



TOPICS

American Presidents: Gerald Ford; you bet; between versus in between

GLOSSARY

money laundering – moving money that one has obtained illegally in such a way that it appears to be legal and cannot be traced to those illegal activities

* For years, this criminal family used busy restaurants for money laundering, making it difficult for the police to find the profits from their crimes.

pardon – official forgiveness of a crime and protection from future punishment

* Under pressure from the community, the governor gave her a pardon.

to this day – even now; up to the present time

* I lost track of my best friend after college, and to this day, I don't know where she is and what she's doing.

to evade – to escape something; to not be caught by someone

* The robbers tried to evade police by driving through the busy shopping mall.

draft – a system that requires young men to serve in the military, usually in a time of war

* If this war continues for another year, we may need a draft to get more soldiers.

deserter – someone who leaves military service without permission

* Manny became a deserter, not being able to kill anyone in war.

special education – programs that are part of public schools designed for children who have special needs, usually due to some type of learning disorder or a physical or mental disability

* Billie is a special education teacher who really cares about her students.

détente – the easing of hostilities or bad feelings, usually between countries; the reduction of tensions between nations

* Do you think the détente between these two rival gangs will continue?



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isolationist – someone who believes that one should stay out of the affairs or interests of other groups, especially the political affairs of other countries

* Paul is an isolationist who believes that other countries should fight their own wars.

refugee – a person who leaves a country for political reasons, especially because that person is no longer safe in his or her home country

* When there is war, large numbers of refugees cross borders into other countries, trying to escape the violence.

assassination attempt – an incident where an individual or group tries to kill someone in an important position, such as a country's leader

* How would history be different if the assassination attempt on President Ronald Reagan had succeeded?

briefing – a meeting to give information or instructions; a short, informative spoken report

* I want a briefing on the political situation in McQuillanland before I meet with its leaders this afternoon.

you bet – an informal response to “thank you,” meaning “you’re welcome”; a phrase used for emphasis to show an extreme, either good or bad

* A: Thanks for helping me move those heavy boxes.

B: You bet.

between – located in the space that separates two objects; occurring at a time after one given time and before another; connecting; dividing an amount equally among people; together or jointly

* I don't think there is a bank between my house and yours.

in between – located on a direct line that joins two other objects; in the way, blocking one's passage

* Is there enough room for Patty to sit in between the two of you?



WHAT INSIDERS KNOW

Saturday Night Live Presidential Impersonations

Saturday Night Live is a live television “sketch comedy” (humorous show with many short acts showing funny situations) and “variety show” (show with different types of entertainment, including humor and musical acts). Saturday Night Live is one of the “longest-running” (shown continuously for many years) television programs in the United States. The show “premiered” (was shown for the first time) on October 11, 1975. Since that time, it has been shown late in the evening on TV every Saturday night.

Saturday Night Live is famous for many types of “sketches” (short acts), including sketches focused on politics. Many “comedians” (funny actors and performers) who later became famous television or movie stars “got their start” (began their career) on Saturday Night Live. And many of them begin by “impersonating” (performing as though they are another famous person) politicians and U.S. presidents.

One “memorable” (hard to forget) example is Will Ferrell’s impersonation of President George W. Bush. For his impersonation, Ferrell “made fun of” (ridiculed; laughed at) George Bush’s “distinctive” (unique) laugh. He also gave ridiculous, and sometimes stupid answers to some important questions regarding the war and the economy. Will Ferrell “went on to be” (later became) one of the biggest “comedic” (related to humor; funny) actors in movies.

Saturday Night Live is considered “an institution” (a very important and respected part) in comedy shows. Their political sketches show people that politics, which is usually considered serious business, can also be funny and entertaining.



COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

You're listening to ESL Podcast English Café number 408.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast's English Café episode 408. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

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On this Café, we're only going to cover one topic instead of two, because we're going to do another one of our series on American presidents. We're going to focus on a well-known 20th century president, at least well-known in the United States, by the name of Gerald Ford. And as always, we'll answer a few of your questions. Let's get started.

This Café begins with the continuation of our series on American presidents. Today, we're going to focus on our 38th president, Gerald Ford. Gerald Ford was president for a relatively short amount of time, from 1974 to 1977. Ford was born with the name Leslie Lynch King, Jr. in 1913 in Omaha, which is in the state of Nebraska in the Midwestern part of the United States. His mother and father separated about two weeks after his birth, and in 1916, his mother married again. So, I guess his mother and father divorced. When you separate, you may live in different places, but you are not officially divorced. When you divorce, then your marriage is considered over and you can, in most countries, legally marry again.

Well, Leslie Lynch King, Jr.'s mother divorced his father, and in 1916, she married again, this time to a man named Gerald Rudolff Ford. Almost 20 years later, in 1935, Leslie Lynch King, Jr. changed his name to Gerald Ford – the name by which he became known in politics. So, he changed his name for his new father, that is, for his mother's husband. I'm not sure if he's the only president who legally changed his name. I'm guessing that he is.

Ford was raised in the state of Michigan, which is also in the Midwestern part of the U.S., more towards the East Coast. He was a very talented football player, American football player, and he eventually played football for the University of Michigan – the public college or one of the public colleges in Michigan. He earned his degree, his bachelor's degree, in economics, and then went on to "coach" or teach football at another famous American university, Yale. But he



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didn't *just* coach football at Yale. He got his law degree. He became a lawyer by studying at the Yale Law School, which is one of the best law schools in the United States.

He and a friend, after he graduated, opened a private law practice, a law office, in Michigan. But soon after World War II began, and Ford, like many young men, signed up or “enlisted” in the Armed Forces. In Ford's case, he signed up for the Navy. The “Navy” (navy) is the part of the Armed Forces that is responsible for ships and boats and things that are related to water, I guess. I'm not sure why Ford wanted to enlist in the Navy. I do know, since my father was in World War II, that many young men, including him, tried to enlist in the Navy or in another part of the U.S. military before they were drafted, before the government said they had to go. They decided they would volunteer. They tried to get into the Navy or one of the other Armed Forces.

Ford “served in” or was a member of the Navy from 1942 to 1946, right after World War II ended. After the war, Ford returned to Michigan and became involved in local politics. He became involved in the Republican Party in Michigan. He ran for a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1948. When I say he “ran for a seat” (seat), I mean he tried to get elected to that position, to that office. He was successfully elected to the House of Representatives and reelected or elected again many times. He was a member of the House of Representatives from 1949 to 1973, about 25 years. Interestingly, he was not a very active representative. He didn't write a lot of new legislation or bills or laws. He focused more on negotiations, on relationships with other elected representatives. From 1965 to 1973, he was one of the leaders of the Republican Party in the House of Representatives.

Ford was also well known because he served on a very famous committee, a very famous commission, called the Warren Commission. As you probably know, in 1963, our president, John F. Kennedy at the time, was assassinated. He was killed. After his death, the U.S. government set up a commission, a committee to study what happened, to figure out who actually did it. Gerald Ford was part of that commission. It was called the Warren Commission because the head of the commission was Earl Warren, who was the Supreme Court Chief Justice – the Chief Justice of the United States.

Anyway, Ford was part of this Warren Commission that investigated the murder of John F. Kennedy. I talked a little bit about that in English Café 315. The report that the Warren committee produced was, according to some people, controversial, and there are still today people who debate whether the Warren



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Commission actually found out the truth. For the most part, if you look at the Warren Commission, you actually read the Warren Commission, it's fairly clear they did get to the truth, but people love to believe that there are "conspiracies," there are secret groups of people who are trying to change the world. Of course, there *are* secret groups of people who are trying to change the world, but not everything can be explained by a conspiracy, and the Warren Commission probably got the truth.

In any case, Ford stopped serving in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1973. What happened in 1973? Well, the vice president of the United States at that time, a man by the name of Spiro Agnew, was being investigated by the government for tax evasion and money laundering. "Tax evasion" (evasion) is when you try to avoid paying your taxes, when you do something illegal to try *not* to pay your taxes. Agnew was also accused of money laundering. "Money laundering" is when you try to take money and hide it, or make it appear that it was from some legal activity. Agnew resigned; he said he would no longer serve as vice president. He was the first vice president in American history to resign. When that happened, President Nixon asked Ford to be the new vice president. And with the approval of Congress, Ford became the vice president of the United States in 1973.

At this time, although people knew about Gerald Ford, he wasn't one of the great leaders, the great political leaders of our time. One of the reasons, perhaps, President Nixon chose him was for that very purpose, so that he wouldn't, perhaps, cause problems in his own administration. However, President Nixon was also investigated for participating in illegal activities. I talked about those back in English Café 280. As the investigation continued against Nixon, Nixon decided in August of 1974 himself to resign.

Well, when the president either dies or resigns, the vice president becomes president. So here we have Gerald Ford, who represented one part of one state, suddenly becoming the president of the United States without any popular election. This, however, is the way our Constitution, our guiding legal document, is set up, so that if there is a problem with the vice president, the president can appoint a new vice president, and if the president dies or resigns, the vice president takes his place. So, in August, 1974, Gerald Ford became president of the United States. He was the first and only person to become president in this way.

The next month, in September, 1974, Ford did the most controversial thing of his short presidency – the thing that most people remember him for, the thing that



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historians argue about whether it was the right thing to do. What Ford did in September, one month after he became president, is issue a “pardon” for President Nixon. A “pardon” (pardon) is when the president or a governor forgives someone who has committed a crime and protects them from being punished. So, if the president pardons you – and the president has the power to pardon any criminal in the United States – you no longer are considered guilty. You can leave jail if you were sent to jail, and you are protected from being sent to jail again or arrested again for that crime, whatever crime you were pardoned for.

We say people are pardoned “for” a crime. You don't pardon the person, in the sense that they can never be arrested again for anything. You are saying that this thing they did in the past that was wrong will no longer be a reason for them to be punished. When Ford pardoned Nixon, Nixon was no longer going to have to be responsible for the illegal activities that he did.

Although the president has the power to pardon, many people disagreed with Ford's decision to pardon Nixon. They felt that for justice's sake, Nixon should be arrested. He should have been tried in a court of law to show that what he did was illegal, and to be punished for his illegal activity. Now, you have to understand that in 1974 – which I remember, because I was watching the news as a young boy at the time – there was a lot of political controversy. The American government was divided. There was a lot of confusion in American society because of this crime, these crimes that Nixon was accused of committing. Ford wanted to end the controversy, to end the investigations, because he knew that if he didn't pardon Nixon, this could go on for years. It could be years and years before the issue was finally settled, was finally over. Ford wanted the country to recover from this shock, from this terrible event of having its president resign, and so he pardoned Nixon to end all of the investigations and to end the controversy.

As I said, many, many people disagreed with Ford, said that this was not the right thing to do. Historians now debate whether it was the right thing or the wrong thing. Some people tried to say that there was some sort of agreement between Nixon and Ford, that Ford was appointed to the office of vice presidency with the understanding that if necessary, he would pardon Nixon if Ford became president. Ford said this was not true, that he recognized that Nixon was guilty, that Nixon had committed crimes, but he wanted people to stop worrying about this issue. The controversy remains to this day. Even now, people continue to debate whether this was a good idea.



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Ford made another controversial decision in his presidency. During the mid-1970's, the United States, up until 1975, was still involved militarily in the country of Vietnam. Many young men did not want to go to Vietnam to be part of the army, and the armed services in Vietnam, and so they left the United States or they avoided the U.S. government so they would not have to go to the war. The verb we would use here is "evade." "To evade" (evade) means to escape from doing something. I mentioned Spiro Agnew was charged with tax "evasion." He tried to avoid paying taxes. "Draft evasion" is trying to avoid becoming a member of the military.

The word "draft" (draft) refers to the system where, in the United States, young men are picked and required to be part of the military. Now, in the United States, unless we are in a war, usually there is no required military service. Young men do not have to go and serve in the Army for two years as they do in many countries. There is no required military service in the United States, unless we are in the middle of a war. And if we're in a war, then there is something called a "draft." And in a draft, basically, they select birthdays throughout the year, and if you were born on that day, you have to go into the Army and fight in a war.

Many young men tried to evade the Vietnam War draft. Some of them went into hiding. Some of them left the country and went to places like Canada to avoid fighting in the war. Some people entered the military, were part of the military, and then left illegally. We would call that sort of person a "deserter" (deserter). "To desert" as a verb means to leave something you are supposed to be a part of, in this case, to leave the military without permission.

What Ford did is start a program called the "Return of Vietnam Era Draft Evaders and Military Deserters." Basically, he set up a system so that these young men could come back to the United States, not be arrested and spend time in jail, but be punished in other ways so that they could return to their normal life. Many people, again, disagreed with President Ford's decision. Other people thought it was a good idea to get these young men to come back.

President Ford also worked on some other issues during his three years, issues involving other what we would call "domestic concerns" – things pertaining to or relating to the United States. He was very involved in setting up special education programs. "Special education" refers to programs for boys and girls that have either a physical or a mental disability or a handicap. My father was a special education teacher. He taught these kinds of students.



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Ford, like all U.S. presidents, also had what we would call a “foreign policy,” a set of actions, a set of ideas that he tried to use in terms of dealing with other countries. At this time, you'll remember, we were still in the Cold War with the Soviet Union. The U.S. and the Soviet Union were on opposite sides politically, in the world. However, beginning, really, with President Nixon, the U.S. government tried to make things less tense between the two countries. They tried to reduce, we might say, the “tensions” between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. This policy was called “détente” (détente).

“Détente” was the policy of trying to get along with the Soviet Union, not to get into any sort of arguments or military engagements with them. Ford believed that the United States had to be involved in international politics. He believed they could not be “isolationist.” “To be isolationist” means to only worry about your country and not to be involved in any other countries. Of course, many other countries wish the United States were more isolationist than it is!

President Ford also had to deal with, or take care of, the results of the fall of South Vietnam in 1975. In 1975, the South Vietnamese government was taken over by the Communist North Vietnamese government and many people left Vietnam. They tried to escape Vietnam. The result was that we had many Vietnamese refugees in the United States. A “refugee” (refugee) is a person who leaves or has to leave his country for some political reason. That's what happened to many Vietnamese families that came to the United States. When I was in high school, in the late 1970's, we had a couple of Vietnamese refugees in our high school class. St. Paul, Minnesota was actually one of the places that the U.S. government sent Vietnamese refugees after 1975.

Two people tried to kill President Ford. To kill a president or political leader is to “assassinate” them, and Ford survived two assassination attempts on his life. Ford ran for president in 1976, but he lost to a man by the name of Jimmy Carter.

Ford lived for many years after his presidency. He often received reports from the government about certain activities. We would call these reports “briefings” (briefings). A “briefing” is a report, a summary if you will, of something related to, in this case, political activities. Ford, however, was not very active in Republican politics. Republicans after the 1970's were more conservative politically than Ford, and so Ford's ideas were considered by many to be too liberal for the Republican Party.

During his retirement, after he was president, Ford spend a lot of time right here in California in an area called Palm Springs. Ford loved to play golf and Palm



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Springs is known for its golf courses. So, he spent a lot of time there. Ford died in 2006 at the age of 93. He lived longer than any U.S. president up to that time, even though his presidency was one of the shorter presidencies in U.S. history. So that's the story of Gerald Ford.

Now let's answer some of the questions you have sent to us.

Our first question comes from you, Iraj (Iraj) in Iran. The question has to do with a very common expression in English, "You bet" (bet). "You bet" is used informally for a couple of different reasons. One is to say "You're welcome," after someone says, "Thank you." "Thank you for doing that." "You bet." Or you could say, "Thank you for doing that." "You're welcome."

"You bet" is a little more informal, something you would say to a friend, perhaps. There are actually lots of different ways to say, "You're welcome," when someone says, "Thank you" to you. Some people say "No problem." Other people will say, "Anytime." "Thanks for helping me do this." "Oh, any time," meaning you can ask me anytime. "No problem" means it wasn't difficult. It didn't cause me any problems. Don't worry about it. Both of those can be used in addition to "You bet" to say "You're welcome."

"You bet" can also be used as a form of emphasis. Someone asks you if you're going to go back to the store and return something that wasn't working properly. You might say, "You bet I'm going to go back to the store!" The use of "You bet" there indicates a certain passion, a certain emotion, in this case, a certain anger. It can also be used to emphasize a very positive thing. Someone might say, "Are you going to the movies with me?" And you say, "You bet!" meaning, "Yes, absolutely! I am definitely going. I want to go."

Our next question comes from Ban (Ban) in Serbia. The question has to do with the difference between the word "between" and the phrase "in between." There are a lot of uses of the word "between." I probably won't have time to answer with a complete list of those.

Generally speaking, "between" is used when you have two objects, or two areas, and want to refer to something that is in the space that separates the two objects or the two areas. So, you have a chair over here, you have another chair over here, and then you have a space in the middle, if you will, where there is no chair. That would be "between" the two chairs, located in the space that separates the two areas or the two objects. You can also use this to talk about time. Five o'clock is "between" four o'clock and six o'clock.



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In many cases, you can also say “in between” to mean the same thing. “This house is in between that house and the other house.” “This house is between that house and the other house.” Both of those are possible. Usually, “in between” is only used when we’re talking about physical objects, and “between” can be used for both physical objects and nonphysical objects – when you’re talking about time, for example.

You might say “The dog is in between me and you.” You’re standing over there, I’m standing here, and “in between” us is a dog. The dog is in the middle of the space that separates the two of us.

When in doubt, I would say always use “between.” You probably won’t get into any sort of problems if you do that.

If you have problems with your English, email us. Our email address is eslpod@eslpod.com. We’ll do our best to answer as many of your questions as we can here on the Café.

From Los Angeles, California, I’m Jeff McQuillan. Thank you for listening. Come back and listen to us again right here on the English Café.

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