Text Messages

Since most students have mobile phones, most of them need to be able to read and write text messages. Students will have plenty of questions about messages they have received and messages they want to send.

Age Group: Young Adults/Adults
Level: Entry 3
Time: at least 1 hour
Skill focus: Abbreviations and text message language, reading for meaning.
Sub skills: Basic punctuation (capitals, full stops, and apostrophes)
Materials: Worksheets
Curriculum References: Rw/E3.7a Rt/L1.5a

1. Although it’s a constant battle getting students to turn their mobile phones off, ask them to write down the last text message they received in English. There will be a lot of number punching and scribbling. Write some examples on the board. It will probably be full of mistakes; correct them. Make students aware that text messages are informal and usually grammatically incorrect.

2. Give out worksheet one and get them to work through the questions.
   1. See you later.
   2. I’ll be there before eight.
   3. You forgot your coat.
   4. Where are you?
   5. I’m waiting for you outside.
   6. I’m going to meet Dave at ten o’clock. I’ll see you there.
   7. Can you pick me up at eight o’clock? Is that OK?
   8. Don’t forget to call me.
   9. Call me as soon as possible.
   10. What are you doing tonight mate?

You can now have a go at the next worksheets. First give out the text messages and get students to read them out loud. Make sure they understand the words and the overall meaning. You might also get students to think about who wrote the text messages, a girlfriend, a friend, or someone else.

3. Now they can do the comprehension. Answers as follows.
   a. 11 b.5 c.10 d.6 e.1+8 f.4 g.7 h.14 i.9 j.3
4. Corrected sentences are as follows. The words in bold are corrections.
   1. Babe. I had a **fabulous night.** I'll see you later. Call me.
   2. What are you doing tonight? Come to my house and we'll get some pizza.
   3. Can you send me Dave's number **as soon as possible?** Cheers mate.
   4. It's now half past eight and I'm still waiting. If you're not here in ten minutes I'm going home. I'm stood in front of the cinema.
   5. **You** have won £200. To claim your free prize call 08909 43434343. All calls cost £1.50 per minute.
   6. That sounds good. I'll meet you at the gym at 5.00.
   7. How are you Ahmed? Did you get home okay last night?
   8. I really enjoyed your company at the weekend. We have to do it again soon.
   9. Can you get me a can of coke while you're at the pizza shop?
   10. Can we get a lift back with you this afternoon at about two o'clock outside the station?
   11. Mum, phone me when you get this text (message).
   12. So, what are you wearing tonight? I'm wearing my pink top and my pink boots.
   13. Do you fancy coming out tonight? We'll have a laugh in town.
   14. Don't bother calling me again. After what you did last night it's over. Loser.
   15. Are you going to come out tonight? I've booked a table at the restaurant, but I'll cancel if you're not going to come. Please let me know.
   16. **What's** the name of that place in London where we stayed last month? I need to know **as soon as possible.**

Chris Speck 05/01/04
Text Message language

Match the text message language with the good English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text Message</th>
<th>Good English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>l8r</td>
<td>a. you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>b. before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>c. mate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>d. later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xx</td>
<td>e. As soon as possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lol</td>
<td>f. are you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ur</td>
<td>g. kiss kiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m8</td>
<td>h. see</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b4</td>
<td>i. laugh out loud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r u</td>
<td>j. to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASAP</td>
<td>k. your</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Text messages are very short and the grammar is often incorrect. Write the following messages out in grammatically correct English. Use full stops, capital letters and good spelling.

1. c u l8r
   ..........................
2. ill be there b4 8
   ..........................
3. you forgot ur coat
   ..........................
4. were r u?
   ..........................
5. im w8ing for u outside
   ..........................
6. going to meet dave at 10. c u there
   ..........................
7. can u pick me up? 8 ok?
   ..........................
8. dont forget to call me
   ..........................
9. call me ASAP
   ..........................
10. wot u doing today m8?
   ..........................

© Macmillan Publishers Ltd 2003
Downloaded from the ESOL section in www.onestopenglish.com
Text Messages

Answer the questions about the text messages.

a) Which message is to your mother? 
   b) Which message wants to take your money? 
   c) Which message is asking for a lift? 
   d) Which message is arranging a meeting at 5? 
   e) Which two texts say ‘thank you’? 
   f) Which message is saying you are late? 
   g) Which message asks how you are? 
   h) Which text is very, very angry? 
   i) Which message is asking for a drink? 
   j) Which text is asking for Dave’s number?

All the messages have a mistake. Rewrite the message and correct the mistakes.

1. ____________________________
2. ____________________________
3. ____________________________
4. ____________________________
5. ____________________________
6. ____________________________
7. ____________________________
8. ____________________________
9. ____________________________
10. ____________________________
11. ____________________________
12. ____________________________
13. ____________________________
14. ____________________________
15. ____________________________
16. ____________________________
Text Messages

1. babe I had fab nite c u l8r. Call me

2. What u doing 2nite! Come to my house and we’ll get pizza

3. Can you send me daves number ASAP. Cheers

4. It's now half past 8 and im still w8ing. If you're not here in ten minutes im going home. Stood in front of cinema.

5. Your have won £200. To claim your prize call 08909 43434343. All calls cost £1.50 per min.

6. Sounds good. Meet you at the gym 5.00

7. How are you Ahmed? you get home okay last night?

8. Really enjoyed your company at the weekend have to do it again soon.

9. Can you get me a can of coke while your at the Pizza shop?

10. Can we get a lift back with you this afternoon About two outside the station.

11. Mum, phone me when u get this text.

12. So what u wearing tonight I’m wearing my pink top and pink boots.

13. Fancy coming out tonight. Well have a laugh in town.

14. Don’t bother calling me again. After what u did last night its over. Loser.

15. Are you going to come out tonight? I booked a table at the restaurant, but I’ll cancel it if ur not going to come. Please let me no.

16. Whats the name of that place in London where we stayed last month? Need to know ASAP.