

TEACHER'S NOTES

Bang, bang!
by Karen Richardson

SPEAKING SKILLS TEACHER'S NOTES

Level: Pre-intermediate and above
Target age: Any (works especially well with teenagers or young adults)
Time needed: 90 minutes (approx.)
Grammar / language objective: Storytelling / describing an incident
Materials: Ideally a computer with Internet connection; alternatively a CD player. A digital camera or mobile phone that can take videos or a voice recorder / mp3 player with recording function.

Overview

This lesson aims to get students writing and talking about incidents that have happened in the past. The lesson can be used in many ways, e.g. to practise particular lexical fields or grammar points.

A PowerPoint slide show is provided, but you may find it more beneficial to make your own, using the slide show provided as a guideline. If your classroom is 'low-tech', you can print out the slides or use other pictures and sentence beginnings.

The slide show that is provided is quite dramatic, but you could also take a sequence of photographs and use them to the same effect, either in a PowerPoint or on printouts. For example, you could photograph a game of pool or any simple, low-key sports event; you could photograph a shopping trip from beginning to end; you could walk around your town and take photos of landmarks and then get the students to describe the journey you took; or if you teach in a company, you could take photos of the production process. The variations are limitless!

Warmer

Decide what vocabulary might help the students report the incident. Your choice will depend on the level of your class. Write the words on slips of paper and hand them out to the students. The students should tell the others in the class about the word(s) they have, what they think the word(s) mean(s) and they should also give an example of how their word(s) could be used in a sentence. Encourage students to help each other.

Suggested vocabulary for the provided PowerPoint story:
battering ram, armed, special commando, riot gear, helmet, emergency, stick / baton, shutters, walkie-talkie / radio, surround the house, arrest, handcuffs, police station, police officer, jail / prison

Stage 1

Show the slides one by one. Students should guess what happened and complete the sentences orally before you move on to the photos that illustrate the text. At this early stage, encourage students to suggest as many different ways to complete the sentences as possible, but ask them to stay within the realms of possibility. When you move onto the next slide, you can see who guessed correctly each time. When you have gone through the whole slide show with the group, start again but only allow one student to tell their version of the story.

Stage 2

Give the students printouts of the slide show. If using PowerPoint, you might want to use the 'print' option which allows you to print out three slides per page. This option provides space for students to write their own notes next to the slides. Alternatively, simply get the students to copy the sentence beginnings onto paper and then complete them in writing.

The students may complete the sentences any way they like, but what they write should be grammatically correct and the story / report should make sense and correspond with the pictures.

Stage 3

Ask students to swap papers, read each other's work and talk about how their work differs. Discuss what they are doing, i.e. writing a report. Draw their attention to the style of writing and the grammar used for this genre.

Stage 4

Change the genre of the written work. Ask students to work in groups and turn the incident into a play. They should write a script, assign roles and then act out the incident.

Follow-on activities

1. Change the genre again. Ask students to write an email to a friend describing the incident.
2. For project work, the students should develop their own PowerPoint slide show for next week using digital cameras or photos from the Internet. A low-tech version is also possible: the students could use drawings, pictures from magazines and a bit of imagination.
3. Students could act out a story from a newspaper (which could be photographed) and put into a PowerPoint slide show.
4. For more advanced students, this can be turned into a 'gossip' lesson. Ask students to tell the story to each other in a gossipy way, using phrases and responses such as: *You'll never believe what happened ... Really? I don't believe it!*

