



Film and TV

Film / Comedy movies

Teacher's notes



Age: Teenager/Adults

Level: Upper intermediate (B2)

Time: 90 minutes (+ 30 minutes for the optional webquest)

Activity: In this lesson, students will:

1. revise and expand vocabulary related to comedy, work and women's rights;
2. provide oral practice of the above three themes;
3. improve listening comprehension of real-life English from a movie trailer and a movie clip;
4. find unusual jobs online and then perform an imaginary job interview for one of these positions.

Language focus: speaking, listening, vocabulary

Materials: one copy of the worksheet per student, a PC or projector, an internet connection in the classroom, students should use smartphones for the final project but this is not essential

1. Vocabulary and speak (20 minutes)

Aims: to introduce vocabulary which will allow students to use varied language when discussing the topic of comedy (synonyms of the word 'funny' and specific types of humour), to give students the opportunity to personalise the topic of the lesson and use new vocabulary in conversation

Procedure: Students work in pairs. Give them about five minutes to complete 1a. Monitor the class and for weaker pairs, perhaps help them to find the words and then decide the meaning either by sharing their knowledge or using a dictionary. Remind students not to worry if they don't understand all the vocabulary at this stage. Elicit the answers to 1a and write them on the board.

Key:

+ + O + + + + C + P +
 A M U S I N G I + R H
 S + T + + + Y T T I W
 + L R + + + + S L C +
 + + A + + + + A + E +
 + + G P + + R C + L +
 + + E + S I + R + E +
 + + O + O T + A + S +
 + + U U + + I S + S +
 H Y S T E R I C A L +
 + + + + + + + + K + +

Comedy adjectives

1. hilarious
2. hysterical
3. amusing
4. priceless
5. sarcastic
6. outrageous
7. slapstick
8. witty

Next, have an open-class discussion about the exact meaning of the adjectives. If students find this very difficult, they could use dictionaries. Conclude the activity by asking

Notes:

1. WARNING: This lesson refers to a trailer and an online clip, both from comedy movies. While these videos don't contain explicit material, you should watch the videos before the lesson to judge whether they are appropriate for the particular group of students. The trailer contains mild violence.
2. This lesson contains exercises which focus on listening, speaking, vocabulary and a short reading. If you wish to maximise class time for listening and speaking, you could ask students to complete the vocabulary and reading exercises as preparatory homework before the lesson. It would then only be necessary to quickly correct these parts in class. The exercises which could be done as preparatory homework are marked with a symbol.

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students to decide which words simply mean 'funny' and which describe a type of comedy.

Key:

<i>amusing = funny</i>	<i>sarcastic = ironic</i>	<i>slapstick =</i>
<i>hilarious = very</i>	<i>humour</i>	<i>ridiculous</i>
<i>funny</i>	<i>outrageous</i>	<i>humour (often</i>
<i>hysterical = very</i>	<i>= ridiculous</i>	<i>with a physical</i>
<i>funny</i>	<i>humour</i>	<i>element)</i>
<i>priceless = very</i>		<i>witty = clever</i>
<i>funny</i>		<i>humour</i>

Ask students to discuss 1b in pairs. Monitor their responses. If there are students who are not interested in comedy movies, explain that the lesson will contain useful language which can be used in a variety of non-movie situations (e.g. talking about work, personality, etc). At the end of the activity give some feedback, drawing attention to good language which students used. Focus particularly on language used which will be useful for the lesson.

2. Listen and speak (15 minutes)

Aims: to provide listening practice of understanding dialogue from a movie trailer, to provide spoken practice of talking about movie genres and personality

Procedure: Play the video. Ask students in pairs to briefly compare answers to the four questions. Play it again and let students decide their final answers in pairs. Elicit the answers. Ask students to briefly discuss the final questions in pairs.

Key:

- a. *The room has a lot of pollen so this makes him sneeze and accidentally shoot the enemy.*
- b. *Her mother used to tell her not to get people's attention or to try to be a winner. She advised her to forget about her dreams and ambitions (she used to put a note with this message in her daughter's lunchbox).*
- c. *The new enemy already knows all the CIA's spies so they can't do the mission. They need a person who is invisible and unrecognisable, so they choose this woman.*
- d. *The woman's new identity is a housewife. She is supposedly divorced and from the American state of Iowa.*

3. Read and vocabulary (15 minutes)

Aims: to read a short text about a comedian and women in comedy, to focus on vocabulary related to work and

women's rights, to introduce Amy Schumer to students who may not know her before watching her movie clip in Task 4

Procedure: Tell students that they are going to read a short text about the American comedian Amy Schumer. If possible, search for her on Google and show a photo of her on the board to help students recognise her. You may want to ask the students if any of them know this comedian and, if so, try to elicit some information about her (the names of her movies and TV show, etc). Tell the students that they are going to read the text in order to find answers to the two pre-text questions. Remind them that it isn't important to fully understand all parts of the text at this stage. Give them two to three minutes to read the text and then discuss the two pre-text questions with their partner. Elicit the answers.

Key:

- *After a long period of doing stand-up shows in small venues and universities, one of Amy's shows was finally broadcast on a big TV channel. The show was popular with viewers and so she became famous.*
- *Most comedians are men, and some of them have told Amy that they don't find women funny. Amy says that, unlike men, female comedians are expected to be pretty and inoffensive.*

Now ask students to look at Task 3b. Tell them that they are going to focus on some vocabulary related to work and women's rights which will be useful for later tasks in this lesson. Give them about five minutes to complete the table, making sure they realise that all the answers can be found in the text in 3a. Monitor and help weaker students by providing some of the missing letters. Elicit the answers and focus on correct pronunciation.

Key:

- a. a **LOW-WAGE** job
- b. to **MAKE ENDS MEET**
- c. to **CLIMB THE LADDER**
- d. to **HIT THE BIG TIME**
- e. to **TAKE OFF**
- f. **STAUNCH**
- g. to **LOOK DOWN ON** somebody
- h. **DOUBLE STANDARDS**
- i. to **QUIT**
- j. the **GLASS CEILING**



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4. Listen and speak (15 minutes)

Aims: to provide further listening practice of understanding dialogue from a movie, to consolidate ideas and vocabulary from the previous task, to provide practice of speaking about personality, relationships and women's rights

Procedure: Play the trailer. Ask students in pairs to briefly compare answers to the four questions. Play it again and let students decide their final answers in pairs. Elicit the answers. Ask students to briefly discuss the final questions in pairs. Give feedback, perhaps focusing on the correct usage and pronunciation of new words from previous tasks.

Key:

- She asks him whether he is aware that it isn't possible to get a refund for the money that they have paid for the holiday.*
- The man uses the present continuous to say that he wants to end the relationship. In English, this tense is used to describe actions happening at this moment or actions which are going to happen in the future. The woman is not sure if he wants to end the relationship now or in the future.*
- He thinks that the woman lacks direction and ambition.*
- She tells the man that she wants to start dating other people, as if the idea to end the relationship was her idea.*

5. Vocabulary (10 minutes)

Aims: to provide students with useful vocabulary related to work which they can use in the subsequent speaking tasks

Procedure: Read the introduction to the task aloud. Ask students if they can think of any other unusual professions represented in comedy movies or TV series. Tell them that for the rest of the lesson they will be talking about the world of work so this task will provide them with some useful vocabulary. Give them a few minutes to complete the task in pairs. Monitor and help weaker students by providing the first few letters for certain words. Finally, elicit the answers.

Key:

- figure*, *b. oversee*, *c. liaison*, *d. background*, *e. prospects*, *f. workload*, *g. shift*, *h. overtime*

6. Speak (15 minutes)

Aims: to provide spoken practice of topics related to work and women's rights, to encourage students to incorporate new language from the worksheet tasks and the videos of this lesson

Procedure: Ask students to discuss the questions in pairs. Monitor their responses. At the end of the activity give some feedback, drawing attention to new language from this lesson that students used.

7. Optional project (30 minutes)

Aims: to consolidate new language from the lesson, to complete a short job interview, to possibly aid long-term recall of language from the lesson by asking students to find their dream job

Procedure: Divide students into pairs, ideally so that each student has a different partner from previous tasks in this lesson. Ask students to discuss Step 1 and monitor as they do so, encouraging them to incorporate new language from this lesson. Provide brief feedback.

Ask students to use their phones to visit any one of the websites shown in Step 2. To add more variety to the task, the two students should each visit a different site. Make sure that they understand that their objective is just to select one job position that they would like to 'apply' for. Also, emphasise that they only have five minutes for this so they need to decide quickly. Monitor as they do this and help weaker students with difficult vocabulary on the websites. (Note: if it's not possible for your students to use phones, you could simply open one of the websites on the class board.)

Ask students to read the instructions for Step 3. Make sure they understand that they will be the interviewee (and not the interviewer) for the job position which they have selected from the website. Give them a few minutes to work individually to prepare for their interviews. Refer students to the Job interview questions worksheet. Set a time limit for each interview. For example, Student A has five minutes to interview Student B and then vice versa. Monitor as they conduct their interviews and help them with any questions which they don't understand. Conclude the interview tasks by asking students to give each other feedback, as outlined in Step 5. Then provide feedback on language they have used.



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Worksheet

1a. Vocabulary

Look at the word grid below. You have five minutes to find eight adjectives which can mean funny or describe a type of comedy. The words go in all directions.

J	X	O	E	K	R	M	C	B	P	J
A	M	U	S	I	N	G	I	I	R	H
S	F	T	C	T	C	Y	T	T	I	W
K	L	R	B	M	F	L	S	L	C	H
Z	O	A	F	V	I	X	A	K	E	Y
B	Q	G	P	N	U	R	C	B	L	I
T	J	E	O	S	I	E	R	H	E	U
S	X	O	T	O	T	O	A	C	S	V
C	N	U	U	Q	D	I	S	M	S	P
H	Y	S	T	E	R	I	C	A	L	V
N	R	D	A	Z	N	F	C	K	X	Q

Comedy adjectives
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.

Once you have found the eight words, talk to your classmates to decide the small differences in meaning between them.

Which words simply mean 'funny'? Which words describe a type of comedy?

1b. Speak

Discuss the questions with your classmate.

- Are you a fan of comedy movies or comedy series on TV?
- Can you think of a famous comedy movie from your country? Describe it.
- Now describe an English-language comedy movie which you have seen. There are some suggestions in the box.

The Hangover / Anchorman / The Big Lebowski / Shaun of the Dead / Bridesmaids / Clueless / There's Something About Mary / Dumb and Dumber / Deadpool / Monty Python's Life of Brian / Scary Movie / Borat / Ted / Meet the Parents / Zoolander / Some Like It Hot / Naked Gun

2. Listen and speak

Watch this trailer for the movie *Spy*. Melissa McCarthy plays a CIA spy who needs to prevent a criminal from buying a nuclear bomb (a 'nuke'). Listen carefully and then answer the questions.



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Worksheet

www.youtube.com/watch?v=AcVPM3kscww

- a. At the start of the trailer, why does the male spy shoot his enemy?
- b. What type of advice did the woman's mother use to give her?
- c. Why do the CIA choose this woman to be the spy for this mission?
- d. What new identity do they give the woman?

Discuss with your classmate:

The movie *Spy* is a spoof movie. This means that it imitates and exaggerates the stereotypes of a particular genre of movies. What genre of movies does this movie imitate?

Can you think of any other famous spoof movies?

What type of character would a person need to have to be a spy?

3a. Read

Amy Schumer is a famous comedian from the US. Read the text below about her life and, with your classmate, discuss the answer to the two questions.

- How did Amy first become famous?
- Why does she think her industry is unfair to women?

Amy Schumer: America's hardest-working comedian

A string of successful comedy tours, her own TV series, a bestselling autobiography and two Hollywood blockbusters are already on her resume. Still in her thirties, Amy Schumer can certainly never be accused of underachieving. Her working life began as a waitress in New York's bars and restaurants, working in low-wage jobs and often struggling to make ends meet. At the same time, she began to perform as a stand-up comedian in underground comedy clubs. From there, she moved on to doing shows for university students. This allowed Amy to slowly climb the ladder of her profession, finally hitting the big time when a major TV network decided to broadcast one of her shows. It proved to be popular amongst viewers and allowed her career to really take off.

Aside from making people laugh, Amy identifies as a staunch feminist. She sometimes laments the fact that the world of comedy in the US (and beyond) is still a male-dominated industry in which women can feel looked down on. In her autobiography, she describes her life touring with male comedians, several of whom had no hesitation in telling her that they simply didn't find women funny. In interviews, she describes double standards by which female comedians need to look pretty and not offend people, whereas her male colleagues enjoy much more freedom in those regards. Does she ever think of quitting? It doesn't look like it. With her unstoppable success and fearlessness to speak her mind, it looks like Amy Schumer is already well on her way to breaking that glass ceiling.



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3b. Vocabulary

Find words and expressions from the text which correspond to the following definitions. You will need to alter the form of some verbs.

Definition	Word/Expression from the text
Example: If you want to apply for a job, you first need to send this to your potential employer (American English)	a <i>resume</i>
a. a job which doesn't have a high salary (compound word)	a ____ - ____ job
b. to earn enough money in order to survive (3 words)	to ____ / ____ / ____
c. to progress in your job or your sector, regularly moving to higher positions (3 words)	to ____ / ____ / ____
d. to become successful and famous, usually after years of hard work (4 words)	to ____ / ____ / ____ / ____
e. when a project or your job starts to become successful, often providing you with more money and prestige (2 words)	to ____ / ____
f. to be extremely committed to your beliefs	_____
g. to consider a person to be inferior to you (3 words)	to ____ / ____ / ____ somebody
h. rules which vary for different groups of people, meaning that these rules are unfair (2 words)	_____ / _____
i. to leave your job as your own decision	to ____
j. an invisible limit in an organisation which prevents women (and people from minorities) from progressing to the top (2 words)	the ____ / _____

4. Listen and speak

Watch this scene from *Snatched*. Amy Schumer plays a woman who is planning to go on holiday to South America with her boyfriend. Listen carefully and then answer the questions below.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=6MfJPGWalGY

- When the man says that he can't go on holiday, what question does the woman ask him?
- What is the woman's initial confusion when the man explains that he wants to end the relationship?
- What are the man's reasons for ending the relationship?
- How does the woman try to save her dignity?



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Discuss with your classmate:

Do you know any funny stories related to dating or a couple breaking up?

Do you agree with Amy Schumer's belief that there are double standards for men and women in comedy?

What type of character would a person need to have to work as a professional comedian?

5. Vocabulary

Many comedy movies are based on unusual professions. *Spy* shows the life of a CIA agent, *Zoolander* exposes the job of a male model, while *Anchorman* describes the job of a TV news presenter. In this task, you are going to study some vocabulary for talking about jobs. For each sentence, unscramble the letters to complete the gap.

Example: (EALD) A doctor needs to **DEAL with** patients; an accountant needs to **DEAL with** his/her clients' accounts.

(Definition: phrasal verb – to have professional contact with something or somebody.)

- (UGRIEF) A computer technician needs to _____ out how to repair computer problems. (Definition: phrasal verb – to find a solution to a problem, to calculate the solution to a complex sum.)
- (EREVESO) A supervisor needs to _____ the tasks of the workers to make sure that everything is correct. (Definition: to supervise, to be responsible for something.)
- (ISALEI) A nurse needs to _____ with a doctor to make sure that they both agree on the best treatment for a patient. (Definition: to communicate with, to cooperate with.)
- (RADGUNBOKC) Many politicians have a _____ in the legal sector, often having worked previously as lawyers. (Definition: a person's working history, a person's previous work experience.)
- (PSEPSROCT) Working in a large bank can be a job with good _____, where many workers get promotions after the first few years. (Definition: future possibilities, work opportunities.)
- (KALLOWROD) An architect often has a very heavy _____ and can feel quite stressed with so many deadlines and projects. (Definition: the quantity of work that a person needs to complete.)
- (THIFS) A fire-fighter needs to work a _____ of 8–12 hours, often working in the middle of the night. (Definition: a period of work, usually of 6–12 hours which could be in the morning, the afternoon or at night.)
- (MEEVIROT) A surgeon often needs to work _____, especially if there is an emergency and no other surgeon is available. (Definition: to work more time than your official timetable, to work extra hours.)



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Worksheet

6. Speak

Discuss the questions with your classmate.

Do you work? If so, describe your position and tasks. If not, describe the job that you hope to have in future.

Describe a person you know who has a great job. Explain.

Describe a job which you would hate to have.

Do you think people in your country have a good work-life balance? Explain.

With websites like LinkedIn, is it now an old-fashioned idea to send a resume if you want to apply for a job? (*Note: in British English, a resume is called a CV.*)

In your country, is there equality between men and women in the labour market? Explain.

Can you think of some professions in your country which are generally dominated by men? And by women? Do you know any men or women who work in a job which is uncommon for their gender?

Some governments and companies use a quota system to ensure that there is a 50/50 divide of men/women in high positions. Do you agree with these types of systems?

Being a comedian isn't the only job which requires a good sense of humour. Think of other examples.

7. Project: Apply for an unusual job

Step 1: Look at the three lists of unusual professions below. For each list, decide which job you think you would prefer and explain why. Discuss in pairs.

List A

restaurant critic	comedian	Prime Minister of your country
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List B

Hollywood actor	author of children's books	CIA spy
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List C

presenter of a TV travel show	videogame tester	zookeeper
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Step 2: Find an unusual job which you would like to do. To get ideas, use your phone to view the suggestions on any of these websites:

www.jobmonkey.com/uniquejobs

<http://pivot-rpo.co.uk/odd-jobs-that-make-good-money>

www.buzzfeed.com/windowsuk/12-jobs-you-wont-believe-actually-exist

You have five minutes to select the job.



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Step 3: In a moment, you will need to do an interview for the job you have selected. Take a few minutes to write some notes and prepare for the interview. Think about things like why you have chosen to apply for this job, the relevant skills you possess, how your personality would be suitable for this job, relevant past experience, what you know about this type of work, etc.

Step 4: Work in pairs. On your phone, show your partner the job which you want to apply for. Then take turns to interview each other using the questions which your teacher will provide.

Step 5: Decide whether you would hire your partner for their chosen job. Give some constructive feedback on parts of the interview which he/she did well and parts which he/she could improve.



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Job interview questions

Student A: Questions to ask your partner

- Why have you decided to apply for a job as a _____ ?
- Describe yourself in three words.
- Describe a part of your personality which you need to improve.
- What background do you have related to this job?
- Are you comfortable with giving orders to other people?
- Describe a time when you needed to deal with a difficult person.
- Do you prefer working alone or in a team?
- Tell me about your ability to work under pressure.
- Are you a people person? Explain.
- (you may wish to make up some extra questions)

Student B: Questions to ask your partner

- Why have you decided to apply for a job as a _____ ?
- In terms of personality, what strengths would you bring to this job?
- What weaknesses would you bring to the job?
- What background do you have related to this job?
- Describe a time when you had a problem and found a way to figure it out.
- What makes you a good team player?
- What type of person would you refuse to work with?
- Tell me about an accomplishment in your life which made you feel satisfied.
- Why should I hire you?
- (you may wish to make up some extra questions)