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The Most Important English Phrase - Ted Tuesdays - "Why Lunch Ladies Are Heroes"



The transcript to episode #54

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Hello there. Kevin here, with another episode of the Feel Good English podcast.

Today is a TED Tuesday lesson. I have one here for you called *Why Lunch Ladies are Heroes?* So in the U.S. and in a lot of countries around the world, maybe your country, maybe not, we feed our children lunch at school. In the U.S., children, starting from even the age of let's say seven, go to school from eight in the morning until three in the afternoon. They're at school all day. Because they're at school all day, they need to have lunch, and we have cafeterias that serve children lunch. Some children bring their lunch to school, and other ones don't. They buy their lunch at school.

Who makes the lunch for these kids? Lunch ladies, of course. We call these women *lunch ladies*. Do you have lunch ladies in your country?

Well, often, lunch ladies are made fun of. They're joked about, and they might be even disrespected. They don't get a lot of value because they're making food. Sometimes, the food isn't that great. They have to make food for hundreds of children every day, and has to be food that is inexpensive, so often the food's not very good, and

we blame them and we look down on them.

But in this talk, Jarett is going to validate them, and how he did this was he probably showed those books making lunch ladies superheroes. So I'm going to talk about this video. Today, I'm going to teach you some of the vocabulary and the words that he uses and give you a chance to learn a little more deeply into understanding native speaking a little better. So, listen to this episode once or twice or three times, and then go watch the video TED. You can find it on my website feelgoodenglish.com/lunch or you can go to ted.com, too. That's easy. Search for the video "Why Lunch Ladies are Heroes," there you'll find this transcript to the video, and watch the video itself.

Just a reminder, there are a couple of days left for you to become a Feel Good English member for free, the month of August *(2016)* is the last month I am going to allow you to do this, by giving me a review on iTunes or Stitcher about how much you love the Feel Good English podcast. So after the lesson, go do that, get transcripts to my lesson and be a superhero. Now, let's get into the TED Tuesday lesson *Why Lunch Ladies are Heroes*.

I looked across the room, and there she was. My old lunch lady. She was still there at the school, and she was busily preparing lunches for the day. So, I approached her to say "Hello," and I said "Hi Jeanie. How are you?" and she looked at me, and I could tell that she recognized me, that you couldn't quite place me. She looked at me and she said "Steven Crizascan?"

So here, Jarett says: *...and she looked at me, and I could tell that she recognized me, but she couldn't place me.* So, what does it mean here when somebody can't *place* you? Using *place* as a verb, which is pretty different. Somebody looks at you and says *"Ah. I know this person from somewhere, but I can't quite place this person. I don't know how I know him or where I know him from."* So, that's the connection there: where you know somebody is the place that you

know them from. So if you can't place them, it means you don't know where you know them from. *Oh, I saw this girl yesterday, but I couldn't quite place her. I know I have met her before, but I couldn't place her.*

...and she started telling me about her grandkids, and that blew my mind. My lunch lady had grandkids, and therefore, kids, and therefore, left school at the end of the day? I thought she lived in the cafeteria with the serving spoons, because I never thought about any of that before.

...and she started telling me about her grandkids, and that blew my mind. So, that's a great expression; *to blow someone's mind*. In this case, it blew his mind. This is to completely shock you, to amaze you. *"It's amazing. It blew my mind."* He didn't expect this woman behind the counter, serving him food, to have a family and grandkids and all of these things that normal people do. He just considered her as the lunch lady. So it blew his mind that she had a family.

"With that chance encounter inspired my imagination, and I created the "Lunch Lady" a graphic novel series."

A chance encounter is when you meet somebody without planning it. It's by chance. Random. It just happened. It was a chance encounter.

...and coast to coast, all of the lunch ladies told me the same thing: "Thank you for making a superhero in our likeness."

...and made a superhero in her likeness," meaning the superhero is based on these women. The superhero was based on them, in their likeness.

"It meant the most to Jeanie. When the books were first published, I invited her to the book launch party. In front of everyone there, everyone she had fed over the years, I gave her a piece of artwork and some books. And two years, after this photo was taken, she passed away. I attended her wake, and nothing could have prepared

me for what I saw there."

And then, he, Jarett, attended her wake. A wake, W-A-K-E, just like in the verb *to wake up*," the same word. A wake is when you go to somebody's funeral. It's when they're showing the body. The body is out there, people are around and looking at her, and talking about the person that has passed away or has died. So, that is a wake. A wake is part of a funeral. A funeral is the whole process. It could also have the burial. *To bury* is to put somebody under the ground, when you're standing outside in the grass, and the person goes down under the ground. You've seen that in a lot of movies, but the wake is when the body is there, either with a casket that is open or not, but you can look at this person one last time.

"...because next to her casket was this painting, and her husband told me it meant so much to her, that I had acknowledged her hard work. I had validated what she did."

...and her husband told Jarett, that it meant so much to this lunch lady, that he had acknowledged her, and had validated what she did. Acknowledged her, recognized her good work, and validated. To validate is to make something valuable. To make it a value, so people didn't look at the lunch lady as somebody who is doing something valuable, he made it into something that is valuable because it is.

" There is Miss Brenda in California, who keeps a close eye on every student that comes to her line, and then reports back to the guidance counsellor if anything is amiss."

So, she reports back to the guidance counsellor if anything is *amiss*. Amiss, A-M-I-S-S. If something is amiss, it means something is wrong. Something is not right, maybe the kid is sick, or maybe he is not behaving or acting accordingly. He's misbehaving. Maybe he's doing something wrong, or maybe he's sad. So it could be a variety of things, but if something is amiss, it means something is wrong. Another example: *I walked into my house last night, and something*

was amiss. The door was a little open, and something didn't feel right. Somebody might have been in my house. I'm not sure, but what I do know is that something was amiss.

"For me, I was so moved by the response that came from the lunch ladies because one woman said to me, "Before this day, I felt like I was at the end of the planet at the school. I didn't think that anyone noticed us down here." Another woman said to me, "You know, when I got out of this is that what I do is important."

Jarett was *moved* by this. *To be moved* by something is to beget emotional. To get emotional by something. So if you're moved by something, it affects you emotionally. So, in general, it's just becoming emotional. He was really affected by how these women were thanking him and acknowledging the fact that he had made them feel special. He had made them feel valuable.

"...and I hope that you'd remember how powerful a "Thank you" can be. A "Thank you" can change a life. It changes the life of the person who receives it, and it changes the life of the person who expresses it."

Saying *thank you*, making people feel valuable, bringing attention to people that might not feel very valuable in the society is such an important thing. Equality in making everybody feel valuable in the society, not just those that have big important jobs, nice cars, those who make money, managers, and bosses. So, saying *thank you* to people like this and respecting them and being nice to them is very important; something they do a lot. In the opposite, when I see people disrespecting others just because they think they're a restaurant server or work at a store, or in this case, they would work in a cafeteria, when I see people disrespecting them simply because they are working there, I get very upset. I think that is a total crap. So, be nice to people, recognize them, say "thank you." What can you do today? To make somebody smile. Go out there today: when you're buying coffee or wherever you are today, say *thank you* to the

person and look at them and be very nice, and show them that you respect them and validate what they are doing. It could just make their day.

That's it for today's lesson. Now, as with any TED Talk, the best thing you can do is to listen to this a couple of times, and then go to [Ted.com](https://www.ted.com), find this talk. You can find this on my website as well at feelgoodenglish.com/lunch, and watch the video on Ted. It's a cool, short video. You can see the subtitles there, you can see the words I talked about, and you can visualize all the stuff that you've been hearing in your ears. It's about six minutes. Real quick, easy, and short. So after this, go over to the website and find the video.

Just a reminder, there are only a couple of days left to get transcripts to the Feel Good English podcast for free, go to feelgoodenglish.com/member. August is the last month so if you are listening to this, hopefully it's still August. Only a couple of days left. You can become a member for free and download transcripts to this and all other episodes - forever! All you have to do is leave a review.

Until next time. I hope you had a good lunch today, and I hope the person that made your lunch knows that you value what they did. Maybe you did your own lunch. So, I hope you feel the value that you deserve because you made yourself lunch.

Here's a lunch lady joke for you: What did the lunch lady say to Luke Skywalker from Star Wars? "Use the forks, Luke."

That's a very stupid joke. Sorry about that one.

Until next time. Keep rocking.

Bye!

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