

Level: Intermediate – Upper intermediate (B1–B2)

Age: Teenagers

Time: 90 minutes – full lesson plan

Summary: This lesson can be used in conjunction with Beyond: Arts and Media: Newspapers. It is divided into two sections: Make the news and Reporter's desk. In the lesson, students will:

1. design the front page of a newspaper;
2. identify objects on a news desk;
3. analyze two news stories;
4. write a news story.

Key skills: question forms, writing headlines and newspaper stories, reporting events, newspaper vocabulary

Materials: one copy of each worksheet per student

MAKE THE NEWS

1. Divide the board into four columns.

- In the first column write: *go, do, buy, see, meet, eat, play, visit*
- In the second column write: *anyone, anything, anywhere*
- In the third column write: *exciting, interesting, dramatic*
- In the fourth column write: *last week, yesterday, today, tomorrow, next week*

2. Divide students into small groups of three or four. Tell the groups they are going to create stories about each other and the world to fill the front page of a newspaper. Ask students to use the prompts from the four columns on the board to find out if anyone in their group has done anything newsworthy recently. To help, give them an example question such as, 'Have you bought anything exciting this week?' Encourage them to ask follow-up questions and make notes of any interesting details. Monitor and offer error correction where needed.

3. When students have finished, ask them to report to the class what they found out. What stories are newsworthy and could be used on the front page?

4. Hand out the Make the news worksheet which gives the students some guidance on what they must include. Ask students to discuss what should go in each section. What international or national events should be included? They could also include the news story they started in the previous news lesson.

5. Ask students to create their front page either on paper or using a computer. When they have finished, the completed front pages can be displayed on the walls in the classroom.

REPORTER'S DESK

1. Hand out the Reporter's desk worksheet. Ask students to look at the photograph of the reporter's desk for 15 seconds then turn the page face down. They try to write down everything they saw in the photo from memory. Check through the vocabulary. Who remembered the most items?

Key: *pad of paper, pen, laptop, cup of coffee, telephone, electronic dictionary, bottle of water, calculator, notebook*

2. Ask students to look at activity 1, in which they have to read the news story, identify the function of each paragraph, and match it with the appropriate description. When students have attempted the activity, check the answers as a class.

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

3. Ask students to look at the news story in activity 2. The paragraphs are in the incorrect order. Can they put the story into the correct order? When they have finished, check the answers as a class and offer any error correction.

Key: 1. Grandmother lulls ...; 2. A 64-year-old grandmother ...; 3. Estelle Harper was abducted ...; 4. When Harper noticed ...; 5. When her abductor ...; 6. Police arrived at the gas station ...; 7. Ferrell, 31, of Hempstead ...

4. Put the students in pairs and tell them to cover their worksheets. Ask them to remember as many details from the stories as they can. Which pair can remember the most details?

5. Ask students to look back over the two news stories in this lesson and focus on how the news protagonists are referred to. Draw students' attention to the Phrasebook, which details how to refer to people in a news story. Ask students to tell you which tenses and structures are commonly used in news reporting

(answer: past tenses, passive structures) and, if necessary, review some of these grammar rules before starting the next activity.

6. Ask students to look at activity 3 on the worksheet. Working alone, they must use the notes to write the news story. Tell them to use the previous two stories as models. When they have finished their first draft, students swap stories with a partner, who should proofread the text and suggest corrections and improvements. Students can then write a second draft and hand it in to you to be marked.

HOMEWORK TASK

Students choose a news story that interests them. They should prepare a summary sheet on the news story that includes:

- a summary of the news story
- why they chose the story
- key vocabulary from the news story
- some questions for discussion, prompted by the news story (for example, a story on rising house prices could prompt the discussion questions *Does your family own the home you live in?* and *Is it better to rent or buy your home? Why?*).

Students bring their stories and summary sheets to the following class. They present their article to other students in the class, or in a group, giving their summary, explaining what interested them about the story, teaching the others the key vocabulary and chairing a discussion based on their discussion questions.



MAKE THE NEWS

You are going to create the front page of a newspaper. Try to make it look as professional and attention grabbing as you can.

Make the news worksheet 1

You must include:

- the newspaper name (this should include a place name and a paper name)
- the date (not necessarily today's date)
- a lead (which is possibly a scoop or an exclusive)
- a national story
- an international story
- at least one sports story
- a weather forecast
- pictures

REPORTER'S DESK

1. Read the reporter's sneakers story below. Which paragraph ...



1. ... gives you a summary of the story from the protagonist's point of view? _____
2. ... gives you the complete story with details? _____
3. ... gives you a very brief summary of the story? _____
4. ... tells you the protagonist's reaction to what happened? _____
5. ... gives you an expert's reaction to what happened? _____
6. ... tells you who the protagonists are? _____
7. ... tells you the reaction of another person connected with the story? _____

Sneakers save birthday boy's life in lightning strike

- A. A boy was saved by his new sneakers when lightning struck him as he talked to his girlfriend on the phone.
- B. Joshua Bradley, 15, was talking to Zoe Beckman in the hallway of his Massapequa home when a thunderbolt shot down the line.
- C. Bradley said a huge shock made him scream with pain and drop the phone as sparks flew off his nearby mountain bike. The charge was dissipated by the rubber soles of his sneakers.
- D. Bradley said yesterday, 'I feel very lucky to be alive. My Nikes will definitely be my lucky sneakers now. I will treat them with a lot of respect.'
- E. On 26 December, Bradley called Beckman, also 15, to thank her for her gift of aftershave and they talked about their presents. Then, according to Bradley, he heard a crash of thunder and felt a shock shoot up his arm as the hallway fuse box blew out, his bike glowed bright blue and the house lights went out. Bradley was later checked by a nurse, who said his sneakers had saved him.
- F. Bradley's mother, Gloria Nichols, said, 'I'm a single mother and money is tight, so I had to work hard to get the money for the sneakers. But they were worth every penny.'
- G. Hank Kaiser of Lilco, the Long Island electricity company, said Bradley was fortunate to be alive. 'Lots of people die when they're hit by lightning, so it was lucky he was wearing rubber soles to protect him.'



2. Put the sentences in this news story in the correct order.

- _____ When Harper noticed he was getting sleepy, she kept him talking while gradually turning up the car heater to maximum.
- _____ Grandmother lulls kidnapper to sleep
- _____ Ferrell, 31, of Hempstead, was sentenced to ten years after pleading guilty to kidnapping and aggravated robbery.
- _____ Police arrived at the gas station in Astoria, Queens, to find Ferrell still sleeping in the passenger seat with a nine-inch knife in his hand.

- _____ Estelle Harper was abducted at knife point by James Ferrell, a known drug addict, who robbed her and then made her drive for 70 miles as he looked for a place he could tie her up and leave her while he contacted her family to demand a ransom.
- _____ A 64-year-old grandmother escaped from a kidnapper by turning up her car heater and talking to him in a gentle voice about his drug addiction until he fell asleep.
- _____ When her abductor finally fell asleep, she pulled into a gas station and set off the alarm.

PHRASEBOOK

People in news stories

Look back at the news stories you have read. Pay attention to how the protagonists are referred to.

At first, refer to unknown people generically.

- a boy; a kidnapper; a 64-year-old grandmother; his girlfriend

In subsequent mentions, you can refer to the protagonists using their full name.

- Estelle Harper; James Ferrell; Joshua Bradley; Zoe Beckman

You can also add information about their age, and where they're from or the company they're representing.

- Joshua Bradley, 15; Beckman, also 15; Ferrell, 31, of Hempstead; Hank Kaiser of Lilco

3. Write a news story using the following notes. The headline for the story is 'Pizza man saves six lives'.

- pizza delivery man Danny Armstrong, 30
- delivering to Green family in Chelsea
- family ordered margarita pizza
- daughter answered the door
- daughter said people 'falling down around me'
- six members of the family overcome by gas fumes
- Armstrong opened windows
- ambulance called
- gas men found a leak in pipe leading to oven


