

## LEARNING BY EAR 2009

### Economics – 4<sup>th</sup> episode

#### SUCCEEDING IN THE BUSINESS WORLD

**Series:** “THE STORY OF TWO YOUNG PEOPLE, WHOSE SUCCESS STEMS FROM THEIR POCKET MONEY”

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#### FOURTH EPISODE: "The harsh reality of the business world."

##### Scene 1, AT HOME, IN THE LIVING ROOM

**Characters:** **John** (*17-year-old boy, twin.*)

**Jane** (*John's twin sister*)

**Narrator**

##### Scene 2, AT HOME, IN THE LIVING ROOM

**Characters:** **John** (*17-year-old boy, twin.*)

**Jane** (*John's twin sister*)

**Dad** (*Twin's 46-year-old father.*)

**Narrator**

### **Scene 3, IN THEIR BEDROOM**

**Characters:**     **John** (*17-year-old boy, twin.*)  
                      **Jane** (*John's twin sister*)  
                      **Narrator**

### **Scene 4, AT THE STALL**

**Characters:**     **John** (*17-year-old boy, twin.*)  
                      **Jane** (*John's twin sister*)  
                      **Granma** (*Twin's 67-year-old grandmother.*)  
                      **Ayaba** (*20-year-old woman, Granma's domestic help.*)  
                      **Customer** (*30-year-old woman.*)  
                      **Narrator**

**Optional Voice: Dictionary voice** for “The Little Dictionary”: male if narrator is female and vice versa

***NB: The “Little Dictionary” is an optional (LBE Plus) extra, which should be taken out if the manuscripts in your language is too long.***

NB!!!: Please adapt the currency to your target zone or invent a currency if you want

## Learning by Ear Soundtrack

### Intro

**NARRATOR:** Hello Learning by Ear friends, and welcome to this Deutsche Welle series about the subject of economics. It tells “THE STORY OF TWO YOUNG PEOPLE, WHOSE SUCCESS STEMS FROM THEIR POCKET MONEY”. In this fourth episode entitled "**The harsh reality of the business world,**" the twins, John and Jane have to face up to the challenges of a bad harvest, which has caused the price of agricultural products to soar. Groundnuts, which our young heroes sell, have also become very expensive. Several orders have been cancelled. Our entrepreneurs are just as worried about this as they are about their final exams, which are coming up very soon.

### **Scene 1, AT HOME, IN THE LIVING ROOM**

JOHN AND JANE

**ATMO:** *Storm. The cat meows in fear. Television in the background, throughout the whole scene until line 20 of scene 2.*

- Jane:** Now it's raining again! After the rainy season is over!
- John:** It waited until the seedlings were ruined. What a waste!

- 3. Jane:** We can't predict anything for sure. Nobody is completely safe. It's all just disasters in the newspaper. Floods where people don't need rain, droughts where people need water, earthquakes here, forest fires there....
- 4. John:** In the market everything has become more expensive and the prices go up every day. Did I tell you about what happened the other day? (*imitating a regional accent*) "Hey, my friend, don't get on my nerves! There are people who can't afford three meals a day and you think they're going to buy your groundnuts?" I felt half angry and half sorry for him.
- 5. Jane:** But he's right! Within six months, the price of food has practically tripled. The restaurants that haven't shut completely have cancelled their orders with us and we're at the bottom of a deep hole with loads of stock that we can't sell.
- 6. John:** (*To the cat, whistling.*)  
Pf\* ! Pf\* ! Pf\* ! Come here, kitty. He's so worried... (*To Jane*) Now I know what you were talking about the day when we opened the account.

7. **Jane:** My special twin-given gifts rarely fail me.
8. **John:** You're always having feelings about things. But now it's time you felt your way out of this rat hole.
9. **Jane:** Do you think we're going to be able to cope with all these taxes that the restaurant owners and shopkeepers have been complaining about?
10. **John:** In just six months about a dozen restaurants have closed down. Can you imagine?
11. **Jane:** It all began so well for us but it was just an illusion of success.
12. **John:** Don't look at everything so negatively, Jane. It's a storm which will pass just like the one outside. Good weather will come after the storm.
13. **Jane:** Yes, you're right to look on the bright side of things but our stock of groundnuts is likely to rot between now and the holidays.
14. **John:** My god! What's going to happen to us?

**15. ATMO:** *The rain starts to fall. It sounds loudly on the tin roof. The cat continues to meow.*

**NARRATOR:** The twins can't stop complaining. Their father comes out of his room and goes and sits in the armchair opposite them.

**Scene 2, AT HOME, IN THE LIVING ROOM**

JOHN, JANE, DAD

**16. Dad:** Can I take part in this debate?

**17. Jane:** We were talking about the news on TV, Dad.

**18. Dad:** Oh, really? Are journalists selling groundnuts on TV now?

*(After a silent pause, he raises his voice.)*

You are really getting on my nerves with your groundnuts. Do you think there's a groundnut faculty at the university? Your exams are in four weeks time and it's not as if you've been getting top marks recently. I thought the groundnuts were just a holiday pastime? But no, we wake up with groundnuts, we carry round groundnuts all day and we go to sleep with groundnuts. This story is driving me, and you, crazy! What's wrong in this house? What's missing? Don't I look after you

properly? Now get your books out! I don't want to hear the word groundnut said in this house until the holidays. Have you understood?

**19. Jane and John:** Yes, Dad!

**20. Dad:** Turn off the TV, get back to your room and get some sleep,  
(*shouting*)  
even if tomorrow is Saturday!

**NARRATOR:** The twins go to their rooms. But they can't stop talking business.

### **Scene 3, IN THEIR BEDROOM**

JOHN AND JANE

**21.** (*John and Jane are whispering*)

**22. John:** In my opinion nothing is lost. We'll learn from what has happened and we'll be better equipped to tackle the future.

**23. Jane:** That's all very well but how are we going to save our business and not die of hunger while we are doing all this learning?

- 24. John:** Well, I don't know at the moment, but in the future I think we should stock up when groundnuts are at their cheapest.
- 25. Jane:** We're going round in circles. Where will we store them and make sure they don't go bad?
- 26. John:** Oy... what about you coming up with some answers, instead of bombarding me with questions the whole time. We could decide to sell groundnuts only in the good season, if we can't work out how to store them properly.
- 27. Jane:** I am confused about everything, John. Let me think about it. (*Silence*) How about we go and ask Grandma tomorrow for some advice about how to store them. If we interrupt our deliveries we're likely to lose our customers.
- 28. John:** That's true! And there are certainly people out there who are just waiting to steal them away from us.
- 29. Jane:** (*pensive*)  
We could think about selling the groundnuts in Europe but I don't know if it's feasible.



- 30. John:** *(enthusiastically)*  
It wouldn't be impossible, Jane! We could talk to Uncle Sami, he's been living in Zurich for a while. He would probably have some tips for us.
- 31. Jane:** There's also Fo Blam in Frankfurt. He's been there for about twenty years.
- 32. ATMO:** *The storm rages outside, there is silence in the room.*
- 33. John:** Are you sleeping?
- 34. Jane:** I can't.
- 35. John:** Nor can I...  
*(Silent pause)*  
One thing's for sure, whatever happens, we shouldn't give up. We've invested too much in this business.
- 36. Jane:** Yes, you're right. What about selling something else?
- 37. John:** What? What do you mean?
- 38. ATMO:** *The rain calms down a bit.*

**39. Jane:** Something other than groundnuts. Something that would work now, while we wait for groundnuts to become popular again. Do you understand?

**40. John:** *(He yawns)*  
Yes, I understand. Not a bad idea but... I'm already thinking of what we would have to redo...

**41. Jane:** *(Distantly)*  
Yes... there's always a snag...

**NARRATOR:** Let's hope that a good night's sleep will bring some good ideas to Jane and her brother. Next morning the twins go to Granma's stall in the market...

#### **Scene 4, AT THE STALL**

JOHN, JANE, GRANMA, AYABA, CUSTOMER

**42. ATMO:** *Loud market noise. Shouts, motorbikes ...*

**43. Granma:** Oh! Is that why you're looking so glum? If you had mouths to feed I would understand, but your father is right. With the exams just round the corner you should only be concentrating on your schoolwork.

- 44. Jane:** Granma, all our groundnut stocks could rot!
- 45. Granma:** That's always a risk when you are in the perishable food business! Generally, there are ups and downs in all business areas. You have to know how to cope with both extremes so that you can strike a balance. Why not roast the nuts and grind them to use in cooking?
- 46. John:** Now, that's an idea. If they were ground and well bottled they wouldn't rot.
- 47. Granma:** Exactly!
- 48. John:** We could call it "roasted groundnut flour."
- 49. Granma:** If you like. The flour can be used for making sauces. It would be easier to use than normal groundnut paste.
- 50. Jane:** It's definitely the best option for our current stock if we don't want to sell it at a loss.
- 51. John:** If we find a nice bottle and a cute label, we could export it to Europe, couldn't we?

- 52. Granma:** Why not? Anything's possible!
- 53. Jane:** We were trying to think of something else to sell while we wait for groundnuts to become popular again.
- 54. Granma:** That would also be a good idea. But everything's becoming expensive in the market. People are only buying what's absolutely necessary and they can barely afford that! The taxes are suffocating us. What could you sell and still be safe? What's happening has nothing to do with you, it's not your fault. It's a general crisis.
- 55. John:** At least with groundnut flour we can buy big quantities of groundnuts in season and out of season we can make flour and export it.
- 56. Customer:** How much does this dress cost, please?
- 57. Granma:** Welcome, Madam! (*To Ayaba*) Ayaba, look after this lady, please!
- 58. Jane:** We can also export the salted groundnuts to Europe if people are interested.

- 59. John:** We thought that Uncle Sami and Fo Blam might be able to help us.
- 60. Ayaba:** (*To Granma*)  
Granma, the lady wants the dress for 3,000 francs.
- 61. Granma:** (*To the Auntie*)  
Oh, Madam! It actually is worth more than that but take it. You're my first customer this morning.
- 62. Customer:** Thank you, Ma'am!
- 63. Granma:** You're welcome. Have a nice day! (*To John and Jane*) Listen, my angels. You might know how to make money but you're not business people yet. You're still at school, remember, and you should forget your business for now and concentrate more on your schoolwork. You'll have plenty of time during the holidays to re-launch your business. In the meantime, you should just grind the stock that you have and store it properly. Do you understand?
- 64. John and Jane:** Yes, Granma...

**65. ATMO:** *The sounds of the market fade out gradually...*

## Outro

**NARRATOR:** And this brings us to the end of the fourth episode of our story which was entitled "The harsh reality of the business world". John and Jane are so worried that they have neglected their schoolwork. However, this is the absolute priority for father and grandmother  
And now it's time for our "Little Dictionary" where we find out the meaning of some of the more complicated economic terms that are relevant to this episode

## **Jingle "The little dictionary"**

### **PRODUCTION OPTION:**

Each LbE language can change the dictionary voice as it sees fit (using cartoon voices, echoes etc...) or let the narrator voice the key words (bold and underlined).

### **66. DICTIONARY VOICE:**

Crisis is the bane of all economies: the balance of the markets is disturbed and the **prices**, the market value of goods or services, go up or down erratically. Both

extremes - highs and lows - have their disadvantages. Prices depend on **supply** and **demand**. If supply - the amount of goods on the market - is higher than demand - the needs of the consumers - then the prices fall. They go up, however, if goods are rare. That's exactly what happened in this episode. The harvest was so bad that there were more people wanting to buy agricultural products than there were supplies on the market. Supply was lower than demand. The reason for prices going up, which is called **inflation**, is impossible to determine. There are several micro and macro-economic factors involved, such as cross-sector production, employment rates and national revenue. Household consumption and the way businesses are run are also contributing factors.

## **67. Closing soundtrack to be left running after the outro and brought up**

**NARRATOR:** John and Jane seem to have some **new opportunities**. In business, problems are part of the learning process. Will they manage to learn from them and become more mature? To find out don't forget to listen to the next episode coming soon. And remember, you can listen to this episode again or tell us what you think about this

series by visiting our website at:

**d w dash world dot de slash l b e**

Bye for now and please don't forget to tune in next time!

**Music up**

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