

## KNOW YOUR ENGLISH EDUCATION

## Laughing all the way to the bank

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“The writer has nice things to say about your company’s cultural programme.”

“That’s to be expected, I guess. He was our former employee.”

“Really? He says there was pin drop silence when the CEO’s wife sang. Is that true?”

“Of course, not! People were chatting away. By the way, the expression ‘pin drop silence’ is an Indianism. Native speakers of English don’t use it.”

“Really? What do they say?”

“They normally say, ‘hear a pin drop’. Everyone was so stunned by the announcement, you could have heard a pin drop.”

“In other words, there was absolute silence. The funeral home was so quiet that you could have heard a pin drop. It was pretty scary, actually.”

“Some use ‘fall’ instead of ‘drop’. When Tejah asked Divya to marry him, she didn’t say anything for a few seconds. The silence was deafening – one could have heard a pin fall.”

“The poor chap must have started sweating. According to this article, several washed-up politicians were present at the function. What does ‘washed up’ mean?”

“When you refer to someone as being ‘washed up’, what you’re suggesting is that the person is no longer as successful as he once was. He has no chance of...”

**Washed up**

“The person has no chance of becoming great again. Is that what you’re saying?”

“That’s right! For example, around this time last year, many sports writers were saying that both Federer and Nadal were washed up.”

“How wrong they were! That’s the problem being a sportsperson, I guess. You’re all washed up by the time you’re 30 or 40.”

“It happens to actors as well. Directors don’t cast women who are in their 30s in lead roles because they believe they’re washed up.”

“Our news channels provide opportunities to washed-up politicians to air their views.”

“The feedbacks that they give to the reporters...”

“Feedback and not feedbacks.”

“What?”

“The plural of ‘feedback’ is ‘feedback’ and not ‘feedbacks’. The feedback that we got from the students and the parents was positive.”

“Vinitha got immediate feedback on her dissertation from her supervisor.”

“Get feedback from your customers before you start trying to improve your product.”

“That’s what one of our rival companies did last year, and now they’re laughing all the way to the bank.”

“Laughing all the way to the bank? Why would they do that?”

“The expression is mostly limited to informal contexts. When you say that someone is laughing all the way to the bank, you mean that the person is making lots of money.”

“Is it because the person did something smart?”

“Not necessarily. It could be because of some other person’s stupidity. Nobody wanted to publish my father’s novel. Finally, my cousin decided to do it himself. Now, he’s laughing all the way to the bank.”

“How about this example? If we don’t have a tie-up with this company, someone else will. And they will be laughing all the way to the bank.”

“Sounds good.”

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*He who does not understand your silence will probably not understand your words.*

Elbert Hubbard

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