

EPISODE 88
LEVEL B2

READING COMPREHENSION



CAREER PEAK

It is often assumed that youth is a bonus in most professions. But frequently, it is only when you have a combination of both age and experience that a person can truly be said to **be at their peak** (= at the best moment).

By the age of 26 most top catwalk models are thinking of retirement or at least a change of career. Maybe they are wise to quit when they are at the top, and before time **blemishes** (= spoil) that perfect image.

The great soprano Dame Joan Sutherland, for example, was widely considered to **be at the height of her powers** (= be very successful) at the age of 33, whereas female swimmers are regarded as old when they are out of their teens.

There are no exact **rules of thumb** (= practical and approximate way of measuring sth) but it is possible to **gauge** (= calculate) when you are likely to be at your best, depending on the kind of job you do.

Great mathematicians will do their best work in their early 20s, while novelists will have to cram in years of experience, to say nothing of perfecting their style of writing, before they can truly be **at the summit** (= at the top) of their career.

Fortunately, however, there are exceptions to the rule in every profession. Actresses are always **moaning** (=complaining) about the fact there are no good roles for them after the age of 40, but there are also those who **leapt** (=jumped) to **mega-stardom** (= status of being extremely famous) in their 50-s.



EXERCISE 1

Decide which of these statements are true or false:

1. Female swimmers are at their peak when they are in their teens
2. Mathematicians do their best work in their 30s.
3. No actors become famous after their 50s.
4. It's better to be old in all professions.

ENGLISH IN USE



IT'S TIME / I'D RATHER

Remember after these phrases use past simple to express a present situation

Alan's shoes are so old they are falling to pieces.

It's time Alan bought some new shoes.

Could you come in on time?

I'd rather you came in on time.

EXERCISE 2

Write the sentences using **it's time** and **I'd rather**:

1. He ought to start looking for another job
2. Do you want me to finish these letters now?
3. John's hair is very long. He looks awful.
4. Shall we not postpone the meeting?
5. Julie really needs a holiday.
6. Can you send this fax yourself?
7. If you don't want to be late, you'd better get up.
8. Can I tell Paul? It would be better not to tell him.

IDIOM CLOSE-UP



EXERCISE 3

GO IT ALONE = do sth without help from anyone

PUT ALL YOUR EGGS IN ONE BASKET = rely on only one thing for success

DEAD-END JOB = a boring job with no hope for promotion

PIN YOUR HOPES ON SB = hope that sb will help you

Fill in the missing verbs:

1. Don'tpin your hopes.....on others. If necessary, have the courage togo it alone.....
2. Some say it is adead-end jobstanding at a machine eight hours a day.
3. Don't and try to keep your options open.

Discuss:

1. If someone looks young for his / her age, is that good or bad?
2. When is someone in his prime?
3. If you tell a 20-year-old man Act Your Age! what kind of thing might he be doing?
4. At what age do people generally come of age in your country?

PHRASAL VERBS CLOSE-UP



Many phrasal verbs have more than one meaning:



BRING UP = look after a child

BREAK DOWN = collapse in tears, stop working (about the machine)

MAKE UP = forgive and become friends again, invent an excuse

TAKE UP = start a new job, fill space or time

EXERCISE 4

Fill in the sentences with proper phrasal verbs:

1. They have decided that their marriage has and they are going to get a divorce.

2. When he retired, he golf.
3. After her parents died she was by an aunt.
4. We often argue but we always soon after.
5. My job all of my free time these days.
6. Sometimes it's better to an excuse than to tell the truth.
7. When they told her the bad news, she
8. I'm sorry to keep but you still haven't paid me the money you owe me.

NEWS



POST OFFICE WORKERS ON STRIKE

Workers at hundreds of post offices are set to strike later this month in the latest round of industrial action over plans to **franchise** out 76 high street branches. The **walkout** by around 4,000 workers in 373 Crown post offices will be the sixth and seventh strikes since Easter, with staff unhappy at plans by management to sign up outside businesses to run the sites and cut up to 1,500 jobs. Union bosses have called on the Post Office's chief executive, Paula Vennells, to join the talks in the hope of a **resolution**. Dave Ward, the CWU deputy general secretary, said: "This dispute can't be resolved while the CEO Paula Vennells remains **aloof** and absent from talks. "It's time that Paula Vennells got her hands dirty and engaged with this dispute which affects the post office network's biggest branches. It's no good hiding in the shadows and hoping we'll go away." The union's members voted nine-to-one **in favour of** the strikes at the Crown sites, which make up just 3% of the Post Office's portfolio but process 20% of all transactions. The Post Office, which is **state-owned** and receives £1.3bn of taxpayer **subsidy**, has said franchising out branches to retailers is essential to securing the future of the service.

Franchise = to sell sb the rights to sell your goods or services in a particular place

Walkout = a form of protest

Resolution = a solution to the problem

Aloof = not wanting to be involved in sth

In favour of = giving sb an advantage

State-owned = belonging to the country

KEY TO EXERCISES

Ex. 1

1. T
2. F
3. F
4. F

Ex. 2

1. It's time he started looking for a new job.
2. I'd rather you finished these letters now.
3. It's time he had his hair cut.
4. I'd rather we didn't postpone the meeting.
5. It's time Julie had a holiday.
6. I'd rather you sent this fax yourself.
7. It's time you got up.
7. I'd rather you didn't tell him.

Ex. 3

1. Broken down
2. Took up
3. Was brought up
4. Make up
5. Takes up
6. Make up
7. Broke down
8. Bringing ...up

Ex. 4

1. Don't**pin your hopes**.....on others. If necessary, have the courage to**go it alone**.....
2. Some say it is a**dead-end job**standing at a machine eight hours a day.
3. Don't**put all your eggs in one basket**..... and try to keep your options open.