

Instant coffee by Pete Clements

Age:	Teenagers
Level:	Upper intermediate +
Time:	3 hours
Objective:	To continue a story in the style of the original author
Key skills:	Writing, speaking
Materials:	One copy of the story and the worksheet per student; images of futuristic implants (optional); audio tracks Part 1, 2 and 3 downloaded in advance or played via onestopenglish (optional – you may prefer to read the story aloud yourself)

1 Prepare (15 minutes)

Discuss

1. Hand out the worksheet. Students discuss the question in pairs. You could display some images of futuristic implants to stimulate interest.

Role-play

2. Read the role-play scenario to learners and check understanding.
3. Before students begin, you could allow some time to generate ideas or make notes.
4. The task can be repeated with different partners. When they finish, ask for some brief feedback. You can use the following questions:
 - Which company employee was the most persuasive?
 - What were some of the persuasive techniques used?

2 Explore (15 minutes)

Discuss

1. Concept check *foodographer* (someone who takes photos of their food and uploads them on social media).

2. Check that students understand they are completing the task from the perspective of a foodographer, not from their own perspective.
3. Students discuss which strategies might help their posts gain more popularity. You could provide process language if needed (for example, *That strategy wouldn't be that effective*).
4. Students add their own ideas to the list.

Imagine

5. This is a repeat of the discussion question in the *Prepare* section. However, this time, students are answering from the perspective of a foodographer who wants to gain popularity.

3 Listen (1 hour–1 hour 20 minutes)

Part 1 (maximum 25 mins; omit activities as desired)

1. Read or play part 1 of 'Instant Coffee' to the students. Remember, the text has not been graded for the learners – it is authentic. It may help to animate or add gestures to some of the sections to aid comprehension if you are reading it aloud.
2. When you finish reading/playing the audio students complete the tasks outlined. You may wish to hand out part 1 of the story, especially for the drawing task. If your class are independent learners, you could allow a fair amount of freedom here. If not, timings have been suggested.
 - **Write down:** Students complete this alone, free writing. Allow three to four minutes (this should keep interest).
 - **Discuss:** Students discuss the implant in pairs. Provide process language if needed. Feed back briefly as a group when completed. Allow three to four minutes
 - **Draw:** Make sure students understand that this is only a sketch. They don't need to be perfect; it is the simple idea and the imagery that are important. In fact, sometimes the worse the image, the better! Give students a chance to share and discuss their images. Allow a total of six minutes.

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Part 2 (maximum 35 mins; omit activities as desired)

3. Read or play part 2 of the story to the students. Again, gestures and actions may aid comprehension in parts if you are reading aloud. Students will need a copy of part 2 to complete the follow-up tasks.
4. Students work with a partner to complete one of the tasks. For the role-play tasks, they may prefer to make notes first. For the performance (a mime would work fine), they will need to follow the text. Allow for preparation time and performance. (10 minutes)
5. Fast finishers could begin one of the other tasks.
 - **Draw:** Make sure students draw on paper and leave space for comments below the image. (4 minutes)
 - Students imagine life from Richard's perspective. They draw an image that he has (involuntarily) taken during the day. You could prompt them here to imagine everyday situations that he may have snapped (nothing rude!). Also, prompt them to consider the photo itself – would it be focused or blurred? Framed well or off-centre? ...
 - **Respond:** Allow time for learners to view and respond to each other's drawings (photos). To add authenticity, they can comment on each other's drawings like they are commenting on PhotoNow (an imaginary Instagram-like platform). Remind them that they should respond from the perspective of another foodographer or a follower of @RichAroma.
 - **Discuss:** When they have finished commenting, review and discuss the comments – how might they make Richard feel?

Part 3 (20 mins)

6. Read or play part 3 of the story to the learners. Gestures and actions may aid comprehension if reading aloud.
 - **Describe:** When you finish, give students a handout of part 3. Ask them to reread the

section before and up to Richard's blink (from 'The waiter arrived with a latte from heaven ...'). When they finish, they should close their eyes and imagine the photo that Richard's eyes took. Allow one minute to process the mental image. Students then describe their image to a partner.

- **Freeze frame:** Students work together to create a freeze frame of the scene. They can share their freeze frame with other groups and get feedback.
- **Discuss:** Students discuss the questions with a partner or group. Feed back as a class. Prompt open-class discussion if this engages the class.

4 Develop (15 minutes)

1. Students continue the story in their notebooks. The target is to write 150–200 words. It might be useful to read the final paragraph of the story to them again so they are better prepared to continue the story.

5 Language focus (35 minutes)

1. This stage raises learners' awareness of the themes and types of descriptive language used in the story. It prepares them to upgrade their own writing to align it more with the writer's style. When monitoring students during 'Develop ...', you may feel that they are using most of the language features in this section. If so, give stronger students the chance to read the text in detail and highlight some features or language that they want to use in their own writing. This does not have to be directed learning – in the reflection stage, they have a chance to justify why they have included certain features in their own writing.

Themes: Students scan the text for vocabulary related to the four themes listed.

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Key (possible answers):

Social media

foodographer, PhotoNow, followers, social media, views, likes, shares, video channel, buzz, notifications, trending, upload, unfollow, posts, caption

Photography

well-framed, edited, artistic, snaps, unfocused (shot), scene, point-of-view, image, photo

Mental/physical actions

(voluntary/involuntary) eye movements, blink, scroll, swipe, tap, process, panic, eyebrows tense into a frown, notice, removed his glasses, hear the sound of

Coffee

coffee shop, tasty-looking, instant, granulated coffee, frappe, cute little tray, cocoa-powder patterning, steam, oscillated, 'Love Latte', droplet, foam

Technology

digital technology, implant, digital lens implant, prototype, trial, connections, camera shutter

- Understand:** Students search for the words in the text. This can be quite a challenging task if students are not directed to search in one particular section of the text, so some scaffolding may be needed. To scaffold the task, you could first provide the target words on the board. Students scan the text and search for these words. You could then ask them to discuss the possible meaning of these words with a partner, which would encourage them to use contextual clues. Finally, provide the possible meanings, and students can deduce the answers, having already predicted information about the words.

Key: 1. adulation; 2. distortion; 3. anticipation; 4. exquisite; 5. mundane; 6. state-of-the-art; 7. disastrous

- Gap fill:** The nouns in the list are more to aid comprehension of the story. The adjectives may be useful for the *Redevelop* task later. Students check understanding of the adjectives by completing the sentences with the appropriate word.

Key: 1. exquisite; 2. disastrous; 3. state-of-the-art; 4. mundane

- Descriptive language tasks:** These tasks draw attention to some of the descriptive language used in the texts. There are no specific answers for these tasks. However, it is advisable to monitor students closely to check that they are using the correct word form/class.
- Richard's inner voice:** Students scan the text to find examples of Richard talking to himself.

Key (suggested answers): What latest image?; Photo of what, exactly?; Perfection ruined. (Note: the last example is less explicit in the text.)

6 Redevelop (25 minutes)

- Students edit their story from the *Develop* section, including any relevant language from the *Language focus* section.
- You may want to support learners here by allowing them to review each other's work prior to editing. They can suggest areas of improvement to their partner.
- When they have finished editing, they share their story with a partner. Make sure that the first feedback given from a partner is on what happens in the story, not on the language.

7 Reflection (10 minutes)

- This section encourages further reflection on the story, language and learning. Encourage learners to reflect together.
- They could also note down some action points – for example, how can they further develop their knowledge of the themes in the story?

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by Pete Clements

INSTANT COFFEE

Part 1

Richard felt like the coffee shop was his last hope. If a well-framed, tasty-looking cup of coffee didn't help matters, nothing would.

His eyes were dry and stinging. They were definitely becoming infected. His eyelids were strained from the pressure of two matchsticks forcing them to stay open. He was wearing sunglasses indoors to avoid scaring people, although that was strange in itself and drew perhaps even more attention.

Five days. He hadn't blinked for FIVE DAYS.

As one of the most popular foodographers on PhotoNow, image was everything. Richard knew this coffee shop would get things right – his reputation depended on it. All the random photos of his shoelaces, bathroom doors and other mundane items this week had cost him over 100,000 followers.

If only he could turn back time, he'd have ignored that call altogether.

'This is a fantastic opportunity to lead social media and digital technology into a new age. Believe us, RichAroma. This is too good to turn down.'

RichAroma was his PhotoNow username, a nice pun on the coffee theme of his posts.

*'The trial will only last two weeks, after which the implant can be removed. We say **can** be removed, but trust us, you'll see just how popular this will become. You're the first. You'll go down in history.'*

So, he agreed. Who wouldn't? I mean, everyone is after fame and fortune. We all want to stand out from the crowd, to have the most followers, views, likes, shares. But everyone is posting about coffee, so how can you *really* make yourself stand out?

Trial the prototype of PhotoNow's new digital lens implant, that's how.

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The operation itself had gone well. Richard was fitted with the lens within a couple of hours. A few connections were made to the occipital lobe and cerebral cortex, but he didn't really understand the science behind it. He knew that the implant would have some control over his voluntary and involuntary eye movements, but he wasn't that interested in the details. All he really cared about was this: the device would allow him to take perfect, instantly edited photos simply by blinking. He didn't even have to worry about uploading the image himself – the state-of-the-art technology would do that for him within seconds.

What did this all mean? It meant the most 'natural,' point-of-view images of coffee you could imagine. That meant hits, likes and followers.

The first few days of the trial were a resounding success. Richard's blinks were producing some of the best, most artistic snaps he'd ever created. By the end of Day One, his average views had risen by 14 per cent. By Day Three, he'd gained over 10,000 new followers. His 'Love Latte' series of photos were trending and were appearing all over the net – even getting a mention on CoffeeFreak's video channel. Then came Day Four ...

Richard woke up on the Tuesday morning to buzz after buzz of notifications. He swiped the screen and began scrolling through what he thought would be further adulation. However, the first few comments on his latest photo made him sit up with fright.

CoffeeLover44: OMG! What's *that*?

FrappBoy: @RichAroma Stick to the real coffee!

EspressoOh!: Time to ditch Rich? @RichAroma

Richard was dumbfounded. He tapped on the comment to take him to his last image. What was wrong with it? It was a simple snap of a frappé with orange and turmeric flavouring, that's all. It wasn't his best offering, but it certainly wasn't unfollow-worthy.

Richard gasped as the image appeared.

Somehow, his last photo was not of a frappé. It was a rather unfocused shot of his bedside table. You could make out an alarm clock, a stained, white coffee mug and a stale, burnt crust of toast on a plate. Behind that, horror of all horrors, rested Richard's jar of instant, granulated coffee. He'd hid the jar upstairs a few weeks earlier when some guests came round. After all, he couldn't be seen dead drinking any old flavoured water, could he?

He barely had time to process this, when up popped a new notification:

Your latest image has been uploaded to PhotoNow.

What latest image? He tapped to see, and there it was: an image of his hand holding his phone, with the three negative comments displayed. Underneath read the caption: '*What was wrong with it?*'

Hang on ... That's what he was thinking when he read those comments! Then he must have ... blinked. Somehow, something had gone wrong. Richard's world was being uploaded blink by blink. The device could no longer separate the voluntary from the involuntary; intentional uploads from Richard's inner voice.

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Five days had passed. PhotoNow were ignoring his requests to terminate the trial – his contacts at the company seemed to have disappeared off the face of the Earth. Richard had already become an online laughing stock. Despite losing so many followers, there were still plenty of people eager to share his next disastrous image. His rivals were gloating, as you would expect. But most importantly, Richard hadn't blinked.

La Dolce Vita Coffee was foolproof. He'd never had a bad latte there. Plus, they were always served on a cute, handcrafted tray, in antique cups and with a square of shortbread.

One good photo, just one, would relieve the pain.

The waiter arrived with a latte delivered from heaven. The cocoa-powder patterning was exquisite. The steam floated up from the antique cup, and biscuit crumbs on the tray from the shortbread added to the scene. This was the moment Richard had been waiting for. As the waiter knelt to lay the tray on the table, Richard removed his glasses in anticipation. As he did so, he noticed the waiter's badge for the first time:

Alessandro – Trainee

Richard panicked. He noticed the waiter's arm was shaking under the strain of carrying the handcrafted metal tray. His inexperience was showing, but it was too little, too late.

The coffee oscillated unnervingly until the movement finally tipped a few drops over the edge, carrying a droplet of foam and cocoa with it.

Perfection ruined.

Richard couldn't contain his emotions. He felt his eyebrows tense into a frown. Under such distortion, the right matchstick popped out of place and crashed down onto the coffee table. Richard's right eyelid followed the downward trajectory until he only saw black and heard the sound of a camera shutter in his mind.

His phone buzzed. The photo had been uploaded. Photo of what, exactly? He didn't know. He didn't want to know. Above all, the last thing he wanted to do was drink a coffee.

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1. Prepare

Discuss

Work with a partner. Discuss the question.

- *Would you ever have any technology implanted into your body? Why? Why not?*

Role-play

A social-media company has found a way to implant your mobile-phone screen into the palm of your hand. Your hand will vibrate when you receive a call, message or notification.

Student A: You work for the company. Try to persuade student B that this product is useful and that they should trial it.

Student B: You don't want to trial this product. Think of reasons why student A's ideas are bad.

2. Explore

Discuss

You are a fairly popular 'foodographer' on a social-media platform. You take great photos of all types of food, and you have thousands of followers. However, other people are more popular than you. You normally post at least one new photo a day. You never edit your images.

Consider these ideas for improving your reach and popularity. Which do you think would work best? Why?

- Post more frequently.
- Stick to the same theme in your posts.
- Edit your photos.
- Tag food companies in your photos.
- Share across other social-media platforms (e.g. Facebook, Twitter).
- Comment on other people's posts.
- Offer to promote food items for companies.

Are there any other strategies that might enhance your popularity on social media? If so, what are they?

Imagine

As a well-known foodographer, you've been offered the chance to trial new technology from a social-media company. It involves implanting part of the technology in your brain. The company feels that the technology will bring you immense popularity.

Would you do it? Why? Why not?

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3. Listen

Listen to part 1 of *Instant Coffee*. When you finish, complete the tasks below.

a) Write down ...

- How does Richard feel? Has social media ever made you feel like this?

b) Discuss ...

- What do you think the implant does?

c) Draw ...

- a diagram of the implant with labels and details of the process;
or
- Richard in the coffee shop.

Listen to part 2 of *Instant Coffee*. When you finish, choose one of the tasks (1–3).

1. Role-play a conversation between the scientist and Richard. The scientist is explaining the operation to Richard, but Richard isn't that interested.
2. Role-play a discussion between Richard and a friend. Richard has just taken his first photo using the new implant, and it is trending on social media.
3. Perform a short scene to your partner: you are Richard and you have just woken up on Tuesday morning. (Follow the text to help you.)

Draw ...

Richard cannot stop blinking throughout the day. Sketch one of Richard's unplanned photos.

Respond ...

Look at the photos around the room. Imagine these have been posted on PhotoNow. Comment below each photo. (Remember: you follow RichAroma for his amazing photos of coffee.)

Discuss ...

Choose one photo. Discuss the comments with a partner – how do you think each comment would make Richard (RichAroma) feel?

Listen to part 3 of *Instant Coffee*. When you finish, complete the tasks.

Describe ...

Read the paragraph in the story leading up to Richard's blink. Close your eyes. Get a mental image in your head of Richard's photo. Describe your photo to a partner.

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Freeze frame ...

Work with a partner. Create a freeze frame of the scene where the coffee drips from the cup.

Student A: You are the waiter.

Student B: You are Richard.

Discuss ...

Work with a partner. Discuss the questions.

- Is there any way that Richard can turn his situation into a positive experience?
- Should PhotoNow help Richard? Why have they not done so?
- Who/What was responsible for Richard's problems? Richard himself? The company? The waiter? Coffee?!

4. Develop

Continue the story for 150–200 words. Is there a twist?

5. Language focus

Find language in story related to the themes below.

Social media

Photography

Mental/Physical actions

Coffee

Technology

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Understand ...

Find the following words in the text.

1. great praise or admiration, especially for someone who is famous (noun)	
2. a change in the way that something looks, sounds or behaves so that it becomes strange (noun)	
3. a feeling of excitement about something enjoyable that is going to happen soon (noun)	
4. extremely beautiful and delicate (adj)	
5. ordinary and not interesting or exciting (adj)	
6. equipment or technology that uses the newest and most advanced ideas and features (adj)	
7. very unsuccessful (adj)	

Gap fill

Choose the best adjective from the table above to complete the sentences.

- That's one of the most _____ pieces of art I've ever seen.
- The earthquake had _____ consequences for the city.
- The company has developed a _____ solution to reducing carbon emissions.
- He tends to avoid more _____ tasks around the house, such as cleaning or ironing.

Descriptive language tasks

Read these descriptive phrases from the text.

His eyes were **dry and stinging**
... everyone is after **fame and fortune**

Complete the sentences with your own ideas.

- The coffee was _____ (adj) and _____ (adj).
- Richard felt _____ (adj) and _____ (adj).
- The people in the coffee shop looked _____ (adj) and _____ (adj).
- All Richard had wanted was _____ (noun) and _____ (noun).
- The comment under the photo was _____ (adj) and _____ (adj).

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Read the phrase from the text.

... they were always served on a **cute, handcrafted** tray

Complete each phrase with two suitable adjectives

1. a _____, _____ coffee
2. a _____, _____ shortbread biscuit
3. a _____, _____ comment
4. a _____, _____ waiter

Read the phrase from the text

... the coffee **oscillated unnervingly**

Work with a partner. Discuss which adverbs you could use with the verbs in the box.

spoke	drank	ate	scrolled	
screamed	swiped	uploaded	tapped	smiled

Richard's inner voice

Find some examples in the text of Richard speaking to himself. Write them in the box below.

6. Redevelop

Edit the story that you wrote in the *Develop* section above. Try to include some of the language or descriptive features from the Language focus.

Share your story with a partner. What did you think of your partner's story?

Discuss the changes you both made to your stories. Do you think they made the story better?

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7. Reflection

Make notes in the table below.

Your thoughts about the story	Your favourite task during the lesson	Any useful/interesting language from the lesson

Share your thoughts with a partner. Were they similar?