

China's noisy 'dancing grannies' silenced by device that disables speakers

Level: Advanced – Teacher's notes

Article summary: How a dispute between exercise groups and residents has highlighted a lack of empathy and understanding between different generations, and what can or could be done to rectify this

Time: 90 minutes

Skills: Reading, speaking, directed writing

Language focus: Vocabulary & phrases

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

1. Warmer

- a. Hold a short group brainstorming session in which students offer short answers to these questions. Collect their answers on a board or shared screen.

If there isn't a public park nearby, talk about a similar public space such as a market square, or a public park in a nearby town or city.

2. Key words

- a. Students write the correct word or phrase from the wordpool next to the definitions on the lines provided. Then they find and highlight them in the article to read them in context.

Key:

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 1. (in) unison | 9. intervene |
| 2. standoffs | 10. prompting |
| 3. blaring | 11. disputes |
| 4. confront | 12. products (of) |
| 5. bonds | 13. absolute |
| 6. roots | 14. interaction |
| 7. burden | 15. hostile |
| 8. bullying | |

- b. Before reading the article carefully, students use some of the key words to fill the gaps in the sentences to ensure that they understand and know how the words are used in other contexts.

Key:

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| 1. bullying | 4. products |
| 2. confront | 5. in unison |
| 3. intervene | 6. bonds |

3. Comprehension

- a. Students answer the questions with information from the article in as much detail as possible. Encourage them to use the key words from task 2 in their answers wherever they naturally fit.

Key:

1. They meet in public parks and squares in the early morning or late afternoon to dance in unison. They do this to socialize and form bonds with each other.
2. The groups take over part of the park and do square dancing to loud music. They do this in areas where many other people live, and these people feel that they have no peace when the groups are dancing. The groups are accused of bullying people who try to intervene.
3. Many of the elderly dancers are products of the Red Guard era and the Chinese Cultural Revolution. The resident says that they believe that they built modern day China and that they therefore have the right to do what they want and should be respected at the same time.
4. It works like a stun gun. You point it at the speakers that are blaring the music, and the device disables them so they cannot blast out music. It is sold online.
5. Some cities, such as Tianjin City have started to fine the groups if they are too loud and if their behaviour is considered uncivilized.

One group in Lanzhou use Bluetooth earphones so that they do not need to blast out loud music and annoy others, the music is only heard by the people who are dancing to it.

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4. Key language

- a. Students look for multi-word phrases in the article.

Key:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 1. <i>disturbing the peace</i> | 4. <i>civilized behaviour</i> |
| 2. <i>high-density residential areas</i> | 5. <i>high-rise resident</i> |
| 3. <i>social justice</i> | 6. <i>emerging market</i> |
| | 7. <i>noise pollution</i> |
| | 8. <i>golden rule</i> |

- b. Next, they use them in sentences about the article.
- c. Then they use them in sentences of their own that are not related to the article.

5. Discussion topics

- a. Students discuss the questions directly connected to the article.

6. In your own words

- a. Divide the group in half so that students write a letter or email about their situation as outlined in either A or B. Ask the whole group to decide who they are writing to: the local council, the park authorities, the local newspaper, etc. Everyone should be writing to the same place and should choose the appropriate form and length of letter or email for the situation.

Allow students to work in pairs or small groups to encourage collaborative writing. When they have finished their letter or email, they should exchange it with students who wrote from the other perspective. Ask them to read the letter and respond to it.