bone. Yeah.

It gnashes his teeth. Okay. So at a bone, like.

At a bone. It gnashed its teeth at a bone. So you waved a bone in front of the dog's face and it went.

No, a lion. A lion gnashed its teeth at the bone. Okay.

So what is it? Well, I know exactly what it is. I'm trying to find ways. Listeners, do you know what the word at is? What type of word is this? So we've got nouns and verbs.

We've dealt with them. There's adjectives as well, right? Do you remember adjectives? They describe other words in a sentence. No, they describe nouns.

They describe nouns. Exactly. Or pronouns.

Right, exactly. So the angry lion, for example. Angry is the adjective.

Then also we have adverbs, right? These describe verbs, right? So he gnashed his teeth angrily. Angrily is an adverb. But why doesn't proverb exist? Well, that's a good question.



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Pronoun exists, right? Yeah, because... What's a pronoun? A pronoun is like a little short word for a name or something. So it replaces another word in the sentence. Like he.

He. Like Noah played, he played. Yeah, so Noah played the piano and he played three songs.

So instead of saying Noah played the piano and Noah played three songs, we use the pronoun he to replace the word Noah. Yes, to not repeat really. To not repeat and it refers back to the word that we had before.

Okay, so that's a pronoun. So we've had nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns. Are there any others? There's conjunctive and it's not conjunction.

Sorry, it's not that. So it's a preposition. It's a preposition.

Thank you, bye. Okay, listeners, there you go. That was a quite a useful one, though, wasn't it? Because despite these random interruptions, they have been quite useful because we've had collective nouns.

There are a few different collective nouns for different groups of things, if you remember. And then we've just had different parts of speech. Prepositions, listeners, you know.

Prepositions are a very tricky aspect of English. And they are typically small words that we use to attach nouns to the sentence. So at the bone, at school.

Yes, and so we use prepositions to add nouns into sentences, basically. And collocations are very important here. You tend to find certain prepositions go with certain nouns.

The easy way of understanding prepositions is prepositions of place or position and movement on the table, under the table, next to the table, behind the table, around the table, you know. Prepositions of place and movement onto the table, into the cup, things like that. Then there's prepositions of time, you know, at six o'clock, on Monday, in August.

And then there are all sorts of other prepositions that are just really a little bit, it seems a bit arbitrary. And you just have to remember that, you know, we say at full

speed, in time, on time. Yes, that's another question for another time, isn't it? Prepositions.

I did do several episodes about prepositions many years ago. You could go back and listen to them. Well, maybe you listen to the second part.

I'll talk about those prepositions episodes later in this episode because they are, well, one of them was a bit of a disaster as I'm about to actually talk about that. So anyway, questions and comments from other guests who've been on this podcast over the last few years. If you will forgive more self-indulgent ramblings, let's go.

Okay. So Martin Aaron, this is Martin from the recent episodes in which he asked me more questions. He asked me questions about childhood recently and about food as well.

So that's Martin. He actually wrote three questions and said, take your pick. I think I'll have a stab at all three of them.

First question is, when have you laughed most while recording an episode? When have you laughed most while recording an episode? Martin, I honestly can't remember, but I've laughed quite a lot in the past, especially with guests. Martin, I laugh a lot in episodes with you. That's one of the things I enjoy most about our episodes is that there's always a bit of humour in there and we do have a good laugh.

I laugh a lot when I'm with Amber and Paul, my long-term comedian friends who've been on the podcast. But I think in recent memory, the time I've laughed the most on this podcast is actually in this episode itself. When my brother asked me that question, if an alien landed in your garden, what would you show it? My first thought was to show it.

Well, I won't describe what I initially thought I would show an alien that landed in my garden because it's too rude, but I'll let you imagine what that is. Like, hey alien, have a look at this. But then I thought about it a little bit and just decided that I would show it our cordless vacuum cleaner, a bit like the lawnmower that we were talking about earlier.

We've got one of those automatic vacuums that goes around and that's pretty cool. So I would show it that. And for some reason that caused me to laugh so much.

But because of the microphone problem I described, you probably couldn't hear any of the laughter, but I was in stitches. So I think in, as far as I can remember, it was that moment in this episode. But I'm sure there have been plenty of other times as well.

Second question from Martin, which episode was the biggest disaster? And Martin mentioned that he used to do a podcast with his friend Andrew. They only did 50 episodes and they had at least four disasters. For a podcast to become a disaster, I mean, there's several ways that can happen.

One is the technical problem where you think you're recording, but actually you're not. And luckily, recently when I've had these technical issues, they've been recoverable because I have had a sort of backup recording with a poor quality microphone, but one that I could fix with AI. But in the past, I have in fact recorded entire episodes of the podcast and then checked and realised that none of it was actually captured.

One of those was video and I just had a black screen and I just published it anyway on YouTube with a black screen. And several weeks later I realised that for some reason, no microphone was selected. And so I did the entire episode with lots of spontaneous anecdotes and funny bits that could never be repeated.

And I discovered that none of it had been captured and all I had was like an hour and a half of total silence. This is the sort of thing that makes you want to throw your laptop into a lake or something like that. And I did that in an episode with my friend Sebastian Marks.

We did one about English words that have come from Yiddish. Do you remember that a couple of years ago? Sebastian came all the way over to my podcasting room, quite a long journey for him. We sat down together and we recorded this fantastic conversation about English words that have come into the language from Yiddish, just one of the languages that English has poached words from.

And we had a fantastic conversation full of interesting insights and again, humorous moments and little stories and things. And then we finished and we were tired and happy to have done something good. And I checked and instantly, it was almost like my heart stopped when I realised that I hadn't recorded any of the audio.

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The video was fine, but you just couldn't hear a damn word that we were saying to each other. So we had to just press record and start the entire thing again. And we just did it all again, exactly the same stuff that we just said.

We just did it all over again and miraculously, more or less, remembered every single thing we'd done and just did it again. But we, I don't know if it's obvious from the video, but we're a bit like at the beginning of the episodes, right? So Sebastian, hello, welcome to the podcast. How are you? You know, it was a bit like that kind of energy, but you don't realise that, do you? When you're watching or listening to an episode, you don't realise the situation that has happened just before or just after.

So that was one of the biggest disasters. And then other reasons why a podcast episode can be a disaster is simply because just the things you say are just total nonsense, or you get it all wrong, or you realise that you don't know what you're talking about, or you make a terrible mistake and say the wrong thing. And I did, many years ago, I did an episode about prepositions.

I thought, I'm going to talk about prepositions, I'm going to ramble about prepositions. A bit like if a student had come to me in class and asked me, what are prepositions, can you explain them? And then I just talked about prepositions. And my daughter's trying to interrupt, hold on.

And I just talked and talked about prepositions until I got to the point where I realised that I needed to do more preparation, that I wasn't really able to ramble about prepositions in an insightful enough way. But nevertheless, despite the fact that I felt like it was a sort of a failure, I decided to publish the episode anyway. Most people were fine with that and enjoyed the episode.

I did get one rather angry comment from someone who said, I don't know who it was, but they said to me that they were very disappointed that they had to listen to this entire episode without hearing me get to the point. And in the end, they still didn't really know what a preposition was. So very sorry to that person.

And the very next episode, I try to fix the problem by actually, you know, doing a bit more research in advance. Something I've learned, if I'm about to do something like that, a specific episode on a specific topic that is definitely worth doing the research in advance. And just rather than relying on my ability to just pull an answer out of nowhere, sometimes that just doesn't work.

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Um, I've got a third question from Martin, which is what advice would you give to the Luke Thompson of episode one? So if I could go back in time to 2009, um, and revisit me, um, either just before, just after recording episode one, what advice would I give? Honestly, I don't think I would give that much advice because I think when I started the podcast, um, I was already fairly deep into my career. And I felt like I knew what I was doing already. And I'd already worked it all out in my head.

And I knew basically the kind of thing I wanted to do. And I was really excited because I had this great idea and I could, I had a vision for it. I thought I could do loads of these episodes in this way.

And I think the sort of the blueprint that I created for episode one, I'm still using more or less the same approach. And so I don't think I would advise the Luke Thompson from 2009. Many things really, except just go for it.

Carry on. You're definitely onto a good thing. Keep doing it and do just, um, experiment more experiment as much as possible.

I think those are probably the moments in this podcast that have been the most interesting and most exciting where I've decided to do something kind of really different and experiment with something like a different format or an improvised story or something like that. So just keep, keep going and have fun with it. But I think one big thing would be, I would recommend the Luke Thompson of 2009 to invest in a reasonable microphone because I had no clue about microphones at all.

I thought that there was such a thing as a microphone that you could just put on a table and it would record crisp, perfect audio. I had no idea. So if, if I could, I would say to Luke from 2009, buy yourself a dynamic microphone like the one I'm using now, the sort of microphone you see comedians or musicians using on stage.

Get yourself a £100 dynamic microphone like the Shure SM58 and get yourself a basic, um, uh, microphone interface, which is a little box essentially that you plug that microphone into and you can control the audio levels and things like that. And that then plugs into your computer via USB. And that will result in much better quality sounds than that terrible inbuilt microphone on that old MacBook that I was using in those days.

So I would recommend myself to just invest a bit more money into the right kind of microphone and then just have fun and experiment and just make as many

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episodes as you want and enjoy the process. That's what I would say to Luke Thompson from episode one of this podcast. And Olivia, my daughter is back with another crazy question.

Okay, what is it? You're going to get me to answer you to do your homework again, aren't you? So go on then. So this in, so they say add a PH or GH to complete each word. Add a GH or a PH to complete each word and draw a picture.

So you're doing, again, you're doing spelling words that are spelled with GH or PH. Yes. And it's so hard.

I couldn't, I didn't even do one. I didn't even do one, um, word. Give me the, give me the book, please.

Give me the book because, um, we need to know what these GH and PH words are. So it's words like rough, you know, rough and smooth. Rough, R-U-O-G-H, R-O-U-G-H.

But, but the words that you'll see here, show them. Dan's D-O-L space I-N, Dan's dolphin. Well, they're not from my spelling list.

Not from your spelling list. No. Dolphin, laugh, L-A-U-G-H, sphere, S-P-H-E-R-E.

Okay, thanks. Like a ball. Okay, but can I do my homework here and I'm not talking? All right, she'll be back like the Terminator.

Um, so thanks Martin for those three questions. The next question is from Kate Billington, friend of the podcast, Kate Billington. And her question is this.

If you could only eat one type of cake for the rest of your life, what would it be and why? So this is an appropriately cake-based question from Kate, the cake maker. She is a professionally qualified cake maker. She's got a full-on like French cake making qualification.

So she knows a lot about cakes and she makes really good cakes, including, well, all the cupcakes and cookies and things that she's brought to me in the past when she's been on the podcast. It's just not the same now that she lives in Taiwan and we have to do podcasts remotely because, well, no cake. We have Kate, but no cake.

But so Kate's question, Kate's cake-based question, if you could only eat one type of cake for the rest of your life, what would it be and why? Good question. I think it would probably be one of two types. It's going to be a sponge cake of some kind because for me, that's the best kind of cake.

Sponge cake in a cup of tea. So some sort of sponge cake and either it will be the classic Victoria sponge, which is, is this not right? Simple, like is it vanilla flavoured sponge cake, two sponge cakes on top of each other with a layer of strawberry jam and I think cream in the middle or is it buttercream? Anyway, strawberry jam in the middle and on the top, some sort of icing sugar sprinkled on the top. That is a classic cake, either that or just a simple chocolate sponge cake.

And I think we all know what that is. It's just chocolate cake with, you know, it's just chocolate sponge cake. So either one or the other.

I wouldn't go for something more fancy. I like to keep it reasonably simple with my cake. So no need for some sort of fancy thing with loads of cream all piled up on top of it.

I wouldn't want a Battenberg cake. That's the one that looks like it's windows, you know, four squares, just the taste. Doesn't it have a sort of an, a sort of almond taste to it? No, just a simple sponge cake, chocolate or Victoria sponge.

That's the cake for me. Thank you, Kate, for your cake based question. I appreciate that very much.

And it makes me realise how much I miss the cakes that you make. So I don't know how we're going to deal with that. Maybe she can post me cakes in advance of the next recording with Kate.

But there you go. That was my cake question from Kate. Yes.

You're back again. She's back again with another question. Please just do your homework.

It's not a question. It's a surprise. What's the surprise? What is it? Is this for me? Yeah.

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Is it really for me? Yeah. My daughter has brought me one of these. And for non... But I need to have a bite, Mummy said.

Because Mummy had two giant bites of mine. Fly landed on my hand and wouldn't get off. You have a bite of this.

But for non-video viewers, what am I holding in my hand? It is a... A pan au chocolat. When I... Is that the correct way to say it? Pan au chocolat. Yeah, because when I go to the bakery... Pan au chocolat.

I say, bonjour, est-ce que je peux avoir un pan au chocolat? And they go, huh? And then I get all annoyed. But it's a pain au chocolat, isn't it? Not pan au chocolat. Me too, I always say pain au chocolat.

No, it's not right. It's pain au chocolat. So this is a classic French bit of patisserie.

It's like a croissant, but it's got bits of chocolate in the middle. Go on then, you have a bite and then I'll have the rest. I think it's probably the moment for me to stop now.

Does this mean that the little boy is awake? He's not? Well, he will be in a minute. Yeah, because mummy said that... We can't hear you. Mummy said that the little boy will wake up.

Yeah, because it's late now, isn't it? Yeah, because he wouldn't go to sleep. He was resisting a rest earlier. Okay, well, look, I'm going to eat this pan au chocolat and then we'll continue this mad episode.

With more questions from friends and family coming up. And we're back again. And it is the next day.

This is the fourth day of recording for this episode. This is getting really ridiculous. That pain au chocolat was delicious, by the way.

Yum, yum, yum. What a lucky boy I am. But it is the next day.

And yes, my son is asleep again. This is the only time when I can do this, when he's sleeping. And so for the time being, I'm able to do this.



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We'll see if my daughter interrupts me again. But she's currently deeply involved in doing some origami, which she's really into at the moment. Folding bits of paper and making frogs and foxes and stuff.

It's really cool, actually. But right, let's continue, shall we? Yes, let's do that. Let's try and keep the pace up as we go through this next section.

So then let's continue with some more questions from previous guests on this podcast. And we're going to go for some audio and video questions that have been sent to me. The first one is from Alistair Budge from Leonardo English.

And this is Alistair's question. Luke, congratulations on episode number 1000. It's a fantastic achievement.

Here is my question. If you had to start it all over again, what would you have done differently, if anything at all? OK, thank you, Alistair, for your question. If I started all over again, what would I do differently, if anything at all? I've kind of answered this question already, haven't I, I think.

And I think I said that, I think one of the things I mentioned was recording equipment and investing earlier in a reasonable microphone. But at the time, I didn't know what I was doing in terms of microphone stuff. So if I can just add a couple of other things to that, and I'll talk about this a little bit more, because there may be some of you out there who are interested in doing something like this, right? There may be some of you who are interested in doing a similar thing, right? Doing a podcast about whatever you have things to talk about.

And I think it's a fantastic idea. But yes, audio equipment. So I said before, here are the basic things you need, right? You could spend loads of money on this kind of equipment, but you don't need to.

You can do it pretty simply. So this is what I would do differently. I would earlier get some equipment, as I'm about to explain in a bit more detail now.

So the first thing, as I said, is a dynamic microphone. This is the kind of microphone that blocks other sounds. So it tends to just capture the sounds that happen directly in front of it.

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And sounds that happen behind it and to the sides and in the distance don't really get picked up. So this is the ideal kind of microphone for recording in situations where, for example, you're not in a controlled audio environment, not in a studio where you know it's going to be silent. So I can record outside in the garden, or I can record in my apartment where there's noise outside, just general noise.

And it's pretty good at rejecting all those noises. So something like a Shure SM58. But there's a company called Behringer, and they kind of do copies of most audio equipment at a drastically cheaper price.

I mean, I don't know where you stand on that kind of thing in terms of them copying other people's products or even the conditions in which those products are made. Because they're incredibly cheap. You can get a pretty good dynamic microphone from Behringer for about 25 euros, I think.

So if you're on a super budget, go for that. But otherwise, the Shure SM58. And you need to make sure that that microphone is really close to your mouth.

It's got to be just like within a couple of inches from your mouth. It's no good if it's like really far away from your mouth. You can't just put it on a table, you know, a couple of feet away and point it in your general direction.

No, that's not how these microphones work. They've got to be right up close in front of your mouth to pick up that nice warm sound. So either you hold it in your hand like I do sometimes, and I always get comments from people who just can't understand the folly, the madness of recording an hour or two of audio, holding the microphone in the hand.

And there's people who just can't seem to wrap their heads around why anyone would be foolish enough to do that. And that's especially in episodes with Amber and Paul where the three of us are holding microphones for an hour or two. But that's just because you get the microphone consistently close to your mouth.

It's not really that uncomfortable to stand there or sit there with a microphone in your hand. That's not really comfortable. In fact, it's more comfortable because you get the freedom to move around.

You can sit back, you can sit forwards, and you always have that microphone in front of you. Whereas like now, I'm actually using a microphone stand which has its

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advantages, but it also has its disadvantages because it means that I do have to sit in the same position in order to more or less keep my mouth in the right place. If the microphone is static and in one place, I've got to be static and in one place too.

And that starts to get uncomfortable. You find that your back can hurt, your neck can hurt from sitting in the same position. Anyway, get that microphone nice and close to your mouth.

You could use a microphone stand. A simple stage stand would be good because it frees up your hands and arguably looks a little bit better as well. So you can get a cheap microphone stand or a desk-mounted stand.

You've got to be careful of noise, noises that the microphone will pick up. And the best microphones reject these sorts of noises as well. So if you're using a microphone that's in a stand, sitting on the table, and you put your elbows on the table, put your hands on the table, it's going to go boom, boom, boom, boom.

You're going to hear all those noises reverberating through the microphone, through the table, through the microphone stand, into the body of the microphone and into the recording as well. And that sort of thing can be very distracting and unpleasant to listen to. So a simple stand that is not actually attached to the table, maybe attached to the wall or on the floor or something like that, so that you can get your hands free if you want to.

And then, yes, connect that to a simple USB microphone interface. You can get ones from Behringer. Probably a two-track interface would be best so that you can have another guest with you if you want.

If you're doing it online, then you just have to hope and pray that your guest on the other end has got some sort of reasonable audio equipment. What I do these days is actually often I will send microphones to my guests and I'm willing to make that investment, actually paying for a microphone and having it sent to them so that I can get reasonable quality audio and they can keep the microphone. So there you go.

That's what I would do differently. Just try to invest in new recording gear. Going back to the equipment, one more thing I suppose is some sort of pop filter for your microphone.

When I'm using these handheld microphones, I tend to just use the foam cover, which is those sort of soft black foam covers that go over the end of the microphone and that will reduce the sounds that will impact the microphone when you say words beginning with a P, like pizza, pizza, pizza party, pizza pop. Those plosive sounds can make a distracting noise. So a simple foam cover on the end of the microphone should deal with that.

Pizza party, pizza party, you can't hear that now. There's also the pop filter which you've probably seen. It's a kind of a round plastic thing which has got some mesh on it and they can be cumbersome and annoying to attach.

You don't need that. Just keep it simple. Go for a foam cover.

Just leave a little bit of air between the top of the cover and the actual microphone. So put the foam on but not too tight. Leave a little bit of air there.

Okay, so that's what I would do differently, Alistair. I mean there's probably lots of other things I could improve, could have improved from the start but I'm sticking with the audio quality now. Assuming that I had the basic idea of the podcast in mind and organised and sorted in my head and other than improving my equipment, it would just be a case of just do as much stuff.

Just record and have fun and experiment like I said before. Thank you, Alistair, for that question. Let's move on to the next one.

This is from Alex Love who hasn't been on the podcast for a while but has been. I mean, when was the last time? I think it was during the COVID lockdown. So an appearance from Alex on the show is long overdue.

I know Alex from when we started doing stand-up together in London in 2009, coincidentally enough. The same year that I started doing this podcast. Later that year, I did start doing stand-up comedy and I met Alex and I met Paul Langton and I met Moz.

Long-term listeners will remember because they were on the podcast a lot in the early days, including when we went to the Brighton Fringe Festival doing a comedy tour. Not a tour, it wasn't a tour. We did a comedy show about a week at the festival and I recorded podcasts with Alex and Moz and Paul and they were very silly.

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And there's also the infamous Slightly Drunk episode as well. You can find them in the archive. I might mention those again later.

Anyway, this is Alex Love. He's a stand-up comedian. His Edinburgh show, which is always sold out every year, is called How to Win a Pub Quiz.

In fact, it might be running right now if you're in Edinburgh. So if that is the case, if you're at the Edinburgh Fringe this August, look for Alex Love, How to Win a Pub Quiz. All right, you will have a good time.

So this is Alex's question. Here we go. Hello, this is a message for Luke Thompson, aka Luke Johnson.

And Luke's English podcast listeners can also hear this message. My name's Alex Love and I am a friend of Luke's and I've been a guest a few times. Haven't been on for a while though, Luke, so I think it's been about 10 years.

So let's sort that out. Anyway, I've got a question for you. My question is, what are some of your fondest memories of performing on the London comedy circuit in 2009 to 2012? So you don't have to talk about your improv meltdown in Brighton in 2012.

This is only focussing on the positive memories. Okay, my fondest memories of performing stand-up in London in the early days, around 2010, 11 and 12. I think probably the fondest memories, and Alex did mention the fact that I did have a meltdown on stage in Brighton.

One fateful early evening performing stand-up when Steve Bennett, the famous, again, the infamous Steve Bennett from a website called Chortle, appeared in our audience without warning. And Steve Bennett is from a website called Chortle, which is kind of one of the biggest stand-up comedy websites in the UK. And Steve Bennett is a reviewer.

He comes and reviews shows. And the reviews that you receive on Chortle are really important. So Steve is a famous comedy reviewer.

And one evening, we looked in the crowd, the small audience that we had, and we saw that Steve Bennett was there. He had... Alex said I didn't need to talk about

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this, but I am anyway. He'd come two years before when we did another show, and he gave me a very good review.

He said some very nice, positive things about me. He said I was one to watch for the future or something like that, which is great. But this particular year, when he came again, I was not prepared.

I was not in the right mental space at all. And I went up on stage to do my comedy. It was boiling hot.

I'd spent most of the day outside flyering, trying to persuade people to come to the show. And I wasn't properly prepared. And I was doing my material, but I didn't really believe in it.

I didn't really... I wasn't feeling it, and I hadn't properly remembered it. And I thought that it would be better if I just improvised instead. I don't know what came over me.

I suppose it was a misplaced sense of self-confidence. I thought, let's throw out the material, which I've spent ages writing and practising again and again. Now, let's just throw this out.

It would probably be a much better idea if I just did something completely improvised that I'd never, ever done before. Yeah, terrible idea. Absolutely terrible.

And so my stand-up set, my 15-minute set, became a complete car crash. I even got someone from the audience up onto the stage with me to do some improv, which I never, ever do and had never done before. But I don't know what made me think that this would be a good idea.

And so I ended up doing this awful Al Pacino impression next to this poor man who was sweating buckets next to me. I was a bit concerned. He was bright red and sweating.

I thought, this could be a health and safety disaster. Not only am I dying on stage, this guy might die on stage as well. It looks like he's ready to have a heart attack.

We don't need two people to die on stage, one metaphorically and the other one literally. This is a total disaster. So my set was terrible, absolutely terrible.

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And naturally, I got an awful review from Steve Bennett afterwards. So that's one of my lowest points in stand-up. But otherwise, between 2009 and 2012, when I moved to Paris, I had some great times doing stand-up, learning how to do it.

And so my fondest memories were probably with Alex, Paul and Moz and some other members of our gang. We started a monthly stand-up night. It was the first Tuesday of every month, I think it was.

We called it Ruby Tuesdays for some reason, quite a catchy name. And we ran this show and we all performed there and we invited guests and stuff. We had some quite famous guests come.

We had people like Sarah Pascoe and who else did we have? Richard Herring and a few other comedians who've been on things like Live at the Apollo, well-known comics and stuff. And that was great. And just the nerves, the nervousness, the excitement, the fear of failure that we all shared.

We were all very supportive with each other. We would all go up and try our best and probably not do very well in front of a handful of people. But there was a really good feeling, a really good sense of camaraderie and a shared experience with those guys that I will always remember.

So it was a really good, fun time where we were experimenting with ideas and jokes and stories and routines and different characters. And it was really a really good, fun, enjoyable time to do that. So those are some of my memories.

And yes, Alex does need to come back on the podcast at some point to talk about something or other. We'll work it out. Yes, we will work it out.

Right. And oh, look, there's a little visitor. My daughter has apparently got bored of doing origami and has wandered over because she's desperate to be back on the podcast again.

Listeners, I really hope that you've been enjoying these interruptions and the shambolic nature of episode 1000. It's proving to be quite a difficult beast to deal with. OK, so what shall I call you today? What's your name today? Olivia again.

OK, all right. So I'm about to switch the microphone on. Make sure you talk into it.

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Now, before you do that, I wonder, is this either you're going to ask me a question about your homework or you're going to ask me some mad random conceptual question about life, the universe and everything? I don't know. It's supposed to be questions about the podcast. OK, the floor is yours.

You have the floor. Just I finished my homework. OK.

And second, my question. Don't knock the table, please. My question is, why does hair exist? How did hair exist? Oh, God.

What kind of question is that? How did hair exist? Now, don't touch the table, please, because for the people watching this, it's like they're in an earthquake or something. Please don't touch the table. Do you understand what that means? Right.

Good. How does hair exist? How did hair exist? So out of all the questions from people asking me, so, you know, if you started this again, what would you have done differently? What are your best memories? What's your favourite episode? How did hair exist? Well, you know, it's again one of these questions about evolution that whenever I talk about evolution, there's always someone in the comments who fervently disagrees with me about it. Stop knocking the table, please.

Just don't touch the table. I'll give you like a 30 second version. So creatures, creatures evolve.

Right. What that means is that the ones who are the ones who are suitable for their environment survive and pass on their genes to the next generation. Right.

So there were some creatures, I suppose, that maybe was mutated because genes and not people, creatures mutate, random stuff happens. OK, for example, you know, if you have a kid, it might just look slightly different to you. I don't know how to explain this.

But anyway, some animals had hair and they survived. The other ones maybe got a bit too cold. So the ones with hair survived and they passed on their hairy genes to the next generation.



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And then animals just had hair after that. And and for humans, for some reason, we lost the hair on our bodies. I don't know how that would have happened at some point in our evolution, but we kept hair on our heads.

Stop it. Stop knocking the table. You are.

You actually are. We still have hair on other parts of our bodies, but it's not the sort of thick fur that animals have. Take your feet off the table to just do not touch the table.

OK, do not touch the table. Those remember those five words. Is that it? Or is there another question? It's a question.

Well, just a question. That's not you just tell me the. It's a quick question.

Where did you put my homework? My my things for school bag with my things. They are. I think they're on a hook near the front door.

Thanks. OK, bye bye. Right then.

So let's carry on then with the next question. Who's this going to be? It's from Amber. Yes, Amber Minogue with the lovely voice.

Here she is. Luke, congratulations. A thousand episodes is really quite something.

I'm not sure how you do it or how you come up with so many good ideas. But I wanted to ask you for you. What makes a really good episode one that you know is just going to be really great to listen to or is really fun to make? OK, Amber's got several questions.

That's the first from Amber. We'll have the next one in a second. So what makes a really good episode? That is a great question.

And I think there are a few different factors that make a good episode good for me. And the best episodes combine all of those different things. Although there is then there are some episodes which are just great in another way, and they don't have to include the other factors.

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OK, so let's talk about those factors, which I think all the best episodes have, unless they're just mad freak episodes that just find their way to be great in another way. So obviously, there needs to be some English learning quality in there, right, something that will genuinely help people learn English. Now, I think that just listening to English a lot and regularly is good in itself.

So there's that. So just doing plenty of listening means that it's useful for your English. What helps is that the sound quality is good because it makes it pleasant.

It's not just that it makes it clear and easy to understand. It's that it makes it a pleasant experience, that the voices you're listening to are just enjoyable to hear. And the whole thing is a pleasant experience because that's going to allow people to listen more and listen long term.

Right. So nicely recorded, but also with some pedagogical value to it. And that probably means teaching some aspect, some element of teaching of English in there, even if it's just presenting language in context, but some sort of rigorous pedagogical content there, explaining language, presenting language, demonstrating language, reflecting on language, you know, all that sort of stuff, vocab, pronunciation, grammar, or generally just like discourse management, the way that we approach using English to achieve different things, the pragmatics of English.

So something, some element of language teaching, I think, is important. But not always, because some of the most popular and arguably better episodes are ones that don't have direct English teaching in them. And instead, the English learning happens in a less direct way.

So good, decent quality sound, some pedagogical element. But then also there's got to be some fun. I think fun and humour and spontaneity.

So maybe spontaneity is a different factor, but fun and humour, like genuine funny stuff. And I think the best episodes have comedy in them, humour and comedy. So stuff that will make you laugh, I think that's invaluable.

And the importance of just bringing a smile to your face or making you laugh while you listen is incredible. And if I can achieve that, then I'm always really, really happy. Then maybe a good guest or good guests and a good feeling.

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So I think maybe the thing with the guests is that it has to come with a nice vibe. Because again, I'm always thinking of the listener's experience. There has to be a good vibe going on.

And I would probably add, yeah, spontaneity. It's difficult to achieve that, but a sense of spontaneity, a sense of this is all happening live. This is not all planned in advance.

I don't always achieve that because sometimes I do write out the things I'm going to say in advance. But that has its advantages too, because it allows me to probably control the pedagogical element a bit more and make things a bit more structured. But an element of spontaneity, I think is good.

Yeah, that probably covers it. And yeah, what's the most important of those things? I'm very tempted to say that it's the humour. I'm very tempted to say that whenever I've recorded an episode that I think is going to be really funny, I'm particularly pleased and excited to publish it.

The most popular ones, generally speaking, are probably the story episodes. And that's another thing, actually. Stories are so important.

Episodes with stories in them. But I think maybe Amber and Paul episodes are definitely up there. And the best Amber and Paul episodes are probably up there with the best episodes of this podcast because they combine the spontaneity.

They combine a great vibe with guests where I think that Amber, Paul, and I do have a really good dynamic together, which makes for interesting listening. We bounce off each other really, really well. So there's the spontaneity.

There's the great vibe. Normally, it's recorded quite well. And the voices are nice, particularly Amber's voice, as we all know.

It's lovely to listen to. There's a lot of humour, often some very funny moments. Some of the best times I've ever had, I would say, have been when recording with Amber and Paul.

And then in terms of pedagogical elements, I'm always... when it comes to Amber and Paul episodes, always kind of struggling or wondering how I can get the sort of

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language teaching in there. Sometimes I manage it. I have to squeeze bits of vocabulary or quizzes or something like that in there.

But if there's an episode that combines all of those things, funny moments with learning quality, decent sound, a good vibe, then I think that's probably what it is. And something original. I'm still adding points here.

Something original and something personal as well. I think if there's something really personal, that makes it unique. So if I can share some really personal viewpoint or experience, I think that always makes an episode really, really unique.

I could go on. That's probably enough. Let's have Amber's next question.

Luke, we have not done a thousand episodes, but I have done absolutely loads with you and Paul over the years, and they have been so fun. But have any of our episodes stood out for you for something that we've done, something memorable? I know a few have really stuck in my mind. I particularly enjoyed our story that we had to read to each other, which was so long ago now.

Okay, so memories of Amber and Paul episodes, particularly good memories. Amber is referring to an episode called Victorian Detectives. I think it was called Thompson, Taylor and Minogue, Victorian Detectives, where we read one of Peter Carlson's Victorian Detective text adventure stories, the three of us together and did the story together.

You can find that in the episode archive. Look for Victorian Detectives and you'll find it. That was great, and we should do something like that again.

I've got some ideas. I was thinking maybe I could do a Learn English with a Short Story episode with a guest, where I just do the same thing I would normally do, but with someone else. I could do that with Amber and Paul.

That could be fun. But Amber and Paul episodes that I particularly remember. So there was the first Catching Up with Amber and Paul episode that we often refer to, which was recorded on a sunny day on the roof terrace of my old, old apartment.

And it was sunny and the three of us as English people were attempting to avoid the sun because we didn't want to get sunburned. Paul and I are sort of vaguely ginger,

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ginger-ish. We have the ginger gene in there, which makes us a bit sensitive to the sun.

Amber's not particularly insensitive to the sun either. So there was, I think, one chair that was in the shade. So we kept having to change seats during the episode.

And it was just a typically random conversation. But it was the first time the three of us got together and did an episode on the podcast. It was the first time that that sort of dynamic happened in an episode.

And I invited Paul and Amber because they were my two English friends. And we just discovered that we had a really good, yeah, dynamic together. So that was memorable.

I remember listening back to what we'd captured, what I'd recorded. I didn't know how it was going to be while I was doing it. But I listened back to it and I realised, oh, actually, this is like really entertaining.

Why is this so much fun to listen to? And most of the episodes I've done with Amber and Paul ever since have been like that. There was the story episode. There was the bank robbery episode, which was pretty good, where we planned a bank robbery.

But I think one of the ones that sticks out for me is the episode in which we talked about going to the toilet for about 40 to 45 minutes. It was called Toilets, Titanic and TikTok. Can't remember the number, 800 and something.

And yeah, there was at the beginning, unplanned, we ended up talking about toilet habits. And it was not only really funny, and it was particularly funny with not just funny stories and observations. That was a woodpecker that I just heard.

Not just stories and observations about toilet habits, but also lots of little jokes, little word jokes and puns that just came out. But it was also educational because, for example, if you ever wondered why it is that when there's a girl's toilets and a boy's toilets, that often the ladies' toilets is really busy with a big queue of women. What are they doing in there? Why is there always such a queue? Whereas with the men, it's not the case.

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And we learned from Amber all sorts of fascinating new things about what goes on in the women's toilets. What is it that they do in there? What is it like for the girls using public toilets? How difficult and inconvenient is it? What are the mad things they have to do in order to use the toilet in a fairly clean way? And we kind of covered everything that you need to talk about with the subject of the toilet, like the argument of should the toilet seat be left down or up? Who's right and who's wrong about that? How do you deal with the dirtiness of a public toilet? Do you have any little tricks for lifting up the toilet seat or touching things? How do you avoid getting dirty? Every single, I think, every issue relating to using the toilet was discussed. And it was extraordinary, really.

And I'm so glad that we recorded it. That's one of the ones I remember. So yeah, listen to that.

Toilets, Titanic and TikTok with Amber and Paul. Check it out for an extraordinary 40 minutes or so of chat about using the toilet. Thank you so much for your question, Amber.

And thank you, Amber, for just the contribution that you've made to this podcast over the years. It is, I think, a huge thing that what Amber and Paul have brought to the podcast is huge. And I really appreciate both of them for that.

And I think that we've got a kind of a podcast family thing going on. And I'm so glad that I found Amber and Paul and that we have fun making these quite original episodes together. Talking of Paul, here is his question in video form.

And it's quite a long one. Paul's gone for a rambling approach to this, to his question. So I'll just sit back for a bit and let Paul do a bit of the talking for me.

Here's about three minutes worth of Paul and his question. Here we go. Oh, it's f\*cking Luke from Luke's English podcast, TeacherLuke.co.uk with all of his leppers, the ninjas that are in there.

Uh, listen, it's a thousand episodes that you've been doing this podcast. I'm trying to think if I've done a thousand of anything in my life. I've not been doing anything for as long as you've been doing this podcast.

I may have run. May have ran. May have run.

## Episode 1000 (Transcript)

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I have ran. I have run. I may have ran a thousand kilometres.

I don't even think I have, though. I can't even speak English. I need you to teach me English, Teacher Luke.

I have run. I ran. I have run.

I think I've run. There you go. I think I'm... Anyway, congratulations on a thousand episodes.

Um, I'm kind of disappointed, though, that you didn't invite me and Amber, who have contributed wildly to the success of this podcast for your thousand episode. I mean, I'm disappointed on behalf of me and Amber. I'm sure she doesn't care.

I don't care either. No, I do. I care in the fact that it's like, mate, this has been a wild ride for you.

And congratulations on everything that you've done. My question for you is, is there anything that you would have done differently over the past however many years you've been doing this? Over the past 999 episodes, is there anything you would have done differently with the show to either make it better, more successful, even though it's great and already very successful? But would you have changed anything? Have you ever turned down anything for this show in order to keep like the integrity of the podcast? Because I feel like a lot of people do that with podcasts. They sell out, right? Whether it's to a brand, a corporation that buys it, something like that.

You've stayed very true to yourself. And it's unbelievable what you've been able to do. I'm very jealous.

As I've told you before, I wish I had the mindset of just being just like, this is amazing and this is it. This is what is next for the rest. Now, to celebrate, I typed Luke Thompson into my phone.

And this is what I found as the first photo of you in my phone, Mr. Luke Thompson. This is recording an episode of your podcast. I've got a beer in my hand.

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For those that are just listening to this and not watching it, we're in your old apartment. I mean, your old, old, old apartment. And yeah, we look about the same, which is great.

We haven't aged much. We look better now than we did. That photo for your reference is from the 19th of December, 2013.

So that is almost 13 years ago. I don't remember what episode that was, but maybe you can look it up and share this with your listeners. Listen, I don't even know if you're going to show this video clip at this point.

It's a three minute question. So if you, well, if you do play this audio and video to your listeners, hello, the Lepsters. I hope you're all doing well wherever you are in the world.

And I cannot wait to be back on another episode of Luke's English podcast with the wonderful Amber Minogue. And take care of yourselves. Congratulations, Luke.

You've earned all the respect and admiration that anyone can give you. And keep going. I can't wait for it.

I mean, it's taken you this long to do 1000. I mean, we might be 70 years old by the time you do 2000. But anyway, look forward to the next milestone, whatever that is.

That's it for now. Love you. And I'll see you later.

Bye. Okay. That is Paul Taylor.

So yeah, Paul and Amber are going to be back on the podcast as soon as it's possible. And for episode 900, we did an episode together, which was really good fun. For 1000, I knew it was going to be in August.

That's my reason anyway for not inviting them on. But I could easily have done this with them. But I'm glad that they've been featured in this episode in some way.

And I mean, again, I've already said it, but just a great addition to the catalogue, right, of podcast episodes. The diversity of my episodes has been helped so much by the addition of Amber and Paul. And Paul is a legend.



Paul is an absolute legend. What he has achieved is incredible in a totally different way, you know, on stage with this stand up. Anyway, that's another thing for another time.

So he asked me several questions. One is, what would I have done differently? I've kind of already answered that one. And the second one is, have I ever kind of turned down any opportunities in order to maintain the integrity of this podcast? I think probably have.

There have been sort of quite a lot of a lot of people get in touch with me about sponsorship opportunities. Some of them I take and some of them I don't because I don't think they're a good fit for the podcast. So there have been opportunities like that that I've turned down.

What else have I sort of said no to? I do get emails from all sorts of people asking if they can offer me guest posts on my website and all sorts of things that I just don't think are going to help me do the core thing that I'm trying to do. A lot of stuff that takes me away from the actual substance of what I'm trying to do, which was make episodes in the right way, you know, at the right frequency. And so I have, I guess, turned down things.

If I was, I've said before, I'm professional about this, but I'm also unprofessional about this. So that unprofessionalism that I bring to this, I think probably is just like maybe not chasing up sponsorship opportunities in the way that I could and not turning every single moment into a kind of a thing that's going to lead to monetization. I think some people approach this or would approach this kind of thing in a different way.

Some people who are really good at this kind of thing, like content creation or, you know, influencers and stuff, they do things that sometimes I think, oh damn, I should be doing that. I'm doing this all wrong. So it's not necessarily out of just a sense of integrity where I'm turning things down because I just want to maintain the integrity of this show.

A lot of the time it's just out of a lack of organisation or a lack of priorities that my priorities are often in just making the content, making it as good as I can. And as a result, because I don't have that business brain, I'm not following up on sponsorship things and not squeezing as much profit or juice out of the whole arrangement that I could. If, I mean, I'd sort of talked about this with James earlier.

He suggested that maybe I should get an agent and so on. I don't know, really. I think it's fine.

I think that the way it's going is fine. I'm doing fine. Everything's great.

You know, it's great. I don't have to be like Paul McCartney. The way he talks about things is always like, no, it's great.

I think it's all fine. So I'm going to go with the Paul McCartney approach, which is like, it's all fab. It's just great, you know.

Right. Oh, it's appropriate that I ended with a Beatles reference because the next question comes from Anthony Rotuno, who has three podcasts. One of them is the Glass Onion on John Lennon podcast, where he talks about John Lennon and stuff, and he's a huge Beatles fanatic and sort of an expert on Beatles stuff.

I'm always amazed at the depth of Anthony's knowledge and his ability to talk about Beatles things and John Lennon and his life and the life and times of John Lennon. His other podcasts include Life and Life Only, which is an exploration of inner and outer truth. Some fascinating episodes he's done on that.

And then there's, what's it called? Film Gold, in which he talks about classic films. We've talked about films together on his podcast. So Anthony is a podcast friend of mine.

I've never actually met him in the real world, which must change at some point. Anyway, here is Anthony's question. What's it going to be? Here we go.

Hi, Luke. This is Anthony Rotuno, former guest on Luke's English podcast, and you've been a guest on my various podcasts as well. Big congratulations on your thousandth episode.

And also, I guess you've been going for 10 years or more at this point. So well done on your longevity. My question to you is, so you've obviously done quite a lot of solo episodes, but you've also had lots of conversations with different people on a variety of subjects.

So what have you learned in your time doing the podcast about the art of conversation? Best wishes to you and your audience. Bye for now. Thank you, Anthony.

So what have I learned about the art of conversation from all the conversations I've had on this podcast? I think that's a great question, a really good one, and one I think that brings a certain level of pedagogical value to this. Essentially, what have I learned about, yeah, speaking skills or conversation skills? I think what I've learned is the importance of listening in a conversation. That's what it's all about.

I think a conversation is like a collaboration where the two people are building something together, and the best conversations are ones where both people are building upon what the other person just said. So it's not just one person's talking, saying the things they want to say, and then the other person waiting for their chance to say something. You are building a thing together, and that involves a lot of very, very careful, quite intense listening.

And that's one of the things I really enjoy about a good podcast interview is sitting down with a guest and just listening intently to everything they're saying and kind of following. I think I've described it as, did I describe it as following, chasing a train or something? I can't remember. But it's that.

It's intense listening and kind of following the other person's train of thought as much as possible and letting it lead you into whichever direction feels like the most natural direction. But it's mostly about really intense listening. So that, I think, has been the thing that I've learned.

There's a dog barking behind me. A little dog, yeah, a yappy little dog is barking behind me. Again, this episode has got everything, hasn't it? It's got all of the mistakes and all the issues and all the edits, and now a dog barking behind me, which doesn't happen that much.

But I think listening, I suppose, is the thing that I've learned about conversation and simply the joy of locking into what one person is saying and listening to them so closely and allowing yourself to have all these thoughts that branch off. And you can just pick any one of those things and go down that particular avenue. So intensive listening, for me, is what makes a good conversation when the people listen really carefully.

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Okay, thank you, Anthony. Let's have a question now from Charlie Baxter from the British English Podcast. He was in an episode not long ago, was it? Earlier this year, which we did that game Room 101.

So this is Charlie from the British English Podcast. He sent me a few questions, actually. I think I've picked about three or four of the questions that Charlie sent to me.

Three of them. Here's the first one. I'd actually really like to know, of all of the types of episodes that you do, what are the ones that make you really feel happy that this is your job? This is your full-time living, doing this thing? Great question.

So of all the episodes I do, which ones make me feel really happy that this is actually my job? Well, Charlie, I would say, as well as just like episodes with guests and friends where we make each other laugh, and that's a wonderful thing, and I always feel so glad that I'm able to do things like that and just have quality time with my friends, that it gets recorded, which is a weird thing that I always wanted to do. I remember distinctly in the days before I used to do my podcasts, spending time with my friends and this feeling of like, oh, we should be recording this. We should be recording this.

And so I've always had that feeling. And so it's a great joy to be able to actually record my conversations and have them and publish them. But really, I suppose I feel most delighted that this is actually my job when I'm, yeah, when I'm doing something comedic, something humorous, and normally something a bit mad, really, mad comedy moments.

I just get such a thrill from those things. And I feel like I've maybe got a little bit away from that spirit in the last few years or so. I feel like I've kind of got a little bit away from that.

There was a period in the early days when I was doing a lot of improvisation, a lot of comedy improvisation, and a lot of improvised stories. And I've said this before, but I really have to get back into that. It's quite a scary thing, pressing record and then starting a story, and you've got no idea where it's going to go.

None. You just have to just use your own creativity and your own ability to think on the spot. And you get into a problem where you find yourself in a part of the story, and you just don't know what's going to happen next.

And you have to push through that. It's really a question of switching off your internal editor, that part of yourself that says, you can't say that. That's ridiculous.

You can't do that. That's ridiculous. I suppose it's moments when there's been a voice in my head that says, no, you can't do this.

This is silly. But doing it anyway, in fact, not just doing it, but really leaning into it. I remember an episode with Charlie when this happened, in fact, and we were pretending we were in a pub and having a chat in the pub.

And there was a moment when I was talking about, what was it? I was talking about, I think I was talking about crisp packets and how I unfold a crisp packet in order to let everyone eat it. And I did this thing with my fingers where I was demonstrating how I actually open up the crisps. And we spent quite a lot of time doing this funny thing with our fingers.

And Charlie at one point said, I can't believe this is content. And I said, yeah, this is brilliant content. This moment where I'm trying to explain how I open a packet of crisps and I'm doing this stupid movement with my fingers.

This is absolutely, definitely great content. So I suppose those moments when I make an episode that does something where on the face of it, you think that's obvious, that's stupid. And you can't do that on a serious podcast.

But actually, it's exactly those moments that are really enjoyable and I think are really unique and create something that create a sort of human. I mean, comedy is a funny thing, isn't it? How do you find the funny? How do you find a funny thing? Where is it? How do you actually get to that? Something about being specific, something about just being willing to do something that part of your brain is saying, don't do that. That's silly.

But no, that's exactly what you should be doing. And so moments when I've done that on the podcast and sort of broken through into a new realm of slightly mad, unconventional stuff, and I've really gone for it and it's resulted in something rather beautiful. So there you go, Charlie.

That's my answer to that question. I think he's got another question for me now. I guess a really nice question potentially for your listeners are of all of those episodes,

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which ones really stand out to you to be like a true representation of what you're aiming for with your podcast? Like if somebody new came to listen to your episode, what would be one of the first episodes you'd likely share with them? Oh, that's a good question, isn't it? If I could just pick one episode that would be the essence of the podcast, it's really hard to do that because I think a lot of the time my favourite moments in podcasts, in my podcasts are not just like whole episodes, but just random moments that could happen at any time.

I think I mentioned this before. I've peppered my podcasts with random improvised moments and it's those moments that I think make it special. So hopefully I'd pick an episode that has some of that, but also an episode that ticks all those boxes I mentioned earlier in response to Amber's question.

So I don't know. In recent memory, I think it might be something like the episodes at the beginning of the year that I did, which were all about life hacks, life hacks for learning English, lifestyle changes to your lifestyle that can help you learn English. Because I think they contained a lot of stuff.

There were little crazy moments of comedy. There were some English teaching. There were some interesting insights into language learning and just a few funny moments.

So those would probably be quite good examples. Otherwise, maybe the trip to Norway episode. It's hard to say, isn't it? Because I do a lot of different types of episodes and I'm not sure which one really is the ideal example that, again, if an alien landed in my garden, which episode would I play to it? I don't know, man.

I can't say. I really can't say. Maybe one of the rambling episodes.

I don't know. I think, let's just say in recent memory, it would be the episodes about life hacks to help you with your English. Okay, Charlie.

But listeners, what do you think? What do you think would be a great example to represent the essence of Luke's English podcast? My daughter has returned. Yes. Do you want to pick up the microphone? You have the floor.

And so I have a question about your podcast. Okay. So how did you have the idea to do podcasts? I had the idea to do this because I was working at a school in London and it was early days.

And as a permanent teacher, they gave me a special responsibility, right? My special responsibility was to research technology and applying technology to English teaching with the view to maybe incorporating different forms of technology in our classrooms. Okay. And one of the things that they asked me to research was podcasts, which were a new medium at the time.

And so that's exactly what I did. And I did an online course in podcasting, which taught me the very basics of podcasting audio formats, file formats, and online publishing. And during the course, I was introduced to various platforms that allowed me to, don't shake the table.

I did not. Good. That would allow me to record an audio track on my laptop and then upload it to the website.

And then that would broadcast it all around the world as a podcast. And the school thought, how can we use this in our classrooms? And the idea was that they would get the students to record podcasts in lessons. Wow.

That didn't really work. That's not really how podcasts can help people learn English. And in the end, the conclusion was, well, I should make my own podcast.

I know how to do it. And I've got stuff to say. And I've got, I think I know how to talk to learners of English.

So voila, that was it. That was the birth of Luke's English podcast. Wow.

Okay. I made my own slime. You made your own slime.

With bicarbonate. Bicarbonate of soda. Yeah, and with old products and things.

And I made two, two... Bowls, two bowls. I can't stand slime. Kids toys, like kids have toys that, you know, Lego and... Yeah.

Barbies and all these things and there's paints and pens and pencils. But one of the things I cannot stand is slime, which is this stuff that comes in pots and it's all sticky and gooey. I can't stand slime.

I can't stand glitter. And I don't like putty, silly putty. Oh, yeah.

You know, that putty. No, too messy. Why not glitter? Glitter just goes everywhere.

No, but if it's stuck to a paper. No, I suppose it's all right. That's it now.

Thanks for your contribution. When you come back next time, can you bring me a glass of water, please? Thank you very much. All right, then let's move on to the next person.

I hope this is interesting listeners. I really, really do. So here's a question from Jez Booker, who was on the podcast recently.

An old, old friend of mine from many years ago at sixth form college. Let's hear Jez's question. I've got a feeling that a lot of people are asking the same questions, which is like, what would you tell yourself in the past? What would you do differently? I can't remember what Jez's question is, but there's a chance it's something like that.

But anyway, we'll see. Here's Jez's question. Hello, Luke.

Happy anniversary, mate. A thousand episodes is incredible. You should be super proud of yourself.

Well done, mate. I just want to say thanks for inviting me onto your podcast recently. I think it was, who knows, was it the 991st episode or something? Um, you've been obviously going for many, many years and doing a cracking job of what you do.

So my question to you on your thousandth anniversary, birthday, celebration, whatever you want to call it, is this, where do you see Luke's YouTube podcast being in 10 years time or say another thousand episodes? Where do you want to be? What do you want it to look like? How's it going to change if at all? Or do you want to carry on doing the same awesome format you do now? Um, or do you have plans to change things? That's what I'd be interested to know. Um, and if you don't like that question, here's another one. Hold on a minute, Jez.

Okay. Let's let me just answer that question first. So where would, okay.



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The future. How do I see Luke's English podcast in the future, in the next 10 years or the next thousand episodes or something? Would I change anything or would I keep it the same? Well, I mean, similar to the answer of what would I say to Luke from 2009? I kind of, in a way, don't want to change anything because I think it's all right. But one of the things I'd like to do is to keep the, get the episode length under control.

So maybe in 10 years when I'm still doing this podcast, I'll be able to do what I do, but keep it within a reasonable length because we all know about this and I've been through it countless times. The pros and cons of long episodes. I think more people out there in my audience who appreciate longer episodes than shorter ones.

But having said that, new people who come to the podcast are intimidated by long episodes. And so really I should get that under control. Obviously it's wildly out of control in this episode, but I think that's one of the things I'd like to get under control is just rein in the episode length to about an hour.

That's what I always want. So maybe I will have managed to do that. The second thing is maybe I will be a master of social media and I'll have all of my Instagrams and short form content and all that stuff totally under wraps and you'll see me everywhere.

I'll be on Instagram. I'll be popping up on TikTok and flip-flap and flip-flop and all these different things. And I'll get that under control because you know, don't you, that these days, podcasts are no longer just a guy in a bedroom with a microphone.

It needs to be videoed with a nice studio. Then you need to clip everything for shorts and you need to be across all the platforms. So I'd probably like to get that under control.

But other than that, I'm pretty much happy to keep going the way I'm going. Yeah. And just to branch out again, get a bit more experimental and continue to have fun with it.

But mostly I'd like to just keep going more or less on the same line that I'm going now. Here's Jez's next question. So another question that comes to mind is what three top tips would you give to me as a YouTuber? Fledgling YouTuber who's only done a handful of episodes, maybe 10, 20-ish if you count some of the earlier ones.

## Episode 1000 (Transcript)

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Yeah, I'm at the other end of the scale, a mere baby in the YouTube scheme of things. What tips would you give to me? All right, mate. We'll have a crack in thousands episode.

I hope you feature my question. Lots of love. Jez.

All right. Thanks, Jez. So Jez has a YouTube channel called Get Out, which is inspired by his love of the outdoors.

And it's great. He videos himself going to different interesting locations in the English countryside, visiting different events and festivals and stuff. It's really good.

Check it out. Get Out on YouTube. Get Out, Jez Booker.

You'll find it. And so he's just started, so he'd like some advice and tips and things. So, well, the first thing, Jez, is just keep making content.

Just make, just create, create, create as much content. Thank you, darling. My daughter brought me a glass of water.

You're just going to sit and listen without banging the table, right? You're going to eat that biscuit. Yeah, okay. So create, create, create.

Just make content, make content, content, content, content. For me, nothing happened in terms of monetising my podcast until I was, oh, how many episodes in? Hundreds. I've made hundreds of episodes before I actually started to get anywhere in terms of monetization.

Not that monetization is the thing you're looking for. What you're looking for is, my daughter's pointing behind me because one of our neighbours is walking around, so there's someone listening to ad-free content in the background. So, yeah, I had to do hundreds of episodes before I got anywhere.

But it's not all about monetization. It's just about engagement from your audience and getting the sense that you're building an audience. But really, just keep making content as much as you can.

## Episode 1000 (Transcript)

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Think about it and just think about what you want it to look like, and then just do your best to make content that matches that. But just make stuff all the time. And at the beginning, making an episode can seem like a really difficult thing to do.

But over time, it all starts to become a bit automatic. And you start to get a rhythm going, and you're able to just do things really much more quickly. And so you build your skills as you go.

But yeah, build a body of work, make as many things as you can, and just have fun. Experiment, try different things. If you've got some idea, do it.

Just do everything you can. That's the first thing. Make loads of content and experiment with it.

The second thing is storytelling. Storytelling, right? Try to incorporate storytelling into what you do, into your episodes. So if it's an episode about you going to a festival in the countryside, turn it into some sort of narrative.

And it doesn't have to be some sort of fantasy narrative or anything. Just simply the story of you going to this thing and the people that you meet. Try to incorporate some sort of beginning, middle, and end.

A sense of intrigue, a sense of what's going to happen next. Highlight successes and failures on your journey. So storytelling, build some storytelling into things.

And the third thing is don't underestimate the importance of good quality audio in your videos. So Jez, I think you recently bought a wireless Bluetooth microphone, which you clipped to your t-shirt. Great idea.

Go for it. Definitely do that. And just find ways to make the volume louder, clearer, and warmer.

Audio quality is actually more important than video quality in this game. So there you go. Those are my answers to your questions, Jez.

Thank you for sending them. Olivia has another question for me. Is this podcast related? When you were a kid, why did you choose podcasting? When I was a kid? I didn't choose podcasting when I was a kid.

## Episode 1000 (Transcript)

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What did you want to do before? And when I was a kid, what did I want to do? I didn't, I had no idea. I still don't know what I want to do. Well, okay, that's wrong.

I do know what I want to do. I want to do this, if I can. If I can find the time to do it, I want to do this.

But when I was a kid, I didn't know what to do, what I wanted to do. I never, even when I was an adult after university and stuff, and I just started my career, didn't know what I was doing. Even my first five years of being an English teacher, I wasn't sure that this was the thing for me.

But I continued doing it. That's the thing. You keep working and don't give up too easily.

And eventually you kind of build your own world around you as you build your skills. So you don't have to know what you want to do. You just have to do something and it'll work itself out.

But when I was a kid, when I was maybe your age or a few years older with your uncle, Jamie, we used to do a lot of recordings together. We had these cassette players with a record button and we used to record ourselves doing silly voices and stuff like that. That was fantastic.

And so I always had the seed of this kind of thing in me from those early experiences of doing home recordings with James. Well, I want to be a lot of things. I want to be a teacher, a horse rider, a teacher for people who want to know about horse riding.

I want to be a babysitter for dogs, animals, an animal babysitter. And I want to be a girl who explores. There you go.

You could do all of those things. Yeah. There's no reason why you have to only do one of those things.

You could easily do all of those things. Yeah, that's great. And oh, a singer and a dancer.

Yeah, yeah, yeah. You're a great singer. I mean, and a gymnast.

A gymnast. Yeah. Okay.

And a girl who does experiences. There you go. Experiments.

A scientist or something like that. Okay. Well, I mean, just pick one of those things and just do it.

Pick any of those things and just do them a lot and enjoy it and work hard at it and something will happen. Yeah. Right.

Okay. I've got to continue now. So thank you for your question.

Are you going to stay there? Okay, you can stay there. Right. So I'm answering questions that have been sent to me by friends and recent guests on the podcast.

The next one is from Zdenek from the Czech Republic, who is someone who's learned English as an adult and is really good at English and is a fully qualified English teacher. In fact, he's got more academic qualifications than I have. Even if English is not his first language.

So that's an interesting thing. And he does have a question for me. You want to say something else? Go on.

Is he better than me? At English? Oh, that's a very complicated question. You're an eight year old and he is in his late 30s, I believe. So I don't know.

You have sort of maybe a certain fluency or certain naturalness in English. Don't do that. You have a certain level of control of English as your first language that he doesn't have.

And yet he probably knows a lot more vocabulary and a lot of specialist subjects. And he's got maybe grammatical knowledge, active grammatical knowledge that you don't have. And he's also got like pedagogical teaching skills and speaking skills.

For example, if he had to do a TED talk or something, he'd probably be better at doing that than you as an eight year old. But then again, maybe he's just you've got as someone who's like passed through childhood speaking English as one of your first languages. Maybe you've got something that he can't have.

So, you know, it's not just one person better than another, but one person might have skills that another person doesn't have, but they've got skills that the other person doesn't have. So there you go. Yes.

Right. Anyway, this is Zdenek's question. And here it is.

Hi, Luke. This is Zdenek from the Czech Republic. Congratulations on beating Cristiano Ronaldo.

What an achievement. And you are the true goat of English teaching, Luke. My question is, I wonder, was there ever a moment in the history of Luke's English podcast when doubts sort of crept in and you thought of quitting or were you never actually in doubt? So was there ever a moment? You didn't hear Zdenek's question, but it was like this.

Was there ever a moment when doing this podcast when doubt crept in and I started to think, oh, maybe I can't do this or maybe I shouldn't be doing this? Was there ever a moment when I doubted myself? That is a very good question. I've certainly always had doubts going through and various kinds of doubts. I'm sure that I can't think of specific things now, but I'm probably, if I'm, when I lie in bed tonight to try and go to sleep, they'll all come to me.

But I've always had doubts thinking, oh, I'm doing this all wrong. And this is, I should be, you know, I'm missing an opportunity here. But most of the time, no, most of the time, not many doubts.

But there have been times when doing this podcast, when I actually sort of stopped doing it. In the early days, I think 2010, I think it was, maybe 2009. There was a period when I just didn't do this at all.

And there was maybe a three or four month period where I didn't touch my microphone, didn't record any episodes. To be honest, it probably coincided with the release of the computer game Red Dead Redemption, which is a sprawling Western sandbox computer game, which stole many hours of my life from me. So probably when I was playing that, I didn't do any podcasts for about three or four months.

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Right. And yeah, that was in the early days when these days, I'm so compelled to do episodes every week. And it's so natural and normal for me to publish every week.

And also, of course, it's my living, it's my occupation. So doing a podcast on at least a weekly basis is really important. But in those days, no.

And yeah, so there was a period where I just wasn't podcasting at all for whatever reason, three or four months until I finally got back on the horse again and carried on. Yeah, got on the horse. My daughter's like, on the horse? That's an expression, to get back on the horse.

So if you've stopped doing something or maybe you've failed, it comes from gymnastics. You know, in gymnastics, they have horses in gymnastics, not the animals, but it's like a padded block with legs and gymnasts run along, jump on a springboard and then do a flip over the horse. That is a horse.

And so in gymnastics, if you're doing tricks or things on a horse, if you fall off, you just have to get back on the horse. It's an expression meaning get up from your failure and just carry on. Yeah, so there you go.

Three more questions. This one is from Moz, one of my comedy pals from London, who these days does a podcast, a true crime podcast all about murder. It's fascinating and gruesome.

This is Moz's question. Here we go. Hello, this is Moz from Murder Mile.

Well, well, well, Mr. Luke Johnson, a thousand episodes. That's amazing. Well done.

My hat goes off to you. If indeed I was wearing a hat, I might buy a hat just so I can doff it to you. So you asked for a question.

Here is my question. Hypothetically, let's say that you're on a desert island. You're alone.

There's no chance of escape. You've got no entertainment. You haven't got books.

There's no music. You can't draw anything. You can't write anything.

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All you have is an iPad with limitless batteries and one film. Here's my question. What film will keep you sane for the rest of your life? This is the key bit.

You're going to be watching this film hundreds, if not thousands of times. Which film is going to keep you sane for the rest of your life? Let me know. Congratulations.

A thousand episodes. Looking forward to a thousand more. Bonjour.

OK. Thank you, Moz, from the Murder Mile podcast. His question was, if I was stranded on a desert island, there's no way of escaping.

And all I have is one iPad with unlimited batteries and only one film downloaded on it. Which film would I choose? And this is the film that is going to keep me sane. Meaning there's the film that's going to stop me from going mad.

Stop fiddling with things, please. The story that's going to keep me sane and stop me from going mad, because I'm only going to be able to watch this film, stranded on this desert island. Otherwise, it's just sand and crabs and... No, I can eat stuff that I catch.

You know, I'm stranded on a desert island, but I have an iPad with one film downloaded. Somehow the batteries never run out on this iPad. Maybe there's a solar panel with it.

So which film would I choose that's going to keep me sane for the rest of my life, stuck on this desert island? That's a really difficult question. You think you heard your little brother. He's probably awake from his nap.

So that might be the end of this, which might buy me some time thinking about this question, because that's a really tough question. I can only watch one film for the rest of my life, and it's going to keep me sane. Which film is it? That's a really tough one.

I'm tempted to say Ace Ventura 2, When Nature Calls, which is not really a serious answer, because obviously that's a completely ridiculous, stupid comedy film. I can't choose that. That's a silly choice.

But what film could it be? Oh, that's difficult. I mean, it's got to be one film that has universal meaning to me, a film that I'm never going to get tired of, a film that's



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going to maybe keep my spirits up, a film that will inspire me, a film that maybe will keep me down to earth, stop me from just going completely mad on my own. It's going to keep my feet on the ground.

Oh, that's a really hard one. I think it might be a film that you can watch many, many times, a film that will remind me of great times I've spent with my friends, a film that's going to keep me laughing, because I think comedy is a powerful, sort of, you know, laughter is the best medicine. It's the sort of thing that would keep me... A film that's going to keep me laughing.

Okay, I've got it. It's the film This Is Spinal Tap. I did an episode about it with my brother.

You can check it out. It's in the archive. And This Is Spinal Tap.

It's just a hilarious film that I never get bored of, and a film about a rock, a ridiculous British rock band on tour in America. Listen to the episode I did with James about it. It'll explain everything.

But I think it's going to be This Is Spinal Tap. I think it will remind me of times with my friends and family, and it will also entertain me. And it's quite a sweet film in a way.

It's quite a human film, a human story about friendship. So I think that's the one. This Is Spinal Tap is my film of choice.

I'm going to have to stop here. Again, two questions left. And then the final part of the episode where I go through, I ramble through my selection of episodes from the archive.

Maybe I should cut that bit. Realistically, how long is this? This is ridiculous. But it's episode 1000.

I think after this, normal podcasting will resume whenever I get the chance to do that, because I'm going to be here in this house, in this madhouse until the end of the month. So I don't know. It's really hard to podcast on holiday.

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It really is. But anyway, Moz, thank you for your question. Listeners, if you want stories of true murders, true crimes committed in interesting locations in London with Moz's idiosyncratic style, check out the Murder Mile podcast.

It is available wherever you get your podcasts. Yes. Time for me to go now and be a dad.

Dad duties are required from me at this point. So I'll speak to you later. Will it be the same time tomorrow? I don't think so, because tomorrow I'm driving to Paris to pick up my brother and his girlfriend and their son.

So we're going to have guests. I don't know if I'm going to get a chance to record for another week. This is going to be delayed even further.

The episode that took weeks and weeks and weeks to make. So who knows? Maybe I'll be in a different location for the recording of the next part of this. We will see.

But thank you for listening this far. Time for me to go and be a dad again. And my daughter's stuck on a fence.

She's climbing over a fence and she got stuck. So I've got to go and rescue her. All right.

Bye for now. Hello again. So here is the, I think, fifth recording session, fifth day of recording for this episode.

I had to stop there. Again, because the usual excuse, my son woke up and, you know, the rest. But I'm now back in Paris.

I drove here this morning and in a few minutes after I've done this, I'm going to go up to the station and pick up my brother, his girlfriend and their son, and then drive back over to our countryside house and spend a lovely week with them. So I'm just using this moment now to record what I think will be the final section of this episode. Thank you so much for listening this far, for joining me all the way through to this point.

I've decided that it's probably best for me to draw this to a close now and not let this go on any further. I did, I think I mentioned earlier, I did have a plan to go

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through my episode archive and talk about some episodes that I selected that sort of mean something to me. But I think the self-indulgent rambling has to stop now.

So I'm not going to do that. I mean, I can't really go on and on and on on my own podcast about my own podcast for this length of time. It starts to get a bit excessive, doesn't it, after a while.

So I'm not going to be doing that. I might, maybe I'll come back to that and I'll ramble through my archive in a later episode or something if I see fit, if I think it's a good idea. What else? But I did that a little bit, right? Some of the questions asked me about past episodes or some questions reminded me of old episodes.

So I have talked about some of those old episodes from the archive. And you should feel free to explore the episode archive yourself. If you are subscribed to Luke's English Podcast in a podcast app on your phone, that's the normal way, you'll find almost every single episode there.

You can just scroll back or use the search function in whichever app you're using. Any decent podcast app should allow you to search a podcast for specific words or episode numbers. So you could do that.

If you're on YouTube, you don't have all of the episodes. There's like large sections of my archive, which are not on YouTube. So if you're a YouTube viewer, you don't have the full archive there on my channel.

You'll have to go to, you'll have to subscribe to the podcast through one of those podcast apps. A simple way to do that is just to go to [teacherluke.co.uk/links](https://teacherluke.co.uk/links) right? [teacherluke.co.uk/links](https://teacherluke.co.uk/links) will take you to a page where there are lots of links for lots of different podcast apps. And you can see which one you've already got.

And you just click there and it will take you straight to it. Or you can go to my website. There's a full episode archive there.

I think that may be the most complete one because it includes links to audio hosted on other people's websites and things like that. So the episode archive is always available for you. [teacherluke.co.uk/episodes](https://teacherluke.co.uk/episodes)

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I used to have an app. Do you remember the LEP app? Maybe some of you will remember, but that's dead now completely. It's been dead and buried for several years.

There was one person who created an app for my podcast and were monetising it and stuff. And so if you do have an app on your phone that works, that's not the official Luke's English podcast app. I don't have an official LEP app anymore.

The best thing to do is just subscribe through a podcast app that you've got on your phone. Pocketcast is my favourite one. So yes, the episode archive is always available for you.

You could just dip in and find those old episodes. I'd love to talk through the selection that I made and recommend some old episodes from the past. But enough is enough.

I think I'm going to stop here nearly. I've got several other questions left from guests. So let's have a couple more questions and then I'll kind of make some closing statements.

That's my attempt. That will be my attempt to be statesman-like. I don't know if I'll manage it.

I'll probably just ramble for a bit and then end. But anyway, right. So next we have Stephen Devincenzi from the Send7 podcast, Simple English News Daily in seven minutes.

And he has several questions for me. Let's hear from Stephen. And here we go.

Stephen. Hello, Luke. And hello, Lepsters all around the world.

This is Stephen from Send7, Simple English News Daily, the only daily world news podcast made for people who are learning English. Luke, a thousand episodes. Wow.

What an incredible feat. That is truly remarkable. Congratulations.

I have two questions for you. I hope that's okay. The first question is about optimism and positivity.

Are you a naturally optimistic person? Do you have to motivate yourself in some way? Is there something special that you do to keep yourself motivated? And the second question, if I'm allowed, is do you have a signature dish? Something which Luke is known for cooking? There you go. Those are my two questions. Firstly, optimism and positivity.

Secondly, what is your signature dish? Congratulations, Luke. A thousand episodes. It's incredible.

I'm looking forward to the World News Quiz 2026 already. I hope you've been studying. See you soon.

Okay. So about two questions there from Stephen. Thank you very much, Stephen, for your questions.

The first one was about whether I'm an optimistic person or not. I think I am. I think, generally speaking, I am naturally quite optimistic.

I think. I think I see the glass as half full. I like to try to maintain a positive, upbeat sort of spirit.

I think part of that, to be honest, is the work that I do on my podcast does help to keep me upbeat. It does keep me happy. And also when I'm doing the podcast, maybe a certain positivity or energy comes through.

So I don't know if you were my wife who gets to sit next to me on the sofa every evening and wake up next to me in bed every morning, you might have a different story. Maybe I'm a maybe I moan and groan and grumble about things a lot more than you get on this podcast. But I think nevertheless, having a podcast and having a sense of purpose definitely helps with a sort of positive outlook and a sense of happiness and motivation.

I'm again, I feel really lucky that I've found a thing that I like doing. But another great thing for me about this podcast personally is that it has given me a sense of purpose, a sense of like, this is the thing I'd like to do. This is the thing I want to do.

And I've got an audience of people who, for whom I provide something useful and enjoyable. And that is an incredibly, well, that's just a very motivating thing. And so that does give me a lot of energy.

It feeds me a lot of energy and keeps me optimistic and positive. It's great to have work to do and have a feeling that you're making a difference and making an impact. That's not to say that there's, you know, there's no darkness or anything.

And I do have my moments, of course, just like most of us. But I would say overall, I'm optimistic. And I don't know, I don't think I have particular habits beyond just trying to be healthy, trying to get enough sleep, eating a balanced diet, you know, all the usual things, trying to get some exercise if I can, listening to music that I love.

That really helps if I feel down about anything. I just put on some music that will always put me in a good place. So there you go.

And the other question was, oh, yeah, my speciality, my signature dish. Well, I'll refer you to another episode from the archive, which I think was called Cooking with Luke. So if you want to search for maybe just cooking, you'll probably find it.

And in that episode, I cooked what I think is probably my signature dish, or at least one of them. And in the episode, I had my microphone on, I had it like a headset on, and I was cooking. And I go through every step in the recipe, explaining exactly what I'm doing and teaching loads of cooking vocabulary.

And the recipe I chose is a recipe that my mum taught me. And it is a very simple recipe, but really, really delicious. It's kind of like garlic lemon chicken.

Basically, you get some chicken thighs, put them in a like a dish that you can use to bake in the oven, put some chicken thighs, that's the upper parts of the chicken's legs, which have the loveliest, tastiest and most tender meat on them. So get some chicken thighs, put them in a dish. Then you get an onion.

Wait, not an onion, I mean a lemon. Wash it, cut it into bits and pieces, and scatter those bits of lemon all around the chicken. Then you get loads of cloves of garlic, like loads of whole cloves of garlic.

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You don't even need to remove the skin. Just pick them off and plonk them into your dish with your chicken and your lemon. And then you can obviously season, salt and pepper.

And you add a slosh of white wine, which is a really important thing. Not too much, but you just put enough white wine so that most of the bottom of the dish is covered. And a good glug of olive oil on the top.

And you cover that with tinfoil and put it in the oven and bake it for about 90 minutes, roast it for about 90 minutes. After 90 minutes, you remove the cover and let the chicken brown, the chicken and the garlic brown for about another 30 minutes. The thing about chicken is, as long as it stays moist, as long as it doesn't get, as long as it doesn't dry out, you can cook it for ages and ages.

And in fact, it sort of gets better and better the more you cook it. So you can cook it. It's one that you cook for a long time, but at the end, you get these beautifully brown, golden brown chicken thighs in a lovely mix of oil and wine and the fat from the chicken mixed in with the lovely lemon.

That's lovely citrus taste of the lemon. And then these beautifully cooked garlic cloves, which when you open them up, the garlic comes out like butter. It is amazing.

And you just serve that with... I like to serve it with baked potatoes, green beans. And that is a delicious meal, very comforting, a delicious meal. So that's my signature dish, Stephen.

Thank you for your question. And I think we've got one more question from Charlie Baxter. Again, the host of the British English Podcast.

It's available wherever you get your podcasts. One more question from Charlie. And here it is.

So somewhere out there is a listener who's been with you for hundreds, maybe even a thousand episodes, right? And you may never actually meet that person. So I'd like to ask you, what would you want to say to that person? Okay, so Charlie would like to know what I would say to any listener who's been with me since the very beginning. The first thing I'd like to ask actually is, is there anyone out there

who has been listening to me from the start? So I started this in 2009 and obviously put my podcast up on the internet.

Is there anyone listening now who discovered me in 2009 and has been listening to me ever since? I think I said earlier to James that those people are either dead or have just moved on entirely with their lives, I expect. But I would love to know if there's anyone out there from the old, old days of this podcast who is still listening. I know I've got lots of long-term listeners, including various people who still write in the comment section on my website.

People like Pierre, Bernard, Nick, Jack, who sometimes rubs me up the wrong way with the things he comments. But nevertheless, those people have been there for a long time. And back in the day, there were more people in the comment section crew.

It's kind of slimmed down to a kind of skeleton crew these days. So I know that they've been with the podcast for a long time. And then there are other people like someone like Molly Tai, who comments on lots of podcasts, not just mine.

But I think she's been listening for many years. But there may well be other people who've been listening to me, not just from the very beginning. And if you have listened to every single episode, including all of this one so far, then hats off to you. I doff my hat to you.

So, but anyone who's been listening also from year one, then what would I say to them? I would say, are you okay? You're all right, aren't you? Yeah, you're feeling okay? How's your English? And I would say, like, thank you so much for sticking with me.

Thank you so much for joining me on this journey. And I just want to say, hello. Hi there.

You've been, you've listened to maybe a thousand hours, maybe more of me talking often about very personal things. You've joined me on journeys. You know, you've heard me explain some, perhaps some of the most personal moments in my life.

Hi, how are you doing? I'd love to hear from you. So please send me an email. Okay, get in touch to tell me your story.



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I'd love to know about your origin story, about how you discovered the podcast, about some of the situations that you've been in while you've listened, and also your experiences of learning English with this podcast. So please send me an email. And I extend that request, that invitation to everyone listening.

Remember, I want your emails. I want, or comments in the comments section. I want questions that I can respond to in another episode coming up.

But I also want your stories, your live stories connected to this podcast, if you have any. And I also want to know about your stories of English learning success. Tell me about your journey of learning English, please.

I'm always fascinated to know. And it's extremely useful for me to know about those things. And also very, very encouraging for me too.

Because a lot of the time, as I've said before, I just sit in front of a computer and it's just me. And it's always really helpful for me to get that sense that there are people, there are humans out there having a real experience with this podcast. And also that this is useful.

When people tell me that, that my podcast has really helped them learn English, it is incredibly motivating and really gives me that positivity and drive that will help me continue doing this and reach 2000 episodes. Actually, I think it's, I think we're not that far off, to be honest, because there's actually a lot more than 1000 episodes in the archive. It's probably something like 1050, maybe even 1100.

Then there's the premium episodes and there are over 250 of them. So let's call it 1350. And don't forget A Phrasal Verb A Day, my podcast in which I teach you phrasal verbs in each episode.

And there are about 150 episodes of them. Admittedly, they are short, but they are individual episodes just to show the world that I can make shorter content. Each episode is about five minutes or less of A Phrasal Verb A Day.

You can get it wherever you get your podcasts. But if we add them in, maybe we are close to about 1500 episodes. And episode 2000 then technically is not that far away.

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If I do, well, that is quite far away. If I do roughly about 50, more or less 50 episodes a year, it's actually more with premium episodes. Maybe in five to 10 years, we will be celebrating episode 2000.

We will see. But yeah, do send me your emails, your comments. Like I said, I'm very interested to hear from you.

So thank you to everyone who sent me questions. And thank you to all my guests over the years who've contributed so much to this podcast. I really, really, really appreciate it.

And again, thank you, listeners, to you. Thank you, Lepsters, for being an amazing community. Thank you for supporting this podcast over the years.

Thank you for the gift of your attention. And I sincerely hope that not only have you learned a lot of English from listening to my episodes, listening to my ramblings, but also that you've enjoyed the experience too, and that it has, you know, improved your day a little bit. That's the end of this episode, which I thought I would never manage to finish.

But it looks like I have managed to finish it. I'm sure that after I've stopped recording, I'll think of other things I want to say. But enough is enough.

That's the end of this. Is this the longest episode of the podcast ever? I don't know. We will see.

We will see what happens in the final edit. But thank you for being a brilliant audience. And I hope you have a fantastic morning, afternoon, evening, or night, wherever you are in the world, whatever you're doing with yourself at this point.

And take care. I'll speak to you in episode 1001. I've got no idea what that will be.

When it will arrive, because as you can see, I'm really podcasting in little tiny moments in my day. So you'll have to bear with me. There might be a bit of a delay before episode 1001 comes up, but I'll do my best.

And then we'll get back to normal podcasting in September, when the holidays are closed, when holidays are finished, and the kids are at school. My son is starting school. Crash is over for him.

He's going to start school in September, which means he'll be sitting at a table, doing schoolwork, going to school with a little backpack, and no nappies. He still wears nappies. So we are attempting to nappy train this boy in just about two and a half weeks.

We're getting there. We're getting there slowly but surely. But anyway, that's enough rambling.

Thank you so much for listening. Thank you for watching. And I will speak to you soon.

But for now, finally, it is just time to say goodbye. Bye. Bye. Bye. Bye.