

## A nice story by Jane Richards

**Age:** Suitable for all ages

**Level:** Writing Entry Level 3 and above (but can be adapted for other levels)

**Objective:** To encourage students to use a wide range of adjectives rather than depending on high-frequency lexical items such as *good*, *nice* and *bad*

**Time:** 30 minutes

**Materials:** OHT of *A nice story*. Photocopies of *A bad day* worksheet (one per group or one for each student, as you prefer)

**Organization:** Whole-group activity, then students in pairs or small groups

### Procedure:

1. Show the students *A nice story* on the board. This can be done by using a projector, an OHT or simply by writing the story on a whiteboard.
2. Read the story to the class and have the students discuss the strengths and limitations of the story.
3. As a whole-group activity, students should be encouraged to replace the word *nice* with other appropriate adjectives. As students suggest adjectives, introduce them to (or remind them of) the idea of collocation. For example, *a bright idea* is an acceptable collocation but not *a bright walk*, and we say *a strong coffee* not *a powerful coffee*.
4. Read the new and improved story aloud to the group and have the learners compare and contrast it to the original. Hopefully students will be able to appreciate how easily a simple story can be transformed into something more sophisticated just by their using a range of vocabulary rather than relying on the words *nice* or *good*.
5. Following this activity, students should be issued with the *A bad day* worksheet.
6. In pairs or small groups, the students replace the word *bad* with other synonyms. Monitor to check they're using suitable collocations.
7. Students read their stories aloud and compare their choice of adjectives.

### Follow-up:

The teacher could use this activity as a springboard to a fuller discussion of collocations and fixed phrases and appropriate vocabulary choices.

### Homework:

Students could be encouraged to write their own 'good' or 'bad' story for homework or continue the story for homework.

## A nice story

It was a **nice** day so Mary decided to go for a **nice** walk in the nice park near her house. She thought it was a **nice** idea to phone her friend Jenny so that after their **nice** walk they could go for a nice coffee in one of the **nice** cafés which were near the edge of the town.

## A bad day

John had a **bad** day at work. He had woken up with a **bad** headache and because he was in a **bad** mood he had a **bad** argument with his wife. The weather was so **bad** that he decided not to walk to work. He took his car but a **bad** accident made him late for work ...