

## Genius: Notes and tips for teachers

### 1 Pre-reading tasks

- a Put students into small groups and get them to tell each other if there is any one thing that they can do (very) well.
- b Feedback: any surprises among the students?

**Tip: listen to your students**

Monitor well and if you hear any interesting information get that student to tell the whole class - this could be the basis of a future lesson if someone can play a musical instrument or juggle...

- c Get a map of the world and ask students to identify where Ghana, the US, Vietnam and Iran are.

**Tip: have a map**

If foreign countries are mentioned it's always nice for students to know where they are as this makes the readings more real and interesting. A map in the class is a must!

### 2 Reading tasks

- a There are three readings (A, B and C). Divide the class into small groups (of 3 or 4) making sure roughly a third of the class will have one of the texts.

**Tip: do your maths first**

It may seem obvious but if you're useless at numbers like me try to work out the groups before the class to save time (and embarrassment!). Think about who will work with who as well.

- b Explain to the students they will have one reading each (A, B or C) about a boy genius from one of the countries above. They will also get a worksheet. Their first task is to **read for gist** (general understanding). Make sure that they read the text *quickly* to do the first task – put a time on it if need be. Get them to write their suggested heading on the worksheet.
- c The second task is to **understand text organisation** - students match the headings to the paragraphs. You can check this open class because although the texts are different the answers are all the same: *His talent / His experience / His background / His views*

**Tip: encourage group work**

Students should be working in their small groups. Encourage them to help each other and become less dependent on the teacher, this helps them when they work alone at home.

- d The third task is to **read for detail**. Students read again more slowly and fill in the answers in the chart. Make sure all students are writing down the answers and that stronger students are helping the weaker ones.

**Tip: always have a task handy for the quicker groups**

Perhaps for these readings, if one group finishes before the others, you could ask them if they think the boy is lucky to have this skill (why / why not?), and if they would like to have the skill.

3 **Post-reading tasks**

- a Once all the groups have finished they need to be re-divided into groups of 3 so that there is one person who has read each of the readings in each group. Students take it in turn to tell each other about their genius, but they only use the information in the chart, not the text itself, when speaking.

**Tip: encourage listening**

Make sure the other two students are really listening and not thinking about what they are going to say. Tell them to turn over their worksheets until it is their turn to speak.

**Tip: always make sure there is a reason for listening.**

Get students to listen out for the main similarities between the boys.

- b When they have finished ask the groups to identify the main similarities that they have heard. Which boy do they think is the luckiest?
- c Now students, still working together in their new groups, have to invent a girl with a special talent. To begin with they have to answer the same questions as those for the boys in the second chart on the worksheet.
- d Next the students have to imagine that they are journalists and they are going to write a short article in their local newspaper using their information about the girl. They need to give it a title, as they did for the boy. Suggest using the same text organisation as for the boys i.e. four paragraphs: *Her talent / Her experience* etc.

**Tip: link the reading to a writing activity**

And with the boy you have a good model of what you would like the students to do. Make sure they have answered the questions in the chart first and decided what goes in the paragraphs. (Alternatively: *The advantages and disadvantages of being rich and famous when young.*)

- e And now there is another reading ! Put the writings up around the wall and ask students to read them all – which girl is the luckiest?

**Tip: link the reading to a speaking activity**

Put the students in pairs. One is a journalist who interviews the 'genius'. But there are other possibilities! (Journalist interviews parents?)