

**Level:** Intermediate (B1)

**Age:** Teenagers

**Time:** This lesson can be divided up in various ways to suit the time you have with your students. Below are three time options which you can choose from depending on the length of your class. However, these are just suggestions and there are plenty of other ways you could divide the lesson up.

90 minutes – Complete all activities in Who is he?, My dictionary and Dictionary quiz.

60 minutes – Complete all activities in My dictionary and Dictionary quiz.

45 minutes – Complete all activities in My dictionary.

**Summary:** This lesson is divided into two sections: Who is he?, My dictionary and Dictionary quiz. Students will (depending on the length of lesson chosen):

1. complete an information-gap activity about Samuel Johnson's famous dictionary;
2. learn how to be better dictionary users;
3. identify parts of speech;
4. compete in a dictionary quiz;
5. write their own dictionary quiz.

**Key skills:** reading, writing, speaking

**Subskills:** forming questions, finding definitions, identifying parts of speech

**Materials:** one copy of Who is he? Student A for half the class and one copy of Who is he? Student B for the other half; one copy of My dictionary and Dictionary quiz per student; each student will need access to a print or online dictionary

## WHO IS HE?

1. Using Google Images, bring up an image of Samuel Johnson for students to see.

- Does anyone know who he is?
- If not, can they guess when he lived?
- What else can they guess about him from his appearance? For example, what kind of job did he do?

Don't provide any answers for now. Students will find out all about him in a little while.

2. Write the following sentence on the board, including the gap.

*The man in the picture lived in the \_\_\_\_\_ century.*

Tell students they have to find out the word that goes in the gap by asking you a question. Elicit the following question: *In which century did the man in the picture live?* (there may be alternatives). Tell them *the eighteenth*, but, before you complete the gap, elicit the question *How do you spell that?* and write it on the board. Then, elicit the correct spelling and write *eighteenth* in the gap.

3. Split students into pairs. Give a copy of Who is he? Student A to one student in each pair and a copy of

Who is he? Student B to the other student in each pair. Explain that their partner has the information they need to complete their gaps and they have the information their partner needs to complete different gaps. As in the example you did on the board, they're going to have to ask questions to complete the gaps.

**Note:** During the activity, make sure students are asking each other the questions and not just copying the information from each other.

4. Elicit the questions from the class, checking they have constructed them correctly, and go over the answers.

**Key:** (suggested questions)

*Text 1 – 1. What is the man's first name?; 2. When was he born?; 3. What job did his father do?; 4. What did he suffer from as an adult?; 5. Where did he start studying?; 6. What was wrong with previous dictionaries?; 7. How many years did it take him to write the dictionary?; 8. When was the dictionary published?*

*Text 2 – 1. What is the man's surname?; 2. When did he die?; 3. What could he not do for some time when he was born?; 4. What was he especially good at?; 5. What kind of work did he try to find?; 6. What was wrong with previous dictionaries?; 7. How many assistants did he have?; 8. What was the name of the dictionary published 150 years after Johnson's?*



5. For further practice of the questions, have students cover them up and ask their partner the questions from memory. Can their partner answer them from memory?

### MY DICTIONARY

1. Tell students they are going to discuss dictionaries. Hand out the My dictionary worksheet and ask them to look at the sentences in Activity 1. They should tick the sentences that are true for them.

2. Students should now compare their answers in small groups. Then, go through each sentence with the whole group and note how many students ticked each statement.

3. Now elicit ideas about what information can be found in a dictionary and write these on the board. Answers might include:

- spelling
- meaning
- part of speech
- pronunciation
- antonyms
- synonyms
- example sentences
- related words

4. Bring up the Macmillan Dictionary ([www.macmillandictionary.com](http://www.macmillandictionary.com)) on a projector. Ask someone to suggest a word and look it up.

- How much of the information that you wrote on the board can they see in the entry for that word?
- What other information is available?

Be sure to point out the red star feature of the dictionary. You can show students a video that explains the feature – <http://www.macmillandictionary.com/learn/red-words.html>.

Ask students to suggest a few more words and look those up, too.

5. Ask students if they think they are good dictionary users. Discuss with them what makes a good dictionary user. Write their ideas on the board. (Answers might include: *Before turning to a dictionary, check whether you can work out the meaning of the word from context; Don't just look up single words but also expressions; Make a note of what you find out – formal / informal, pronunciation, irregular forms, meaning, etc. and then revise later; Make sure you're looking at the right definition as many words have more than one; To improve your English further, use a monolingual English dictionary.*)

6. Tell the students that, to be a good dictionary user, it helps greatly to know certain abbreviations. Point

out Activity 2 on the worksheet. They must match the dictionary abbreviations with the full forms.

**Key:** 1. c; 2. b; 3. e; 4. a; 5. f; 6. g; 7. h; 8. d

7. Students should now do Activity 3 where they identify parts of speech. Tell them that, for some of the words, there is more than one part of speech. Do the first one as a whole class.

**Key:** 1. adjective; 2. preposition or adverb (or noun!); 3. adverb; 4. plural countable noun; 5. conjunction; 6. transitive verb or noun; 7. noun; 8. intransitive verb or adjective or adverb

8. Check the answers as a whole class, asking for example sentences for the more tricky words. Then, go round the class asking each student in turn to give you another example of a word from some, or all, of the parts of speech from the activity.

### DICTIONARY QUIZ

1. Tell students that they are going to compete against each other in a dictionary quiz. Put students in pairs and ask them to complete the Dictionary quiz as quickly as possible. They can use their dictionaries.

**Key:** 1. a carton / a bottle; 2. two weeks; 3. heavy and dark; 4. knives – No, it's irregular; 5. in a boot (UK) or a trunk (US); 6. the second syllable; 7. do; 8. some advice – It's uncountable; 9. brought; 10. both; 11. the same; 12. 1.609 kilometres; 13. on; 14. Iraqi

2. When the first pair of students has finished the quiz, check to make sure they have all the correct answers before stopping the activity. Then, ask the winning group to confirm the answers for the rest of the class.

3. Divide the class into three groups. Give students ten minutes to write eight quiz questions, using their dictionaries. They will ask their classmates the questions later. Circulate and monitor the groups' work, making sure their questions are sound.

4. Get each group in turn to ask the other two groups their quiz questions. The first group to find the answer in a dictionary wins a point. This is an opportunity for students to become familiar with dictionaries and discover what information they contain.

### Homework task

Tell students to find an interesting article in a newspaper or magazine. They should pick out five words or expressions they don't know and look them up in a dictionary. They should make a note of the words and write down the information they find about them in the dictionary. Tell them to make sure to be good dictionary users and include all available and useful information such as pronunciation and part of speech.



WHO IS HE?

Who is he? Student A



**Basic facts**

The man in the picture is \_\_\_\_\_ (1) Johnson. He was born in \_\_\_\_\_ (2) in Lichfield in Staffordshire, England. He died in 1784. His father was a \_\_\_\_\_ (3).

**An unpromising beginning**

He had health problems all his life. He said to a friend, "I was born almost dead and could

not cry for some time." He suffered from \_\_\_\_\_ (4) as an adult.

He was a brilliant student and was especially good at Latin. He started studying at \_\_\_\_\_ (5) but he had to leave because of a lack of money. He tried to find teaching work but was unsuccessful so he began to work as a writer. He wrote on a wide range of topics and he built up a good reputation for himself.

**The dictionary**

In 1747, a group of booksellers asked him to write a dictionary. Previous dictionaries were \_\_\_\_\_ (6) and poorly organized so they wanted a new and better dictionary.

It took him \_\_\_\_\_ (7) years to write it. He had the help of six assistants, although he did most of the work himself. The fact that he wrote an entire dictionary almost single-handedly in only eight years is considered an amazing achievement.

The dictionary, called *A Dictionary of the English Language*, was published in \_\_\_\_\_ (8). It became very popular and remained the most influential dictionary in English until the *Oxford English Dictionary* was published over 150 years later. It is still one of the most famous dictionaries in the world today.

**Questions**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ ?
2. \_\_\_\_\_ ?
3. \_\_\_\_\_ ?
4. \_\_\_\_\_ ?
5. \_\_\_\_\_ ?
6. \_\_\_\_\_ ?
7. \_\_\_\_\_ ?
8. \_\_\_\_\_ ?



WHO IS HE?

Who is he? Student B



**Basic facts**

The man in the picture is Samuel \_\_\_\_\_ (1). He was born in 1709 in Lichfield in Staffordshire, England. He died in \_\_\_\_\_ (2). His father was a bookseller.

**An unpromising beginning**

He had health problems all his life. He said to a friend, "I was born almost dead and could

not \_\_\_\_\_ (3) for some time." He suffered from depression as an adult.

He was a brilliant student and was especially good at \_\_\_\_\_ (4). He started studying at Oxford University but he had to leave because of a lack of money. He tried to find \_\_\_\_\_ (5) work but was unsuccessful so he began to work as a writer. He wrote on a very wide range of topics and he built up a good reputation for himself.

**The dictionary**

In 1747, a group of booksellers asked him to write a dictionary. Previous dictionaries were incomplete and \_\_\_\_\_ (6) so they wanted a new and better dictionary.

It took him eight years to write it. He had the help of \_\_\_\_\_ (7) assistants, although he did most of the work himself. The fact that he wrote an entire dictionary almost single-handedly in only eight years is considered an amazing achievement.

The dictionary, called *A Dictionary of the English Language*, was published in 1755. It became very popular and remained the most influential dictionary in English until the \_\_\_\_\_ (8) was published over 150 years later. It is still one of the most famous dictionaries in the world today.

**Questions**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ ?
2. \_\_\_\_\_ ?
3. \_\_\_\_\_ ?
4. \_\_\_\_\_ ?
5. \_\_\_\_\_ ?
6. \_\_\_\_\_ ?
7. \_\_\_\_\_ ?
8. \_\_\_\_\_ ?

## MY DICTIONARY

**1. Tick the sentences that are true for you.**

1. I always carry a dictionary with me.
2. I use a monolingual dictionary.
3. I prefer a bilingual dictionary.
4. I use a dictionary to look up new words when I'm reading.
5. I write new words from my dictionary in a notebook and try to learn them.
6. I look at the different meanings of a word and how to use them.
7. I use a dictionary to learn the pronunciation of new words.

**2. Dictionary abbreviations**

**Check you know what these dictionary abbreviations mean. Match the abbreviation and the full form.**

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| 1. (adv)  | a. conjunction (a word that connects two sentences) |
| 2. (n)    | b. noun   |
| 3. (adj)  | c. adverb   |
| 4. (conj) | d. plural   |
| 5. (vt)   | e. adjective  |
| 6. (vi)   | f. transitive verb (a verb followed by an object)   |
| 7. (prep) | g. intransitive verb (a verb with no object)        |
| 8. (pl)   | h. preposition                                      |

**3. Types of word**

**What type of word is each of the following?**

1. noisy \_\_\_\_\_
2. behind \_\_\_\_\_
3. quickly \_\_\_\_\_
4. cities \_\_\_\_\_
5. because \_\_\_\_\_
6. fix \_\_\_\_\_
7. desk \_\_\_\_\_
8. live \_\_\_\_\_

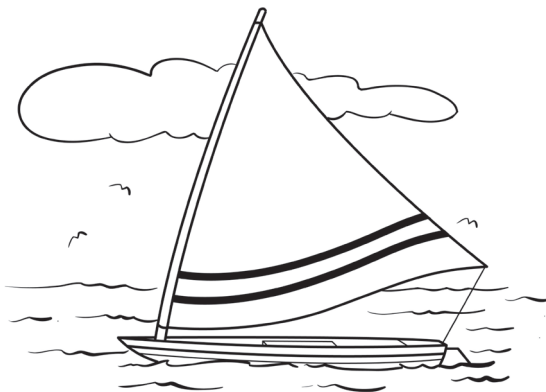
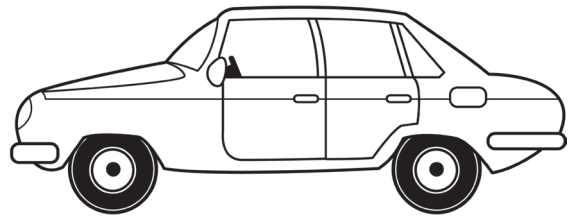
## DICTIONARY QUIZ

4. Be the first group to answer the following questions correctly!



## DICTIONARY QUIZ

1. What kind of container do you buy milk in?
  2. How long is a fortnight?
  3. What are two opposites of *light*?
  4. What is the plural of *knife*? Is it regular?
  5. Where do you put luggage in a car?
  6. Which syllable of *hotel* is stressed, the first or the second?
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7. Do you *make*, *play* or *do* yoga?
  8. Which is correct, *an advice* or *some advice*?
  9. What is the past of *bring*?
  10. Is *drive* a noun, a verb or both?
  11. Is the pronunciation of *sail* and *sale* the same or different?



12. If you travel one mile in Britain, how far do you travel in kilometres?
13. Do you see a programme *on* or *in* TV?
14. What is the nationality of someone from Iraq?